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CROSS-BORDER QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN UKRAINE:

A GUIDE FOR FOREIGN AGENCIES AND UKRAINIAN UNIVERSITIES

**NATIONAL AGENCY
FOR HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE**

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Cross-Border Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Ukraine: A Guide for Foreign Agencies and Ukrainian Universities covers the issues of cross-border quality assurance in the context of the Bologna Process, contains statistical data and existing practices of accreditations by foreign agencies in Ukraine, and provides recommendations to foreign accreditation agencies and Ukrainian higher education institutions on the implementation of cross-border quality assurance procedures in Ukraine, based on national legislative requirements and European standards.

Транскордонне забезпечення якості у вищій освіті України: порадник для іноземних агентств та українських університетів розкриває питання транскордонного забезпечення якості в контексті Болонського процесу, відображає статистичні дані й існуючі практики акредитацій іноземних агентств в Україні, а також надає рекомендації іноземним акредитаційним агентствам та українським закладам вищої освіти щодо здійснення процедур транскордонного забезпечення якості в Україні, спираючись на національні законодавчі вимоги та європейські стандарти.

Layout design and typesetting: ***Tamara Sverdlyk***

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List of Abbreviations

CBQA	Cross-Border Quality Assurance
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
EQA	External Quality Assurance
EQAR	European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education
ESG	Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
HEI	Higher Education Institution
NAQA	National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance
QA	Quality Assurance
USEDE	Unified State Electronic Database on Education

Introduction

In an increasingly globalised higher education landscape, cross-border quality assurance (CBQA) plays a crucial role in fostering international collaboration, enhancing academic standards, and ensuring mutual recognition of qualifications. This Guide is designed to assist Ukrainian higher education institutions seeking accreditation of their study programmes by agencies registered in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), as well as to support foreign quality assurance (QA) agencies in conducting evaluation procedures within Ukraine in full compliance with both national and European standards.

Purpose and Scope of This Guide

This Guide is based on:

the EQAR Key Considerations for Cross-Border Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area,

the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015), and is aligned with Ukrainian legislation and national higher education quality standards.

It is specifically relevant to Ukrainian universities and foreign QA agencies seeking formal recognition of foreign accreditation of study programmes as an alternative to national accreditation in Ukraine.

For institutions and agencies conducting other types of accreditation or quality assurance procedures — such as institutional accreditation, faculty accreditation, QA of micro-credentials, accreditation conducted purely for institutional reputation, accreditation performed in addition to national accreditation, accreditation conducted without seeking formal recognition in Ukraine — this Guide remains a

valuable resource, providing best practices and key considerations. While these institutions and agencies are strongly advised to adhere to the principles outlined here, they are not formally required to do so, as no official recognition will be granted under Ukrainian legislation.

Ukraine's Commitment to Cross-Border QA

The Ukrainian higher education system is among the most open to cross-border quality assurance, with the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance (NAQA) at the forefront of fostering transparency, continuous improvement, and compliance with both national and European standards. NAQA actively supports cooperation between Ukrainian universities and foreign QA agencies, emphasising open communication and constructive dialogue with stakeholders, adherence to international agreements and best practices, strict compliance with Ukrainian national legislation and higher education standards.

The integration of CBQA into Ukraine's higher education system provides several significant benefits, including meeting the accreditation needs of Ukrainian universities by leveraging diverse evaluation frameworks, enhancing institutional development through exposure to international standards and methodologies, learning from best practices in higher education quality enhancement, fostering professional networking opportunities with global academic and QA communities, and receiving valuable recommendations from internationally recognised experts.

Challenges and Risks in Cross-Border QA

Despite the many advantages of cross-border QA, challenges persist. NAQA has observed that not all HEIs and foreign QA agencies consistently adhere to the EQAR Key Considerations for Cross-Border QA, the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015), and Ukrainian legislation on higher education when conducting accreditations in Ukraine. In particular, few universities misled

foreign QA agencies especially during online site visits, some EQAR-registered agencies fail to notify NAQA before conducting cross-border QA activities in Ukraine, and certain agencies operate without proper alignment to Ukrainian legislation and national education standards. These practices pose a tangible risk to the quality and credibility of Ukrainian higher education, and non-compliance raises concerns about the legitimacy and recognition of certain accreditation outcomes.

