

INDEPENDENT AGENCY FOR ACCREDITATION AND RATING

**STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES
FOR INTERNATIONAL INITIAL
ACCREDITATION OF JOINT DOCTORAL
PROGRAMMES IN THE FIELD OF
HEALTHCARE (based on WFME/AMSE/ESG)**



**Standards and Guidelines
for International Initial Accreditation
of Joint Doctoral Programmes in the Field of Healthcare
(based on WFMEAMSE/ESG)**

*Recommended by the Expert Council for Medical Education of
Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating*

Standards and Guidelines for International Initial Accreditation of Joint Doctoral Programmes in the Field of Healthcare (based on WFMEAMSE/ESG) / Astana: Non-Profit Institution "Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating", 2025. – 64 p.

These standards and guidelines have been developed in accordance with the ORPHEUS-AMSE-WFME Doctoral Standards in Biomedicine and Health Sciences (2012), ORPHEUS Best Practices for PhD Training (2024), harmonised with the WFME Global Standards of Basic Medical Education (WFME, 2015, 2020), Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015) and define the requirements for the preparation and conduct of the procedure for the international initial accreditation of doctoral programmes in the field of healthcare regardless of the status, organisational and legal form, departmental subordination and form of ownership of the educational organisation.

Foreword

1. DEVELOPED AND INTRODUCED - by Non-Profit Institution "Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating"

2. APPROVED AND ENACTED by Order No. 142-25-OD of 3 September 2025 issued by the Director General of the Non-Profit Institution "Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating".

3. These standards and guidelines have been developed in accordance with the ORPHEUS Best Practices for PhD Training, 2024, the ORPHEUS-AMSE-WFME Doctoral Standards in Biomedicine and Health Sciences (2012), harmonised with the WFME Global Standards of Basic Medical Education (WFME, 2015, 2020), Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015).

4. SECOND EDITION

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INTRODUCTION

These standards are developed in accordance with the WFME Global Standards of Basic Medical Education (WFME, 2015, 2020), Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015), Standards for PhD Education in Biomedicine and Health Sciences (ORPHEUS–AMSE–WFME, 2012), ORPHEUS Best Practices for PhD Training (2024) and define the requirements for the preparation and conduct of the procedure for accreditation of joint doctoral programmes in the field of healthcare, regardless of status, organisational and legal form, departmental subordination and form of ownership of the educational organisations.

The IAAR Standards and Guidelines for International Specialised/Programme accreditation (based on the WFME/AMSE/ESG standards) consist of two parts: "Procedure for conducting international accreditation of joint doctoral programmes in the field of healthcare" and "Standards of international accreditation of joint doctoral programmes in the field of healthcare". The document defines the procedure for accreditation and regulatory requirements for the main provisions of the standards of international accreditation of joint doctoral programmes in the field of healthcare.

The procedure for conducting international accreditation of joint doctoral programmes in the field of healthcare is carried out according to the approved stages given in the first part of this Manual.

Changes and additions are being made to the current standards of accreditation in order to further improve it. Amendments and additions to the standards and guidelines are carried out by IAAR. In case of initiating changes and additions to the current standard by educational organisations and other interested organisations, suggestions and comments are sent by them to the IAAR. IAAR studies and conducts an examination of the proposals and comments received from the initiators for their validity and expediency. Changes and additions to the current standards and guidelines for accreditation after their approval are approved by the order of the General Director of the IAAR in a new edition with changes or in the form of a leaflet to the current standards and guidelines.

I. THE PROCEDURE OF INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION OF JOINT DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES IN THE FIELD OF HEALTHCARE

Goals and Objectives of the International Accreditation

The purpose of international accreditation (hereinafter – accreditation) is to evaluate and recognise the high quality of activities of educational organisations (hereinafter – EOs) and the implemented joint educational programmes (hereinafter – JEPs) in accordance with international accreditation standards based on international standards for quality improvement in medical education (WFME/AMSE/ESG).

The accreditation procedure serves the overall purpose of evaluating the quality of JEP activities of educational organisations for compliance with international accreditation standards. During international accreditation, the specific legislation of the relevant countries is taken into account.

