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NAQA COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Approved by NAQA decision

Minutes No. 15 (65) dated 27 August 2024

as amended by:

Minutes No. 3 (94) dated 17 February 2026

Kyiv - 2024

1. BACKGROUND

The development of a culture of quality and academic integrity in higher education, in accordance with European standards, is a contemporary imperative, one of the fundamental preconditions in the process of Ukraine's European integration and a benchmark for the modernisation of the Ukrainian system of specialist training, capable of ensuring the country's competitiveness in the context of the war with the Russian aggressor, other pressing external and internal challenges, and the need to consolidate efforts for victory and post-war reconstruction.

Russian aggression, which has resulted in numerous casualties, the temporary occupation of territories and the destruction of civilian infrastructure, has a long and tragic prehistory and is aimed at the subjugation of Ukraine. It is manifested, inter alia, in obstructing Ukraine's European integration, attempts to destroy Ukrainian identity, and malicious actions intended to undermine strategic prospects for societal development. It is for this reason that Ukrainian higher education and research, among other sectors, have become targets of Russian attacks.

In this context, communication plays an important role in securing additional opportunities through international cooperation, maintaining and consolidating public trust in state institutions in the field of education and research, in particular within the system of quality assurance in higher education in Ukraine, given the strategic importance of this area for the country's future. Ensuring the sustainability and consistency of European integration reforms is possible only with public support and the trust of the Ukrainian academic community in the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance (hereinafter – NAQA). Overcoming the devastation and catastrophic consequences of the war becomes possible through a clear vision of the future of Ukrainian higher education and effective communication of this vision to the citizens of Ukraine. NAQA Communication Strategy is dedicated to fostering understanding within the academic community and among key stakeholders in order to accomplish these objectives.

The updated provisions of NAQA Communication Strategy are linked to the adoption in 2024 of new foundational documents – the Strategy of the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance until 2026 (Minutes No. 12 (62) of 25 June 2024) and the National Action Plan for External Quality Assurance in Higher Education for 2024–2026 (Minutes No. 12 (62) of 25 June 2024).

The current version of the Communication Strategy continues and develops the communication practices defined in the Communication Strategy approved by NAQA decision (Minutes No. 16 of 27 September 2022).

2. OBJECTIVE AND TASKS OF THE NATIONAL AGENCY IN THE FIELD OF COMMUNICATION

Objective

Effective, efficient and systematic communication of NAQA with stakeholders in order to ensure the sustainability and consistency of the development of a culture of quality in higher education in Ukraine and its protection.

Tasks:

- Promoting awareness among Ukrainian society and key stakeholders of the process of European integration of the Ukrainian higher education system and the role of NAQA in this process.
- Promoting public trust in Ukraine and securing the support of the international community for the modernisation of Ukrainian higher education by providing high-quality, reliable and timely information on the development of the quality assurance system and the culture of academic integrity in Ukraine, in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.
- Promoting the mission, objectives, principles, key areas of activity and achievements of NAQA.
- Supporting and safeguarding the reputation of NAQA as a reliable and independent quality assurance agency in accordance with European standards.
- Improving and developing the system of communication channels of NAQA with stakeholders in order to build effective partnerships at national and international levels.
- Establishing NAQA as a recognised newsmaker in the field of higher education.

The objective and tasks of NAQA in the field of communication are based on its mission, strategic goals, principles and values.

MISSION OF NAQA

To ensure the sustainability and consistency of the development of a culture of quality in higher education and its protection through effective partnership among key stakeholders.

STRATEGIC GOALS OF NAQA

- Obtaining full membership in the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and inclusion in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR);
- Improving the system of external quality assurance in higher education, in particular through the creation of an institutional accreditation model and the functioning of independent quality evaluation bodies;
- Encouraging innovative practices in higher education institutions in the interaction between research, education and business.

PRINCIPLES OF THE INTERNAL CULTURE OF NAQA

1. Respect for everyone's opinion, collegiality and a commitment to consensus;
2. Commitment to self-improvement and self-development based on critical self-assessment;
3. Cultivation of a spirit of mutual support, sincerity and initiative;
4. Formation and maintenance of institutional and personal reputation.

VALUES OF NAQA

Partnership – cooperation based on equality and respect for partners.

Innovation – generating and implementing new ideas, technologies and methodologies related to quality assurance in higher education.