Ensuring a High-Quality Cross-Border QA Process

To maintain trust, credibility, and academic excellence, it is imperative that all HEIs and foreign QA agencies strictly follow EQAR Key Considerations for Cross-Border QA, the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015), established guidelines, and legal requirements. This Guide provides clarifications of the framework for conducting cross-border QA in Ukraine, outlining best practices, regulatory expectations, and the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved.

By following the recommendations in this Guide, Ukrainian universities and foreign QA agencies can contribute to a robust, internationally recognised, and transparent quality assurance system that benefits students, academic institutions, and the broader higher education community.

1. International Framework for Cross-Border Quality Assurance

Cross-Border QA in the Context of the Bologna Process

CBQA is an integral part of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and is strongly supported within the framework of the Bologna Process. The commitment to enabling external quality assurance by internationally recognised agencies is reflected in key ministerial communiqués adopted by EHEA member states.

In the Yerevan Communiqué (2015), European higher education ministers reaffirmed their commitment:

"to enable higher education institutions to use a suitable EQAR registered agency for their external quality assurance process, respecting the national arrangements for the decision-making on QA outcomes."

This endorsement reflects the recognition that cross-border quality assurance enhances institutional autonomy, while ensuring adherence to national regulations and maintaining the credibility of external evaluations.

The EQAR Key Considerations for Cross-Border QA define CBQA as:

"external QA activities of a QA agency carried out in a country other than the one in which it is based or primarily operates."

In the Ukrainian context, this refers to external accreditation conducted by EQAR-registered agencies for Ukrainian study programmes, either as an alternative to national accreditation, or as an additional quality enhancement tool.

Key Principles for Conducting Cross-Border QA

The EQAR Key Considerations outline fundamental principles to ensure transparency, compliance, and mutual recognition in cross-border accreditation procedures. The following principles are particularly relevant for Ukraine:

- **Transparency and Clearly Defined Accreditation Goals**

A fundamental requirement for CBQA is the clarity of purpose and expected outcomes of accreditation.

> *"An institution planning to engage in cross-border QA should thoroughly consider the aims of the process and the expected added-value." (EQAR Key Considerations for Cross-Border QA in EHEA, p. 4)*

Before choosing an external QA agency, universities must evaluate whether the accreditation will meet their needs and align with both national and institutional objectives.

- **Communication with National QA Bodies**

Foreign QA agencies should engage with the national authorities of the country in which they operate. In Ukraine, this means consulting with the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance (NAQA) prior to initiating an accreditation procedure.

> *"The institution and QA agency should consult and involve as appropriate national regulatory bodies (such as ministries or accreditation councils)." (EQAR Key Considerations for Cross-Border QA in EHEA, p.4)*

This not only fosters collaboration between agencies to enhance external quality assurance (EQA) outcomes, but also ensures compliance with Ukrainian higher education regulations and facilitates the formal recognition of accreditation results.

- **Compliance with National Legislation and Educational Standards**

Cross-border accreditation should fully address the national legislative framework, educational standards, and any specific national accreditation requirements. The final accreditation report must be structured in a way that ensures recognition by national authorities.

> *"The cross-border QA activity may be contingent on the national higher education framework and other specific national regulation. ... It is important that information about legal frameworks and national criteria is readily available and that both the institution and the QA agency inform themselves to ensure a proper understanding of the legal context." (EQAR Key Considerations for Cross-Border QA in EHEA, p.4)*

- **Recognition and Accessibility of Accreditation Reports**

To facilitate the recognition of foreign accreditation in Ukraine, agencies are encouraged to ensure that national criteria are incorporated into their accreditation reports and that these reports are fully and freely accessible.

> *"The QA agency and institution should take into account any additional steps necessary for the formal recognition by the relevant national bodies of any decision following the completion of a cross-border QA procedure that is part of national mandatory QA. ... The agency should ensure the publication of and access to the full report." (EQAR Key Considerations for Cross-Border QA in EHEA, p.6)*

- **Institutional Responsibility for Quality Assurance**

Ultimately, universities bear the primary responsibility for the quality of education they provide. It is crucial that institutions select an appropriate QA agency whose procedures, philosophy, and methodology align with both their institutional context and national legal requirements.