These standards establish requirements for conducting Initial Specialised Accreditation (ISA) and Specialised Accreditation (SA) of JEPs.

During Initial Specialised Accreditation (ISA), criteria marked with the abbreviation “ISA” at the beginning of the criterion are applied, followed by a colon, with the text presented in italics.

During Specialised Accreditation (SA), criteria marked with the abbreviation “SA” at the beginning of the criterion, followed by a colon, are applied.

Criteria applicable to both forms of accreditation (ISA and SA) do not contain additional markings or formatting.

The standards and procedures of international accreditation comply with the key principles and documents of the Bologna Process: professionalism and public accessibility of evaluation; voluntariness; independence; objectivity and professionalism; transparency, reliability and relevance of information regarding accreditation procedures; collective decision-making; dissemination of information on both positive and negative results.

The Procedure for Conducting International Accreditation

The procedure for conducting international accreditation includes the following steps:

1. Submission of an application for accreditation

Submission by the organisation of education of an application for specialised/programme accreditation with attached copies of legal and authorisation documents.

Consideration of the application of the organisation of education by IAAR.

2. Conclusion of an agreement between the organisation of education and IAAR

Adoption by IAAR of the decision to initiate the procedure for specialised/programme accreditation of the organisation of education. The schedule of the visit to the organisation of education, conditions and financial aspects of accreditation shall be determined by an agreement between IAAR and the organisation of education.

Upon request of the organisation of education, IAAR may organise training seminars for internal experts of the organisation of education in order to explain the criteria and procedures of specialised/programme accreditation, including issues related to the theory, methodology and technology of conducting specialised/programme accreditation. This training seminar procedure is not a mandatory component of the accreditation process.

3. Preparation of the Self-Assessment Report

The organisation of education shall independently organise and conduct self-assessment of the joint educational programme in order to determine compliance with international accreditation standards and shall prepare a self-assessment report in accordance with these Guidelines.

The organisation of education shall be provided with guidelines and methodological materials for preparation of the self-assessment report.

The organisation of education shall submit the self-assessment report and all appendices to IAAR no later than 8 (eight) weeks before the visit of the External Expert Panel (EEP). IAAR shall send the self-assessment report to experts for review no later than 6 (six) weeks before the visit after conducting an internal review for compliance with requirements.

The expert shall review the self-assessment report of the joint educational programme for compliance with IAAR international standards, prepare and submit a review to IAAR within 10 (ten) calendar days. In case of non-compliance with IAAR requirements, the review shall be returned to the expert for revision. In the event of repeated non-compliance, IAAR shall have the right to remove the expert from participation in the work of the External Expert Panel.

Based on analysis of the self-assessment report of the joint educational programme, IAAR shall have the right to adopt one of the following decisions:

- «to develop recommendations regarding the need for revision of the self-assessment report materials»;
- «to conduct an external expert evaluation»;
- «to postpone the accreditation period due to impossibility of conducting the specialised/programme accreditation procedure because of non-compliance of the self-assessment report with the criteria of these standards».

4. Site Visit of the External Expert Panel to the Organisation of Education

In the event of continuation of accreditation, IAAR shall establish an External Expert Panel, which shall be approved by the IAAR Director General. External evaluation of the joint educational programme for compliance with IAAR international standards shall be carried out by the External Expert Panel during the visit to the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education.

The composition of the External Expert Panel shall be formed depending on the scope of the external evaluation. The External Expert Panel shall include independent experts, including international experts, with experience in teaching and expert activity in quality assurance, as well as representatives of the employer community and learners. The composition of the External Expert Panel shall include representatives of at least two countries participating in the consortium implementing the joint educational programme.

In the event of continuation of accreditation, IAAR shall agree with the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education on the timeframe for accreditation of the joint educational programme and the Programme of the External Expert Panel visit.

The Programme of the External Expert Panel visit shall be developed by the IAAR Coordinator and the Chair of the External Expert Panel with participation of the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education. The agreed Programme of the External Expert Panel visit shall be approved by the IAAR Director General no later than 2 (two) weeks before the visit to the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education. The structure and content of the Programme shall be developed taking into account the specific features of the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education and the joint educational programme in accordance with the recommended template of the Programme of the External Expert Panel visit (Appendix 1).