Responsibility – a conscientious attitude to the outcomes of actions taken and decisions made.

Integrity – adherence to moral principles and standards.

Openness – readiness to cooperate with all parties interested in improving the quality of higher education.

Transparency – readiness to provide society with full and objective information on the quality of higher education in Ukraine and on the results of NAQA's activities in ensuring it.

Independence – freedom from external influence to ensure comprehensive and effective quality assurance in higher education.

Professionalism – consistent achievement of high standards in quality assurance in higher education through the use of professional knowledge and experience.

Trust – confidence that participants in the quality assurance process perform their duties honestly.

In its activities, NAQA adheres to a policy of zero tolerance for any manifestations of corruption and complies with key anti-corruption policies developed in accordance with the requirements of anti-corruption legislation and taking into account the specific nature of its powers. NAQA duly organises work on the prevention and detection of corruption, which, inter alia, contributes to increasing public trust in NAQA's exercise of its powers in the field of quality assurance in higher education and academic integrity.

In particular, the anti-corruption measures implemented by NAQA are systemic in nature and cover areas such as staff training and development; ensuring the functioning of channels for reporting corruption and corruption-related offences and the verification of such reports; due diligence of counterparties; vetting of candidates for positions vulnerable to corruption risks; identification and management of conflicts of interest; assessment of corruption risks; periodic review and evaluation of anti-corruption policies, etc.

NAQA ensures:

- transparent coverage of the procedure for selecting candidates as experts and members of sectoral expert councils;
- a transparent procedure for appealing against decisions of NAQA, including through the introduction of an independent Appeals Chamber;
- inclusion in expert training of information on compliance with anti-corruption legislation, in particular regarding the management of conflicts of interest;
- engagement of the expert community and the public in the preparation of draft regulations on quality assurance in higher education and academic integrity;
- live streaming of NAQA meetings, in the part concerning decisions on the accreditation of educational programmes, on its YouTube channel;
- organisation of public online events dedicated to the development of a culture of academic integrity.

3. ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION IN THE FIELD OF COMMUNICATION

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active and continuous information and awareness-raising activities concerning NAQA’s operations, as well as its engagement with stakeholders and the wider public. • Activities conducted in accordance with the principles of openness, transparency and integrity. • Trust in NAQA’s information resources among Ukrainian and international audiences. • Active cooperation with relevant international organisations and foreign quality assurance agencies. • Involvement of students in NAQA’s activities. • International recognition of accreditations granted by NAQA. • NAQA’s advisory support provided during the accreditation process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient communication with business and employers. • Insufficient consistency of media culture across social media and the broader communication landscape. • Insufficient capacity to counter subjective negative reactions aimed at obstructing NAQA’s activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging a wider audience with the Agency’s information resources. • Establishing a network of influencers to facilitate the improvement of existing higher education quality assurance processes. • Developing existing and introducing new communication channels, including the press, for engagement with stakeholders. • Applying the most effective communication technologies, tools and channels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing threat to the lives of members of NAQA, Secretariat staff and participants in the accreditation process as a result of the war with the Russian Federation. • Destructive criticism and information attacks against NAQA by biased or vested interests. • Cyberattacks targeting NAQA. • Limited human and financial resources.

4. KEY AUDIENCES

Engagement with target audiences is one of the key components of effective communication, determining the selection of communication channels and the direction of their use.

Ukrainian is mandatory for communication with the following audiences:

1. Ukrainian society;
2. participants in the educational process;
3. representatives of business, employers and professional associations;
4. prospective students (applicants);
5. experts and specialists in higher education, quality assurance and academic integrity;
6. opinion leaders (influencers);
7. civil society organisations and projects in the fields of education and research;
8. Ukrainian mass media;
9. public authorities and state institutions.

Communication in English is intended for the following audiences:

1. the international academic community;
2. foreign experts and specialists in higher education and quality assurance;
3. international partners – quality assurance agencies, accreditation agencies, etc.;
4. international organisations in the field of higher education quality assurance and academic integrity;
5. international and foreign donors and grant-making organisations.

The target audience of NAQA is classified according to communication channels.

5. COMMUNICATION CHANNELS OF NAQA

NAQA uses internal (owned) and external communication channels to ensure the broadest possible reach of its target audiences.

The main communication channels are:

- external communication channels (mass media, official communication channels, public events, etc.);
- internal communication channels (the official website, social media pages and channels, etc.).