"The institution should look carefully at the philosophy and procedures of the chosen QA agency to ensure that they are appropriate for the institutional context, that they are compatible with the aims and expected benefits of the process and that, if necessary, they meet any national legal requirements." (EQAR Key Considerations for Cross-Border QA in EHEA, p.4)

Additional International Commitments Supporting Cross-Border QA

Ukraine's commitment to cross-border quality assurance is also reinforced by the following international agreements and guidelines:

• Bucharest Communiqué (2012):

"We will allow EQAR-registered agencies to perform their activities across the EHEA, while complying with national requirements."

• Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG): A fundamental document ensuring the alignment of quality assurance processes with European best practices.

• Rome Ministerial Communiqué (2020):

"…we commit to removing the remaining obstacles, including those related to the cross-border operation of EQAR-registered agencies."

These commitments underline the importance of removing regulatory barriers, ensuring mutual trust in quality assurance processes, and strengthening international cooperation in higher education.

Thus, cross-border quality assurance is a valuable tool for Ukrainian universities seeking international recognition of their study programmes while maintaining compliance with national regulations. By following the EQAR Key Considerations, Ukrainian higher education institutions and foreign QA agencies can ensure that accreditation processes are transparent, compliant, and beneficial to all stakeholders.

This Guide serves as a practical roadmap for HEIs and QA agencies, promoting trust, cooperation, and high-quality education standards in the European Higher Education Area.

2. Ukrainian Legislation Applicable to Cross-Border Quality Assurance

Overview of Ukraine's External Quality Assurance System

Ukraine's EQA system was formally established in 2014, but was practically launched in 2019, and it continues to evolve, aiming for greater transparency, international alignment, and cross-border cooperation with foreign QA agencies.

Accreditation of a study programme is mandatory in Ukraine. HEIs can issue diplomas only if the relevant study programme is accredited by either:

- The National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance (NAQA),

or

- A foreign QA agency included in the official List of Foreign Accreditation Agencies and Higher Education Quality Assurance Agencies that Issue Certificates of Accreditation of Study Programmes Recognised in Ukraine (Approved by the Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 554-r of July 10, 2019, last updated on June 28, 2024).

In 2019, the initial Regulations on Study Programmes Accreditation were adopted in Ukraine. Since August 1, 2024, NAQA has been conducting EQA procedures under the updated Regulations on Accreditation of Study Programmes in Higher Education, developed by NAQA and adopted by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine in May 2024.

(*Translation of the Regulations on Accreditation into English is available on NAQA website*)

At present, institutional accreditation is not conducted by NAQA, but regulations for its implementation are under development.

Legal Framework for Cross-Border QA in Ukraine

According to the Law of Ukraine on Higher Education, Ukrainian HEIs have the right to choose an EQAR-registered agency to conduct the accreditation of study programmes.

However, foreign accreditation of a study programme will be formally recognised as a substitute to national accreditation only if the foreign agency is included in the List of Foreign Accreditation Agencies and Higher Education Quality Assurance Agencies that Issue Certificates of Accreditation of Study Programmes Recognised in Ukraine (Approved by the Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 554-r of July 10, 2019, last updated on June 28, 2024).

Certificates of study programme accreditation (i.e. official decisions on study programme accreditation) issued by these recognised foreign QA agencies are considered legally equivalent to study programme accreditations granted by NAQA.

Furthermore, Ukrainian law requires that HEIs include an explicit acknowledgment of the accreditation agency on diplomas issued for study programmes accredited by a foreign QA agency.