The Head of the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education shall appoint a coordinator for interaction with the IAAR Coordinator on matters related to planning and organisation of the visit (Appendix 2).

The duration of the Panel visit shall generally be 3 – 5 days. During the visit, the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education shall create conditions for the work of the External Expert Panel in accordance with the Service Agreement:

- provide a room for the work of the External Expert Panel with an individual workplace for each member of the Panel;

- provide each member of the Panel with electronic and hard-copy versions of the self-assessment report;
- provide necessary modern electronic office equipment in agreement with the IAAR representative and according to the number of members of the External Expert Panel;
- organise visual inspection of infrastructure and resources, meetings, surveys, interviews and other activities of the External Expert Panel in accordance with the Programme of the External Expert Panel visit;
- provide requested information;
- organise photographic documentation of the work of the External Expert Panel.

The results of the visit to the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education shall be reflected in the external evaluation report.

The draft report of the External Expert Panel shall be reviewed by IAAR and submitted to the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education for agreement. In the event that the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education identifies factual inaccuracies, the Chair shall consult with members of the External Expert Panel and introduce the necessary amendments to the report. In case of disagreement with comments made by the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education regarding the report of the External Expert Panel, the Chair together with the IAAR Coordinator shall prepare an official response with justification.

The report shall contain a description of the visit of the External Expert Panel, a brief evaluation of compliance of activities of the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education with IAAR international standards, recommendations to the organisation of education for improvement of institutional activities and quality assurance of the joint educational programme, as well as recommendations to the Accreditation Council. Recommendations to the Accreditation Council shall contain a recommendation regarding accreditation (including the recommended accreditation period) or non-accreditation.

The report of the External Expert Panel, including recommendations, shall be developed collectively by members of the External Expert Panel.

5. IAAR Decision-Making

The basis for decision-making by the Accreditation Council regarding an organisation of education in healthcare shall be the reports of the External Expert Panel on evaluation of the joint educational programme and the self-assessment report of the joint educational programme.

The Chair of the External Expert Panel shall present the results of the visit of the External Expert Panel before the Accreditation Council.

The exclusive competence of the IAAR Accreditation Council includes adoption of decisions on accreditation or refusal of accreditation of the joint educational programme. The composition of the Accreditation Council shall be determined in accordance with the Regulations on its Activities. The meeting shall be conducted subject to quorum. The Accreditation Council shall have the right to adopt a decision that does not correspond to the recommendations of the External Expert Panel.

The Accreditation Council has the right to make one of the following decisions:

- **accredit for a period of 1 (one) year** – where criteria are generally met, but with the presence of certain deficiencies and opportunities for improvement (where 40% to 60% of criteria are rated as requiring improvement, with no strong criteria);

- **accredit for a period of 3 (three) years** – where criteria are generally met, but with the presence of individual minor deficiencies and opportunities for improvement (where 20% to 40% of criteria are rated as requiring improvement, with the presence of strong criteria);

- **accredit for a period of 5 (five) years** – where criteria are generally met and positive outcomes are demonstrated (where up to 20% of criteria are rated as requiring improvement, with the presence of strong criteria);

- **accredit for a period of 7 (seven) years** – where criteria are generally met and examples of dissemination of best practice are demonstrated (where up to 5% of criteria are rated as requiring improvement and no less than 20% of criteria are rated as strong);

- **refusal of accreditation** – where significant deficiencies are identified (where at least one criterion is rated as “unsatisfactory” or where 60% or more of criteria are rated as requiring improvement).

In the event of a positive decision by the Accreditation Council, IAAR shall send an official letter to the organisation of education with the results of the decision and the certificate of accreditation of the joint educational programme and/or the partner organisation of education implementing the joint educational programme, signed by the Chair of the Accreditation Council and the IAAR Director General. Thereafter, the decision on accreditation of the joint educational programme shall be submitted to the authorised body in the field of education of the relevant country and published on the IAAR website. The report of the External Expert Panel shall also be published on the IAAR website.

After receiving the certificate of accreditation of the joint educational programme, the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education shall publish the self-assessment report on its website.