Internal (Owned) Communication Channels of NAQA:

1. NAQA official website;
2. NAQA's Facebook page;
3. NAQA's LinkedIn page;
4. NAQA's Telegram channel;
5. NAQA's YouTube channel.

Means of Information Dissemination:

- live streaming of meetings of NAQA;
- publications on the official website (announcements, news, clarifications, public information, documents, decisions of NAQA, etc.);
- posts and updates on social media via NAQA's official channels;
- informational email newsletters;
- official correspondence distributed via the electronic document management system;
- reporting and analytical materials (annual reports, self-evaluation reports, etc.);
- public events at regional, national or international level organised by NAQA;
- participation of NAQA in public events and projects at regional, national or international level as a co-organiser (partner);
- attendance at public events at regional, national or international level at the invitation of organisers, where such events correspond to the statutory goals and objectives of NAQA;
- honorary distinctions awarded by NAQA;
- corporate and promotional materials;
- press briefings and press conferences;
- official comments and interviews in the mass media given by members of NAQA and authorised Secretariat staff.

6. CONTENT IN NAQA'S PUBLICATIONS

To categorise and systematise messages by topic and to ensure the convenience of information recipients, hashtags are used on NAQA's social media pages and channels, in particular:

#naqa_stakeholders (used to mark news about NAQA's cooperation with stakeholders);

#naqa_in_action (used to mark news about NAQA's activities aimed at supporting the education community, particularly during the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation);

#naqa_internationalisation (used to mark information messages about NAQA's international activities);

#naqa_informs (used to mark NAQA's addresses to the education community);

#naqa_comments (used to mark expert and advisory comments by NAQA members, authorised Secretariat staff, etc.);

#naqa_digest (used to mark concise news-format summaries of key events in NAQA's activities);

#naqa_reminds (used to mark information messages reminding about important events and processes);

#naqa_recommends (used to mark selections of events, educational materials, and opportunities that may be useful for the education community);

#naqa_resilient (used to mark information messages concerning the activities of educators and higher education institutions during Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine).

On English-language resources, the following hashtags are used:

#naqa_stakeholders (used to mark news about NAQA's cooperation with stakeholders);

#UAEducatorsAtWar (used to mark information messages aimed at informing the international community about the situation in Ukraine's higher education under Russian military aggression);

#NAQA_weekly (used to mark weekly digest-format reports on NAQA's activities for international partners);

#NAQA_informs (used to mark information important for the international audience, as well as NAQA's addresses to the international education community).

If necessary, NAQA's Public Relations and International Cooperation Department may introduce and maintain additional categories/hashtags.

For each communication channel, the Public Relations and International Cooperation Department develops an internal content plan for official use, which constitutes internal documentation.

The content of each communication channel of NAQA shall comply with the following criteria:

1. correspond to the interests and needs of the defined target audience for which the information is published;
2. align with the mission, principles and values of NAQA;
3. maintain the high reputation of NAQA;
4. comply with the formats and corporate style developed for the specific communication channel;
5. convey key messages;
6. improve and ensure consistent information exchange.

The following are **not** considered official communication channels of NAQA:

1. personal social media pages of NAQA members;
2. personal pages of Secretariat staff;
3. personal pages of experts and members of the Sectoral Expert Councils.

At the same time, NAQA recommends that posts related to work within NAQA and related matters:

1. do not contradict the laws, official positions, values, and professional and ethical requirements of NAQA;
2. do not contain confidential information, restricted-access information, or unverified information from unreliable sources, including fake, manipulative, or pseudo-sensational news.

While not limiting the right of persons representing NAQA to maintain their own social media pages, NAQA calls for adherence in online communications to:

1. communication ethics, including the principles of mutual respect and integrity;
2. avoiding personal insults, unfounded criticism, dissemination of rumours or confidential information, profanity, excessively emotional statements, etc.

Posts on personal social media pages about participation in an official event are advisable **only after** publication of this event on NAQA's official resources. Exceptions apply where such publication has been agreed with NAQA.

NAQA recommends that the community — NAQA members, Secretariat staff, experts, and members of the Sectoral Expert Councils — share posts published on the official resources in order to disseminate information to the target audience and interested public.