NAQA's Commitment to Internationalisation
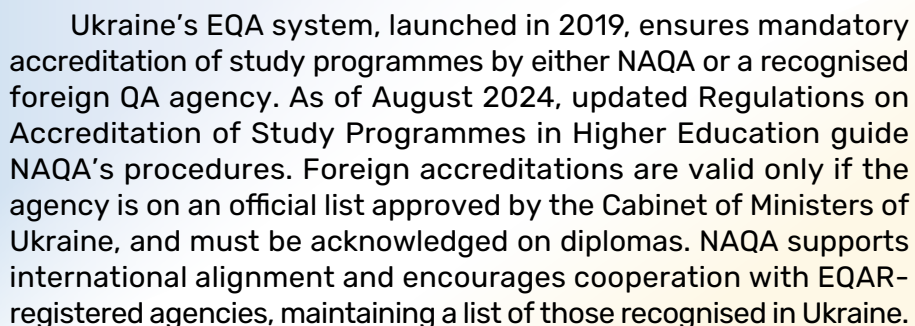
NAQA is committed to fostering international cooperation and aligning Ukrainian higher education quality assurance with ESG 2015. Consequently, NAQA encourages Ukrainian HEIs to seek foreign accreditation from EQAR-registered agencies if it meets their needs and adheres to the principle of being 'fit for purpose'.

NAQA maintains an official list of foreign agencies that has already conducted study programme accreditations, and they have been recognised in Ukraine. This list is available on NAQA website.

Ukraine's EQA system, launched in 2019, ensures mandatory accreditation of study programmes by either NAQA or a recognised foreign QA agency. As of August 2024, updated Regulations on Accreditation of Study Programmes in Higher Education guide NAQA's procedures. Foreign accreditations are valid only if the agency is on an official list approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, and must be acknowledged on diplomas. NAQA supports international alignment and encourages cooperation with EQAR-registered agencies, maintaining a list of those recognised in Ukraine.

3. Cross-Border Quality Assurance in Ukraine: Statistics and Practices

Stats on Cross-Border Quality Assurance in Ukraine

From 2019 to June 2025, 11 foreign accreditation agencies from 8 countries carried out accreditation procedures in Ukraine:

From September 1, 2019, till June 1, 2025, NAQA added to the Unified State Electronic Database on Education (USEDE) 137 decisions on study programme accreditations in Ukraine, accredited by foreign accreditation agencies. Their distribution by level of education is shown in *Figure 1*.
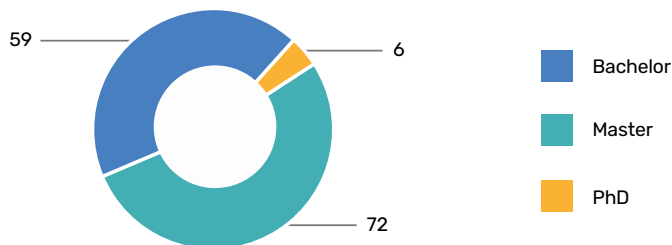
Figure 1. Study programme accreditations by foreign accreditation agencies in Ukraine (as of June 1, 2025), distributed by level of education

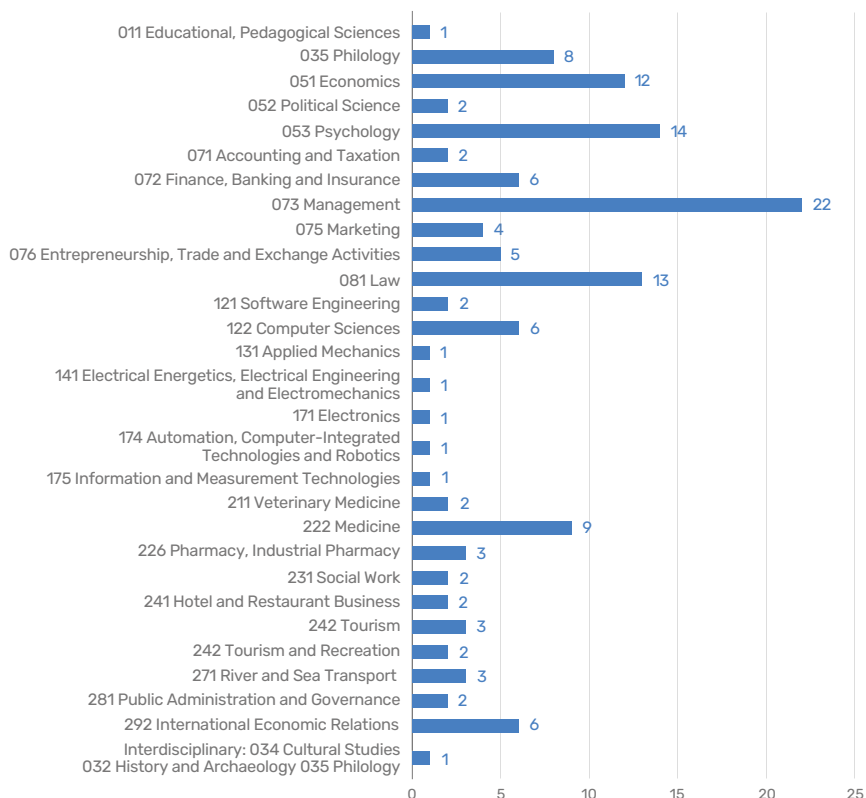The distribution of these accreditations by speciality can be seen in *Figure 2*.

