

NAQA report on HEI and Experts' surveys: December 2019 – March 2020

The National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance of Ukraine (NAQA) launched its first accreditations of study programs in November 2019. At the time, one of the main challenges was to find, attract and train the more than 2000 high quality experts required to perform Ukraine's large number of accreditations. As a part of our continuous improvement and quality control efforts we perform self-assessments on different stages of our processes to enable road map corrections as needed. In December 2019 we surveyed 255 experts and 66 experts in March 2020, and queried several higher education institutions (14 in March 2020) that have already undergone the accreditation process by NAQA.

The experts were asked to evaluate on a ten-point scale the process in general as well as the trainings, Agency support provided, and their experiences of working with other experts in their panel groups.

We are pleased to see the very positive evaluation and even a slightly positive further dynamic of experts' assessments of the study programs that NAQA provides: the majority of surveyed experts highlighted that the trainings gave all the necessary knowledge for practical "in-field" accreditation. Additionally, we see the need to add more trainings/instructions on usage of the Agency's internet-based accreditation system as well as more explanations of legislation and executive orders related to the accreditation of study programs.

The improvements that NAQA made in internal support functions led to a positive dynamic +5% in experts' evaluation of NAQA support. Nevertheless, we see that there should be certain further improvements done, i.e. in financial documents flow and communication velocity.

Table 1. Results of experts surveys (NAQA, 2020)

		Accreditations period		
		2019	2020 Jan-Feb	
Quantity of respondents		Experts: 255	Experts: 67	HEI: 14
Please evaluate the new accreditation process in general:		8.60	8.62	7.86
Please rank how useful the training for experts was:		9.16	9.30	
Please evaluate the support by NAQA experts department:		9.18	9.38	
Please evaluate the support by NAQA accreditation department:		9.13	9.19	
Please evaluate the support by NAQA other departments:		7.73	8.59	
Did you have difficulties with forming and writing the report of your expert group?				
	No	74%	91%	
	Yes	26%	9%	
Please evaluate the attitude of Higher Education Institution towards the new accreditation process		8.24	8.08	
Did you reach the team work in your expert group?				
	Yes	94%	89%	
	Partially	5%	9%	
	No	0%	2%	
Please rank the professionalism of the expert you worked with				
	Q-ty of evaluations: 8 - 10	90%	91%	
	Q-ty of evaluations: 5 - 7	8%	9%	
	Q-ty of evaluations: 0 - 4	2%	0%	

With respect to the HEI survey results, we have only absolute numbers with no dynamics because it was the first survey performed in this format. Response rates were also relatively low – a fact that will be addressed in the future.

One of the main challenges that HEI respondents highlighted was the difficulty of work with the new online accreditation NAQA system, and time resources needed for the preparation of accreditation documents. In that matter NAQA continues to work on system usage tutorial materials and improvements to user interfaces.

In general, the HEIs evaluated experts’ work well and did not have difficulties with visit agenda approvals and implementation processes. One of the obligatory requirements NAQA has for experts’ work is their presentation to the HEI of observations on strong and weak sides of the evaluated study program. Based on survey results we see that all HEI had such presentations during their final meetings, and 79% of HEIs highlighted that they received full and useful quality improvement observations from experts.

Also, it is important to note that none of the surveyed HEIs had conflict situations with the expert groups.

Table 2. Results of HEI survey (NAQA, 2020)

HEI:

		Accreditations period: 2020 Jan-Feb
Quantity of respondents		14
Please evaluate the new accreditation process in general:		7.86
Please evaluate the work of the experts' group in general:		8.93
Please describe how the collaboration on visit program process went		
It was two-parties effective dialog with enough time for further preparation		79%
We lacked time for further preparation		14%
We had technical difficulties		7%
We lacked effective communicationa with experts		0%
The process was chaotic and not organized		0%
Did the experts group gave the consultation of strong ans weak points of your study program?		
Yes, fully comprehensive and useful		79%
Yes, but it was not new or useful information for us		21%
No		0%
Did yo uhave conflict situations with the experts group?		
No		100%
Yes		0%

After detailed analysis of the survey results NAQA has highlighted further improvements plans for the next quarter.