In publications via its own communication channels, and based on the interests of its audience, the National Agency informs exclusively about events and news related to the development of the higher education quality assurance system and the promotion of the culture of academic integrity. When implementing provisions set out in memoranda (cooperation agreements) and within the obligations defined in international agreements, NAQA may provide information support to projects, but only within topics related to its statutory activities, mission, and objectives, with the format, content, and style of messages adapted to the provisions defined by this strategy.

7. VISUAL STYLE

The visual style of NAQA is built around its logo and corporate colours and is governed by the NAQA's brandbook (Annex 1).

The logo consists of two main visual elements. The emblem of NAQA is based on a simple yet well-balanced composition of three golden triangles forming a stylised open book — a symbol of education. The second part of the logo is the name of NAQA. The logo uses the “Monitorica” typeface.

The visual component of information messages includes either a photo report from the event location or a template with a text message relevant to the content.

On the website, social media, and in official communications, templates designed in the corporate colours in accordance with the brandbook are used. NAQA's logo and corporate colours are also applied to physical materials, including notebooks, pens, mugs, sweatshirts, T-shirts, badges, folders, letterheads, etc.

The use of NAQA's visual identity by partners or other organisations in public communications, as well as during the organisation of joint events and projects, is permitted only with the prior written consent of NAQA. Consent for the use of NAQA's visual identity is formalised by an official letter prepared by the Public Relations and International Cooperation Department of the Secretariat, which is responsible for recording granted permissions and monitoring the use of NAQA visual identity.

Where consent is granted for the use of NAQA's visual identity for joint events and projects, the Public Relations and International Cooperation Department of the Secretariat provides the relevant visual identity templates for further use strictly in the versions specified in NAQA's brandbook. Unauthorised use, distortion, or any modifications (including mirroring, stretching, changing colours or fonts, etc.) are not permitted.

In the event of unauthorised use of its visual identity, NAQA reserves the right to take measures to protect its rights and interests.

8. HONORARY AWARDS OF NAQA

The honorary awards of NAQA, intended to recognise and encourage best practices in developing the higher education quality assurance system and promoting the culture of academic integrity in Ukraine, are regulated by the relevant Regulation on Honorary Distinctions of the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance, approved by NAQA decision.

The visual style is defined in the brand book of NAQA. The system of honorary awards of NAQA consists of:

Certificate of Appreciation of the Head of NAQA Secretariat	Certificate of Appreciation of NAQA Head
is approved by order	is approved by order
By NAQA decision, based on the relevant nomination:	
Level 1	NAQA Certificate of Appreciation
Level 2	NAQA Certificate of Commendation
Level 3	NAQA Honorary Certificate
Level 4	Honorary Distinction “For the Development of the National Higher Education Quality Assurance System” Honorary Distinction “For Outstanding Contribution to the Development of the Culture of Academic Integrity in Ukraine”

Honorary awards of NAQA, conferred by decision of NAQA to recognise individuals or institutions, follow the order of conferment — NAQA Certificate of Appreciation, NAQA Certificate of Commendation, NAQA Honorary Certificate, and Honorary Distinction — without the right to receive the same level of honorary award more than once.

Honorary Distinctions are the highest honorary award of NAQA. They are conferred once a year, are limited in number (no more than three), and, as a rule, should be timed to professional holidays (Education Workers’ Day or Science Day) or to NAQA’s key communication event — the annual Ukrainian Quality Assurance Forum (Ukrainian Quality Assurance Forum).

9. KEY MESSAGES

Key messages and the tone of voice in NAQA`s public communications are approved by the Secretariat once a year, taking into account changes in the internal and external environment, as an annex to the Communication Strategy.

In its public communications, NAQA adheres to a serious, official, respectful, and restrained tone, seeking to explain complex processes through clear wording and placing emphasis on facts and arguments.

10. FINAL PROVISIONS

The Communication Strategy is approved by a decision of NAQA and published on NAQA official website. The provisions of the Communication Strategy are updated annually, taking into account changes in the internal and external environment.

The Communication Plan is an annex to the Communication Strategy and defines the frequency, method, format, and purpose of communication activities.

Based on the Communication Strategy and the Communication Plan, a communication calendar is developed, containing information on planned events and information messages. Responsibility for the development and maintenance of the communication calendar rests with the Public Relations Department.

Crisis communications of NAQA, in the event of reputational or communication threats, are carried out in accordance with the developed response protocol, which constitutes internal documentation.

The Public Relations Department is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Communication Strategy.