Figure 2. Study programme accreditations by foreign accreditation agencies in Ukraine (as of June 1, 2025) distributed by speciality

Figure 3 shows the number of accreditation certificates issued by foreign accreditation agencies and added to the USEDE (breakdown by year).
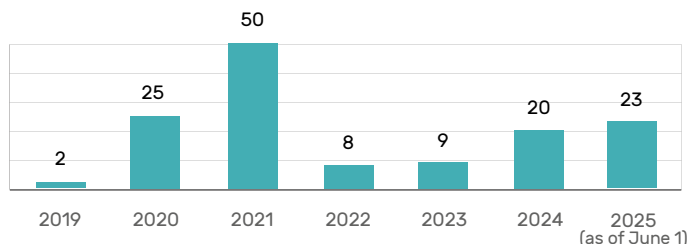
Figure 3. The number of accreditation certificates added to the USEDE (breakdown by year)

The certificates of study programmes accredited by foreign agencies are available on NAQA website under the 'Cross-border QA' section and are published once the relevant information is entered into the USEDE.

Good Practices in Cross-Border Quality Assurance in Ukraine

NAQA's engagement in CBQA has resulted in several successful cases that may serve as models for HEIs and QA agencies seeking to implement similar initiatives in Ukraine. These cases demonstrate adherence to both national and international quality standards and highlight the value of strategic collaboration between Ukrainian and foreign QA bodies.

There are several successful cases that can serve as a model for HEIs and foreign QA agencies that wish to conduct cross-border quality assurance in Ukraine.

Illustrative Cases

1. **Subject-Specific Accreditation by Foreign Agencies**
   Ukrainian HEIs may apply to foreign QA agencies that specialise in the accreditation of specific academic disciplines.

Example: University "A" sought accreditation for its Veterinary Medicine programme from a subject-specific foreign agency in Veterinary Education, aligning its QA with international disciplinary standards.

2. **Complementary Accreditation for Reputational and Quality Enhancement**

   HEIs may pursue additional accreditation from foreign agencies for programmes already accredited by NAQA, enhancing the institution's international reputation and credibility.

   Example: In 2021, University "B" received accreditation from Agency "Y" for 30 study programmes, all of which had previously been accredited by NAQA.

3. **Collaborative Accreditation with NAQA Engagement**

   Prior to initiating cross-border QA procedures, some foreign agencies proactively consulted with NAQA and incorporated Ukrainian legal and regulatory frameworks into their accreditation process.

   Example: An EQAR-registered agency "X" accredited a programme at University "C" following direct consultation with NAQA. Ukrainian experts were included in the external review panel, ensuring alignment with national standards and strengthening procedural legitimacy.

Key Elements of Good Practices

These cases reflect good practices in cross-border quality assurance due to the following factors:

- Full compliance with ESG 2015, EQAR Key Considerations for Cross-Border QA, Ukrainian legislation and higher education standards;
- Inclusion of Ukrainian experts in the external review panels;
- Engagement with NAQA by foreign agencies prior to conducting cross-border evaluations;
- Implementation of cross-border QA as a complement to national accreditation, not as a replacement;

- Strategic selection of foreign agencies aligned with the HEI's academic profile and strategic goals.

