



Support to strengthening the higher education system in Azerbaijan



Twinning project ENI/2018/395-401

Mission Report

Short-Term Mission on Activity 3.3. Create handbook on methodologies and requirements for self-evaluations of higher education institutions

(December 17 – 21, 2018)

1. Name and Function of the Expert:

Full name of expert

Mrs. Nora Skaburskiene, Lithuania

Signature

Full name of expert

Ms. Asnate Kazoka, Latvia

Signature



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This project is funded by the European Union

2. Objective and Tasks of the Mission:

The mission is carried out within the framework of:

COMPONENT 3: THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM IS FURTHER DEVELOPED TO REFLECT THE STUDENT-CENTEREDNESS OF STUDY PROGRAMMES

Activity 3.3.1 Create handbook on methodologies and requirements for study programme evaluations

Benchmarks for this activity are:

- Handbook on methodologies and requirements for study programmes evaluations, including:
 - **working principles of external evaluators** (the composition of expert groups, selection of experts, task division within the group and general organisation of work);
 - **external evaluation report** guidelines.
- Best practices from MS and other countries

3. Time schedule of mission:

Date and Time	Activity
Monday 17 December 2018	<p>10:00-13:00 Meeting with the staff of the Accreditation Department, Accreditation and Nostrification Office</p> <p>13:00 – 14:00 LUNCH</p> <p>14:30-17:00 Deskwork in ANO</p>
Tuesday 18 December 2018	<p>10:00-13:00 Meeting with the staff of the ANO Accreditation Department. Discussions and deskwork on developing a Handbook on methodologies Stakeholders: Mr. Tofiq Ahmadov, Head of Accreditation Department, ANB Ms. Lala Abbasova, Senior Specialist at Accreditation Department Ms. Sugra Jafarova, Intern</p> <p>13:00 – 14:00 LUNCH</p> <p>14:00-17:00 Deskwork in ANO</p>
Wednesday 19 December 2018	<p>10:00 – 13:00 Meeting at the ANO Accreditation Department. Discussions and deskwork on developing a handbook on self-evaluation</p> <p>Stakeholders: Mr. Tofiq Ahmadov, Head of Accreditation Department, ANB Ms. Lala Abbasova, Senior Specialist at Accreditation Department Ms. Sugra Jafarova, Intern</p> <p>13:00 – 14:00 LUNCH</p> <p>14:00-17:00 Deskwork in ANO</p> <p>Stakeholders: Ms. Lala Abbasova, Senior Specialist at Accreditation Department Ms. Konul Fatiyeva, Head Specialist at Accreditation Department</p>

<p>Thursday December 2018</p> <p style="text-align: right;">20</p>	<p>10:00 – 13:00 Meeting with the staff of the ANO Accreditation Department. Discussions and deskwork on developing a Handbook on methodologies</p> <p>Stakeholders: Mr. Tofiq Ahmadov, Head of Accreditation Department, ANB Ms. Lala Abbasova, Senior Specialist at Accreditation Department Ms. Sugra Jafarova, Intern</p> <p>13:00 – 14:00 LUNCH</p> <p>14:00-17:00 Deskwork in ANO</p>
<p>Friday 21 December 2018</p>	<p>10:00-13:00 Meeting with the staff of the ANO Accreditation Department. Discussions and deskwork on developing a Handbook on methodologies</p> <p>Stakeholders: Mr. Tofiq Ahmadov, Head of Accreditation Department, ANB Ms. Lala Abbasova, Senior Specialist at Accreditation Department Ms. Sugra Jafarova, Intern</p> <p>13:00 – 14:00 LUNCH</p> <p>14:00-17:00 Report writing</p>

4. Mission report:

During the mission, experts shared their experience in development of Handbook for experts in the process of evaluation of study programmes. Several examples of Handbooks were provided (from Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Slovenia, ENQA, Portugal, and Ireland), they were analysed and discussed.

The Accreditation department (hereinafter ANO) provided updated version of Accreditation rules for higher education institutions and study programmes that were valuable in order to prepare the Handbook.

Discussion on the form of the Handbook took place and it was decided to develop the whole Methodology for external evaluation of study programmes that would include:

- Introduction
 - European context
 - Azerbaijan achievements in implementation of Bologna reforms
 - Information about the ANO
 - Legal basis
 - Terminology
 - METHODOLOGY
 - Aim of study programme accreditation
 - Involved parties and their roles
 - Ethical principles
 - Main steps of accreditation: before the site visit – during the site visit – after the site visit
 - Evaluation areas and criteria
 - Assessment scale
 - Decision taking rules
 - Practical issues
 - Preparation of self-evaluation report
 - Preparation of the final report
- ANNEXES:
- Information about Azerbaijan higher education system
 - List of reference documents
 - Timeline of the process
 - Example of Agenda
 - Template for self-evaluation report
 - Template of the final report

It was agreed that the ANO would provide their input for the parts of the Methodology concerning the system of higher education in Azerbaijan:

- Azerbaijan achievements in implementation of Bologna reforms
- Information about the ANO
- Legal basis

- Terminology
- Information about Azerbaijan higher education system
- List of reference documents

Through the Mission 3.3.1 the following parts of the Methodology were developed and discussed with the representatives of the ANO:

- Introduction
 - European context
 - METHODOLOGY
 - Aim of programmed accreditation
 - General principles
 - Involved parties and their roles
 - Ethical principles
 - Main steps of accreditation: before the site visit – during the site visit – after the site visit
 - Evaluation areas and criteria
 - Assessment scale
 - Decision taking rules
 - Practical issues
 - Preparation of the final report
- ANNEXES:
- Timeline of the process
 - Example of Agenda
 - Template of the final report

The parts of the Methodology concerning preparation of the self-evaluation report by higher education institutions should be developed during the next Mission 3.3.2.

We would like to thank Ms. Lala Abbasova and Mr. Tofiq Ahmadov for the fruitful discussions and devoted time and efforts in order to discuss peculiarities of accreditation process in Azerbaijan.

The Methodology is attached as the annex 1 to this mission report.

In addition, experts would like to provide the following recommendations regarding the Methodology:

- 1) Proposed Methodology have to be adapted to the situation of Azerbaijan and after approval of new Accreditation rules or other legal documents should be revised.
- 2) The Methodology should be discussed with all stakeholders of the process – the Ministry, academic community, students, employers' representatives.
- 3) Proposed Methodology should also be revised after mock accreditation of study programmes and discussions with the experts and representatives of higher education institutions
- 4) The Methodology should be used for training both the representatives of higher education institutions as well as experts. Additional handout could be provided together

with the Methodology and presentations, such as, tips for writing the evaluation report, possible questions for site visit.

- 5) The Methodology should be published on ANO website according to the requirements of ESG 2015, standard 2.6 .
- 6) It is important to involve all stakeholders into development of the process and its documents, as well as into implementation of evaluation process. It is especially important to start communicating with employers' representatives and students from the very beginning of accreditation process.

Confirmity of Absence of Conflict of Interest

Rules for selections of experts