In the event of a negative decision by the Accreditation Council, IAAR shall send an official letter to the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education regarding the decision taken.

The organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education, in accordance with the established procedure under the Service Agreement and the Regulations on the Commission for Review of Appeals and Complaints, may submit an appeal to IAAR against the decision of the Accreditation Council. In cases of doubt regarding the competence of the External Expert Panel and representatives of the Agency, or in the event of a gross violation committed by members of the External Expert Panel, the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education may submit a complaint to IAAR.

6. Follow-up Procedures

In the event of a positive decision by the IAAR Accreditation Council, the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education shall submit to IAAR an Action Plan for quality improvement and enhancement based on the recommendations of the External Expert Panel (hereinafter – the Plan), signed by the head of the organisation and certified by seal, and shall also conclude a Service Agreement with IAAR. The Agreement and the Plan shall serve as the basis for post-accreditation monitoring.

In accordance with the Regulations on the Post-Accreditation Monitoring Procedure, the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education shall prepare interim reports according to the Plan. Interim reports shall be submitted to IAAR prior to the scheduled date of post-accreditation monitoring.

Post-accreditation monitoring of the joint educational programme shall be carried out in accordance with the Regulations on the Post-Accreditation Monitoring Procedure for organisations of education and/or joint educational programmes.

In the event of failure to implement the Plan and fulfil IAAR requirements related to post-accreditation monitoring, as well as failure to inform IAAR about changes introduced in the organisation of education, the Accreditation Council shall have the right to adopt one of the following decisions:

- “to temporarily suspend the accreditation status of the joint educational programme”;
- “to withdraw the accreditation certificate of the joint educational programme of the organisation of education, which may result in annulment of all previously achieved accreditation results.”

In the event that the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education refuses to conclude an agreement with IAAR for post-accreditation monitoring, the Accreditation Council shall have the right to adopt a decision on withdrawal of the accreditation certificate.

The organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education shall have the right to submit a new application no earlier than 1 (one) year after refusal of accreditation of the joint educational programme.

External Expert Panel (External Evaluation Expert Group)

External evaluation of activities of the organisation of education shall be conducted by the External Expert Panel (external evaluation expert group), consisting of independent experts with experience in teaching and expert activity in quality assurance, as well as representatives of employers and learners.

The External Expert Panel shall be established by order of the IAAR Director General from among certified representatives of the academic, professional and student communities included in the IAAR expert database. International experts may be involved from partner accreditation agencies.

In order to prevent conflicts of interest, IAAR shall send the organisation of education and the partner organisation of education an official letter regarding the composition of the External Expert Panel 14 (fourteen) calendar days before the visit.

The organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education shall have the right to notify IAAR by official letter of any conflict of interest, with justification, within 3 (three) working days. If necessary, IAAR shall replace the expert.

All members of the External Expert Panel shall sign a Statement of Commitment confirming the absence of conflict of interest and the IAAR Code of Ethics for External Experts within the framework of each visit.

The expert shall be obliged to notify the IAAR Coordinator of any relationship with the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education or any personal interest that may lead to a potential conflict related to the external evaluation process.

Each member of the External Expert Panel shall properly perform his/her functions and responsibilities. Failure to perform duties or refusal without justified reason shall be regarded as a violation of the IAAR Code of Ethics for External Experts and may result in exclusion from the IAAR expert database.

Information about the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education obtained during the external evaluation shall be considered confidential and shall not be subject to disclosure.

Members of the External Expert Panel shall not disclose or comment on the recommended accreditation period before adoption of the decision by the Accreditation Council.

The composition of the External Expert Panel shall include:

- **the Chair of the External Expert Panel**, responsible for coordination of the experts' work, preparation and oral presentation of preliminary findings formulated during the visit to the organisation of education, as well as responsible for preparation of the final report on results of the external evaluation of the organisation of education and/or the joint educational programme (programme cluster);

- **External Experts** – representatives of the academic community, responsible for evaluation of compliance of the accredited joint educational programme with IAAR international accreditation standards;

- **an External Expert** – representative of the professional community (employer), responsible for evaluating whether the accredited joint educational programme (programme cluster) and professional competencies of its graduates correspond to labour market requirements;

- **an External Expert** – representative of the student community, responsible for evaluation of compliance of the accredited joint educational programme with needs and expectations of learners (one representative of the student community for each cluster).

