

NAQA report on Experts' survey #3: March 2020 – August 2020

The National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance of Ukraine (NAQA) launched its first accreditations of study programs in November 2019. 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. We surveyed 255 experts in December 2019, 66 experts in March 2020 and 646 experts in August 2020.

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. Also they were asked to name the main challenges they faced during their work with NAQA.

We are pleased to see the stable positive evaluation of study programs assessments that NAQA provides. Also the experts keep positively highlighting during three surveys the usefulness of training provided by NAQA for experts where the trainings gave all the necessary knowledge for practical “in-field” accreditation.

The improvements that NAQA is contiguously implementing in internal support functions led to stable positive experts' evaluation of NAQA support functions. Nevertheless, we continue to see that there should be certain further improvements done in financial documents flow and payments discipline.

Talking about quality of experts NAQA continues to have 99% ranked higher than 4.0 . Every low rank justification was thoroughly analyzed with further recommendation on optimal solution in each case.

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

Period of accreditations	2019 Oct - Dec		2020 Jan-Feb		2020 Mar-Aug		
	experts:		experts:		experts:		
Quantity of respondents	255		67		646		
Please evaluate the new accreditation process in general:	8.60		8.63		8.58		
Please rank how useful the training for experts was:	9.16		9.28		9.20		
Please evaluate the support by NAQA experts department:	9.18		9.37		9.26		
Please evaluate the support by NAQA accreditation department:	9.13		9.18		9.36		
Please evaluate the support by NAQA other departments:	7.73		8.60		8.46		
Did you have difficulties with forming and writing the report of your expert group?							
	No	186	74%	61	91%	597	92%
	Yes	64	26%	6	9%	49	8%
Please evaluate the attitude of Higher Education Institution towards the new accreditation process	8.24		8.09		7.99		
Did you reach the team work in your expert group?							
	Yes	240	94%	60	90%	599	93%
	Partially	14	5%	6	9%	42	7%
	No	1	0%	1	1%	5	1%
Please rank the professionalism of the expert you worked with:							
	Q-ty of evaluations: 8 - 10	745	90%	128	90%	1706	86%
	Q-ty of evaluations: 5 - 7	67	8%	14	10%	252	13%
	Q-ty of evaluations: 0 - 4	13	2%	0	0%	26	1%

In the previous survey experts (48%) highlighted the major challenge of working in technically new accreditation IT system where after numerous NAQA training materials including detailed visual instruction <https://wiki.naqa.gov.ua> the recent survey showed that this issue discontinued to be a challenge with only 7% of experts marking it as a difficulty.

The very big quantity of study programs together with COVID-19 pandemic force majorly resulted in big work load and lack of time challenge for experts when NAQA implemented remote accreditation process and had to perform the big number of accreditations. In order to face the new phase of big number of accreditations NAQA transformed to online format and continued its complex processes on attracting and training new experts to be involved in September – May accreditations.

We are also happy to see outstanding 31% of respondents that did not face any problems and had minor not major ones. Taking into account that the period of survey covers Mar – Aug where COVID-19 pandemic lockdown started in Ukraine in March 2020 and NAQA quickly created new online procedures with technical support of each one.

After analyzing these survey answers we have created the updated procedure to be implemented starting September 2020 where each report will have NAQA review report for experts with aim to make the quality of reports better as well as more clear decisions on further levels (GER and NAQA final) which was indicated in 18% as a challenge together with 8% of those who marked report writing as a difficulty as well. Also the new public training course was published on report writing for that purpose.

Table 2. Results of experts surveys analysis (NAQA, 2020)

Period of accreditations	2019 Oct - Dec		2020 Jan-Feb		2020 Mar-Aug	
	experts:		experts:		experts:	
Quantity of respondents	255		67		646	
Please mark the main problems you faced during the study program accreditation						based on q-ty of respondents:
Transparency of HEI	6	2%	2	3%	48	7%
Passive students	14	5%	2	3%	48	7%
Lack of time	74	29%	15	22%	104	16%
Big work load	88	35%	13	19%	171	26%
Financial (documents, payments)	22	9%	2	3%	180	28%
Unclear process after sending the expert report	48	19%	9	13%	48	7%
Communication with NAQA	29	11%	5	7%	11	2%
Unclear criteria of evaluation	11	4%	4	6%	26	4%
Report writing	55	22%	4	6%	52	8%
Work with experts in group	11	4%	2	3%	21	3%
Preparation and adherence to the visit plan	12	5%	2	3%	10	2%
Work in the accreditation system			32	48%	43	7%
Unclear next level (GER) decision on study program					89	14%
Unclear NAQA decision on study program					25	4%
Didn't have any problems / Other	31	12%	3	4%	198	31%

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