Challenges and Risks in Cross-Border Quality Assurance: Cases of Concern

While Ukrainian higher education has witnessed successful cases of CBQA, there are also concerning practices where HEIs or QA agencies provide misleading information, disregard national legislation, or violate established accreditation procedures. These cases highlight the importance of safeguarding quality and integrity in cross-border QA.

Examples of Problematic Practices

1. **Conceptual Accreditation without Active Programme Delivery**
University "D" received a 7-year accreditation certificate issued by Agency 'W' for a study programme that had no enrolled students and did not conduct any educational activity.
    ► In this case, although the concept of the study programme was reviewed, the formal accreditation was issued for the programme itself — contravening Ukrainian educational legislation, which does not allow accreditation of programme concepts in the absence of actual implementation.

2. **Identical Expert Evaluation Reports Across Distinct Programmes and Institutions**
Two Master's programmes in Administrative Management, offered by University "E" and University "F" respectively, received identical expert evaluation reports and recommendations from the expert panel of Agency 'V'.
    ► This raises concerns about the credibility of the review process and contradicts ESG 2015, as these programmes differ in institutional context, regional environment, faculty, student body, and resource base.

3. **Accreditation without a Site Visit and Peer Review**
Three private universities — "G", "H" and "I" — were granted 6-year accreditation by Agency "U" for medical programmes based solely on document review, with no on-site or online panel visit conducted.

▶ Such practices undermine the robustness of the accreditation process and contradict ESG 2015.

4. **Accreditation of a Diploma Mill Based on Deceptive Evidence**
University "J", previously denied accreditation by NAQA due to its lack of legitimacy (including falsified operations, absence of infrastructure, and insufficient academic staff), obtained foreign accreditation from an EQAR-registered agency during the COVID-19 pandemic.
▶ The institution provided forged documents and deceptive materials during the remote evaluation process.

5. **Accreditation of Non-Registered Programmes**
Agency "T" accredited a study programme at University "K", that is not registered in the USEDE, directly violating Ukrainian legal requirements.

In Ukraine, the number of CBQA procedures has been increasing annually, and over the past five years, a number of models have been developed that can serve as benchmarks for HEIs and foreign agencies interested in carrying out CBQA in Ukraine. At the same time, these cases underscore serious systemic concerns within Ukraine's QA landscape, where the system's openness is vulnerable to exploitation by substandard programmes. Such programmes can bypass national legislation and QA standards, effectively presenting non-compliance with Ukrainian legal requirements and ESG 2015 as legitimate practice. Key issues include the neglect of EQAR Key Considerations, the frequent disregard for Ukrainian national laws and higher education standards, and the exclusion of Ukrainian national experts from accreditation panels. Additionally, there are cases where foreign agencies rely on methodologies that permit superficial, 'copy-paste' assessments across different institutions, further undermining credibility. Most notably, the lack of prior consultation with NAQA by EQAR-registered agencies reflects a broader failure to align CBQA activities with national regulatory frameworks.

4. Key Considerations for Foreign QA Agencies Conducting Accreditation in Ukraine

Foreign QA agencies are recommended to address several critical issues when conducting accreditation procedures in Ukraine:

Compliance with Ukrainian Higher Education Standards

Foreign QA agencies operate using their own criteria; however, Ukrainian national legislation must be respected. All study programmes delivered in Ukraine must comply with:

- Higher education standards adopted by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine for each speciality.
- Special legal requirements for:
    - PhD programmes;
    - Elective courses;
    - Language of instruction;
    - Other national regulations.

It is recommended that foreign agencies inform Ukrainian HEIs of their legal obligations before starting the accreditation process.

Recognition of Accreditation Decisions

Only final decisions on study programme accreditation — approved by foreign agency's board and confirmed by an official accreditation certificate — are recognised as legally equivalent to NAQA study programme accreditation in Ukraine.

Prevention of Diploma Mills and Fraudulent Practices

Ukraine has over 500 HEIs, offering a variety of degree programmes on different levels. Foreign QA agencies must ensure legitimacy before accepting accreditation requests.

Warning signs of potential diploma mills include illegitimate institutions that grant degrees for a fee without proper education delivery, or falsify facilities, faculty members, or accreditation reports (e.g., listing non-existent buildings or staff members).

