

Institutional accreditation is not conducted by NAQA yet. A regulation on institutional accreditation is being developed.

According to the Law of Ukraine on Higher Education, Ukrainian higher educational institutions (HEIs) may choose an **EQAR-registered agency** listed in the Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 554-p dated July 10, 2019 (<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/554-2019-%D1%80#Text>) to conduct programme accreditation at their institution. **The decisions** (accreditation certificates) of these foreign agencies are recognised as equivalent to accreditation by the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance (NAQA).

By law Ukrainian HEIs must include **acknowledgment of the accreditation agency** on the relevant study programme diploma.

NAQA's strategic goals include internationalization of the Ukrainian higher education system and meeting European quality assurance standards. Therefore, NAQA encourages Ukrainian HEIs to seek foreign accreditation and considers EQAR-registered agencies as representing best practices. Several foreign agency accreditations have already been recognized by NAQA and the relevant information published on the NAQA website (<https://en.naqa.gov.ua/?cat=6>).

Having said this, we should also note that cross-border quality assurance is not easy and several issues require close attention:

1. EQAR-registered agencies conduct accreditations in Ukraine on the basis of their own criteria. However, Ukrainian legislation should be respected and it is therefore important to verify as part of the quality assurance process whether the study programme meets local legal requirements. For instance, all study programmes should meet the higher education standard adopted for a particular subject area by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (<https://mon.gov.ua/ua/osvita/visha-osvita/naukovo-metodichna-rada-ministerstva-osviti-i-nauki-ukrayini/zatverdzeni-standarti-vishoyi-osviti>). Special requirements have been published for PhD programmes, elective courses, language of teaching, etc. NAQA recommends foreign QA agencies to inform the Ukrainian HEIs that **national Ukrainian legislation must be respected and should be followed accordingly**.

2. **Only final decisions** (confirmed by an accreditation certificate) issued by foreign agencies on accreditation of study programmes in Ukraine are acceptable as equivalent to accreditation by NAQA.

3. There are more than 1200 institutions in Ukraine that offer higher education degree programmes. Some offer only bachelor level programmes while others offer programmes in all three levels of higher education in a variety of subject areas. When approached by an HEI with an accreditation request, verifying that this institution does not provide illegitimate academic degrees and diplomas for a fee and it is not a potential diploma or degree mill is essential (some details are available at EQAR website - <https://www.eqar.eu/kb/accreditation-mills/>). Recent NAQA experience includes cases when HEIs fabricated degrees or presented falsified information in their Self-Assessment Reports, for example, reporting facilities and buildings which didn't exist and providing lists of professors who didn't work at the particular HEI. It is important to **avoid accreditation of diploma mills** and accreditation should be denied if any evidence of deliberately misleading or falsified information is provided, in accordance with Ukrainian legislation and regulations.

4. Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic NAQA conducted its external quality assurance activities using videoconferencing and other technical resources. This experience has shown that particular attention needs to be paid during virtual site visits to demonstrations of facilities and human resources availability (as well as other criteria) in order to **ensure sufficiency of evidence**. NAQA recommends video recording of all interviews and meetings held as part of virtual site-visits, and to inform the HEI of the video recording.

5. Currently, recognition of foreign accreditation certificates in Ukraine is **applicable only for study programmes**. The regulation on institutional accreditation and its cross-border quality assurance is currently being developed.

NAQA provides **consultation and advice** to interested parties on the Ukrainian higher education system, Ukrainian legislation, and information on higher education institutions in Ukraine. In case of need NAQA conducts **presentations and webinars** for colleagues from foreign QA agencies.

NAQA is open to proposals for the **exchange of experts** with partner QA agencies. NAQA's list of accreditation experts includes approximately 4000 individuals who were recruited, and underwent testing and training in accordance with NAQA requirements.

Please feel free to contact NAQA regarding cross-border quality assurance in Ukraine via email international@naqa.gov.ua

Looking forward to fruitful collaboration and to joint efforts to enhance the quality of higher education in Ukraine and the whole European Higher Education Area.

(Approved by NAQA on May 18, 2021)

NAQA Head

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