Foreign QA agencies must verify institutional credibility. Characteristics provided by EQAR for 'diploma, degree and accreditation mills' can assist in this verification.

If any evidence of fraud or deliberate misinformation is found, accreditation must be denied in accordance with Ukrainian regulations.

Site Visits and Accreditation Procedures

During the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing war in Ukraine, there is an option to conduct hybrid or virtual site visits using videoconferencing. However, special precautions must be taken to ensure credibility:

- Facilities and staff must be verified during online visits.
- All interviews with stakeholders should be conducted in accordance with ESG 2015.
- Video recording of interviews and meetings is recommended for the internal use of agency.
- HEIs and interview participants must be informed in advance if recordings are made.

Physical vs. Virtual Site Visits. For regulated specialities (e.g., Medicine, Law), in-person site visits are mandatory. Some experts must visit the HEI in person.

For other specialities, physical/hybrid visits are recommended but not required due to the martial law. Virtual site visits remain an option under current Ukrainian legislation and for security reasons.

Ensuring Study Programmes Are Officially Registered

Some Ukrainian HEIs have attempted to accredit study programmes abroad that are not officially registered in Ukraine's Unified State Electronic Database on Education (USEDE).

Foreign QA agencies are recommended to verify that study programmes submitted for accreditation are legally registered in Ukraine.

The USEDE database is an open-source registry (in Ukrainian) containing:
- Officially recognised HEIs;
- Registered study programmes;
- Accredited study programmes;
- Institutional licences;
- Student enrolments;

Foreign agencies should not accredit programmes that are not listed in this database.

Collaboration with NAQA

NAQA provides consultations and advice to interested parties on the Ukrainian higher education system, Ukrainian legislation, and information on higher education institutions in Ukraine. If necessary, 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 5,000 persons who were recruited, and underwent testing and training in accordance with NAQA requirements.

It is also recommended to check outcomes of NAQA accreditations of the respected university via NAQA database of all accreditation cases conducted.

Foreign agencies can contact NAQA regarding cross-border quality assurance in Ukraine via email international@naqa.gov.ua

Summary of Key Issues for Foreign QA Agencies

✔ **Recognised Agencies Only:** To ensure their decisions are formally recognised as a replacement for national study programme accreditation, it must be conducted by an EQAR-registered agency included in the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers' list.

✔ **Respect for National Standards:** All study programmes delivered in Ukraine must comply with the national higher education standards and legislation, and foreign agencies conducting accreditations in Ukraine are expected to verify this.

✔ **Final Accreditation Certificates:** Only final decisions on study programme accreditations approved by foreign agency's board and confirmed by accreditation certificates are recognised as equivalent to NAQA accreditation.

✔ **Verification Against Diploma Mills:** Institutions must be legitimate, and agencies should verify the authenticity of the programmes to prevent fraud or fake diplomas.

✔ **Proper Site Visits:**
- Face-to-face or hybrid visits for regulated specialities are required.
- Virtual visits can be an option for other specialities due to martial law in Ukraine.

✔ **Collaboration with NAQA:** it is recommended to contact NAQA before starting CBQA procedures in Ukraine.

The Ukrainian QA system is rapidly evolving towards internationalisation and best practices within the EHEA. Compliance with Ukrainian legislation is essential to ensure the legitimacy and recognition of cross-border accreditation in Ukraine. This chapter serves as a practical guide for foreign QA agencies and Ukrainian HEIs to navigate the legal landscape of cross-border accreditation while maintaining high standards of quality assurance.

5. Recommendations for Ukrainian Universities Seeking Foreign Accreditations of Their Study Programmes

First Steps in CBQA for Ukrainian HEIs

Before starting the cross-border quality assurance procedures, higher education institutions must thoroughly examine ESG 2015, EQAR Key Considerations for CBQA in the EHEA and adhere to these principles in practice:

- To clearly understand the purpose and the expected value from the CBQA process;
- To choose an agency that is appropriate with aims, institutional context and meet national legal requirements;
- To ensure transparency in the procedure and inform the institutional community, including students, of its intentions;
- To consider the requirements of national legislation that are mandatory for the recognition of foreign accreditation decisions;
- To decide whether cross-border accreditation will replace the national accreditation or complement it.

Compliance with Ukrainian Legislation in CBQA Procedures

Higher education institutions should consider Ukrainian legal requirements before conducting CBQA procedures. HEIs are required to:

- Comply with the Regulations on Accreditation of Study Programmes in Higher Education;
- Comply with higher education standards adopted by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine for each speciality.

HEIs are also strongly recommended to check whether chosen agency is included in the "List of Foreign Accreditation Agencies and Higher Education Quality Assurance Agencies that Issue Certificates of Accreditation of Study Programmes Recognised in Ukraine" (Approved by the Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 554-r of July 10, 2019, last updated on June 28, 2024) and consult with NAQA prior to applying for CBQA.

How to Add Information on Successful Foreign Accreditation to USEDE

According to Article 18, paragraph 1 of the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education", the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance "shall add information to the USEDE on certificates (official decisions) on accreditation of study programmes issued by foreign accreditation agencies or agencies for quality assurance in higher education, the list of which is approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine".

According to the Regulations on Accreditation of Study Programmes in Higher Education, in order to add information on the study programme accreditation by a recognised foreign accreditation agency to the USEDE, a higher educational institution shall submit the following documents to NAQA:

- **An application letter** that indicates
    - ° The name of the foreign accreditation agency that issued the certificate (official decision) of accreditation for the study programme,
    - ° The name of the relevant study programme, its number (ID) in the USEDE,
    - ° The code and name of the speciality (subject speciality, specialisation) under which the study programme is accredited,

- ° A license to conduct educational activities at a certain level of higher education issued to the higher education institution,
- ° A license to conduct educational activities under study programmes that lead to the award of professional qualifications for professions subject to additional regulation (if required by applicable legislation);

- **A verified copy of the certificate (official decision)** of accreditation of the study programme (verification may be done notarially or with the seal of the higher education institution);

- **Translation of the certificate (official decision)** of accreditation of the study programme into Ukrainian (it may be an apostilled translation, a translation done by certified specialists from the higher education institution, or a translation agency);

- **Copies of the original and the translation into Ukrainian of the expert panel report and agency decision** or other document with detailed results of the accreditation of the study programme (it may be an apostilled translation, a translation done by certified specialists from the higher education institution, or a translation agency).

The decision to add information to the USEDE is made at NAQA Board meeting after a detailed review of the documents.

Information on the study programme accreditation by a recognised foreign accreditation agency will not be entered into the USEDE in the following cases:

✗ The documents do not comply with the requirements;

✗ The accreditation agency that issued the accreditation certificate is not included in the list of recognised foreign accreditation agencies;

✗ It is impossible to identify the study programme for which the accreditation certificate was issued based on the USEDE data;

✗ The higher education institution submitted inaccurate or false documents.

Summary of Key Issues for Ukrainian Higher Education Institutions

✔ **Recognised Agencies Only:** In order for their decisions to be formally recognised as a replacement to national study programme accreditation, the accreditation must be conducted by an EQAR-registered agency included in the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers' list.

✔ **Comply with National Standards and Legislation:** All study programmes must comply with Ukrainian higher education standards and Ukrainian legislation.

✔ **Final Accreditation Certificates:** Only final decisions on study programme accreditation (confirmed by accreditation certificates) are recognised as equivalent to NAQA accreditation.

✔ **Collaboration with NAQA:** it is recommended to contact NAQA before applying to a foreign agency for CBQA. For any issues related to cross-border quality assurance in Ukraine, please contact NAQA by e-mail: international@naqa.gov.ua

Ukrainian universities seeking foreign accreditation must ensure compliance with national legislation and standards, choose an EQAR-registered agency from the government-approved list, and maintain transparency throughout the CBQA process. Only final accreditation decisions are valid for official recognition, and collaboration with NAQA is strongly recommended to ensure registration in the USEDE.

Annexes

Annex 1. Resources and Documents to be Considered During CBQA in Ukraine.

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  - ▶ *Translation of the Regulations on Accreditation into English is available on NAQA website : https://en.naqa.gov.ua/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Regulations_on_accreditation.pdf*
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