IAAR shall appoint from among its staff a Coordinator responsible for coordination of the work of the expert group. The organisation of education, on its part, shall appoint an authorised person responsible for the process of international accreditation of joint educational programmes in healthcare.

II. SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT

The Self-Assessment Report (hereinafter – SAR) is one of the main documents for conducting international accreditation of a joint educational programme of higher and/or postgraduate education.

These standards and guidelines are applicable to international accreditation of joint postgraduate educational programmes in healthcare, including initial accreditation of joint educational programme(s) (ex-ante).

The self-assessment procedure shall include the following sections: Standards 1–9 and the corresponding appendices.

Main Principles for Preparation of the Report

1. Structured format: strict compliance of the presented material with the sections of the document.

2. Readability: the text of the document should be easy to perceive in terms of formatting, semantic clarity and stylistic coherence.

3. Analytical approach: analysis of strengths and weaknesses, as well as analysis of development dynamics of the joint educational programme (programme cluster).

4. Objectivity of evaluation.

5. Evidence-based approach: provision of facts, data and information as justification for conclusions.

Specific features of the joint educational programme not described in these Guidelines shall be included in the relevant sections of the documents.

During accreditation of a programme cluster, aspects common to all joint educational programmes shall be described once in the introductory section in order to avoid repetition.

The final document shall be well structured and numbered, including appendices.

Format of the Self-Assessment Report

The structure of the Self-Assessment Report shall comply with the criteria of the IAAR standards and guidelines. All statements, judgments and assumptions presented in the report shall be supported by relevant documents in the main text and appendices (Appendix 3. Structure of the Self-Assessment Report).

The report shall be prepared in the following format: font type – Times New Roman, font size – 12, line spacing – 1.5, paragraph spacing before and after headings – no more than 6 pt. At the beginning of the report, an automatically generated editable table of contents and page numbering shall be provided. The report shall be printed in A4 format with portrait orientation; landscape orientation may also be used in appendices.

The first appendix to the report shall contain a statement confirming reliability, completeness and accuracy of all presented data, signed by heads of the organisations of education and executors of partner universities who prepared the report, including contact details of the report authors for further consultations if necessary: “I, [full name of the head of the organisation of education], confirm that this self-assessment report of [name of the organisation of education and/or partner organisation of education], containing [number of pages of the main body of the report, excluding appendices] pages, provides absolutely reliable, accurate and comprehensive data that adequately and fully characterise activities of the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education.”

The volume of the Self-Assessment Report shall not exceed 70–80 pages of the main text. A separate package of supporting documents shall be attached to the Self-Assessment Report as appendices (submitted as a separate file not exceeding 100 pages). Graphic images shall be compressed to a resolution of 96 dpi before being inserted into the appendices. In order to reduce the volume of appendices, it is recommended that the text of the Self-Assessment Report contain,

wherever possible, references to supporting documents available on electronic resources of the organisation of education and/or the partner organisation of education.

The Self-Assessment Report shall be officially submitted in English¹ in electronic format, unless otherwise specified.

The report and its annexes shall be submitted to IAAR in electronic form to the email address iaar@iaar.kz, as well as in hard copy in one (1) copy in each of the selected languages.

Contents of the Self-Assessment Report

The Self-Assessment Report shall include an introduction, three main sections and appendices.

It is recommended that the introduction include information on the conditions and organisation of the self-assessment process, as well as its aims and objectives.

The first section shall present general information about the organisation of education and/or partner organisations of education, and the structural unit implementing the evaluated joint educational programme (programme cluster):

- brief information;
- organisational and legal framework of activities;
- organisational structure and governance system;
- interaction with educational, research and professional organisations at local, regional and national levels;
- international activities;
- number of learners (annual);
- dynamics of the learner contingent in different modes of study over the last 3–5 years.

In the case of initial international accreditation of a joint educational programme, information on the dynamics of the learner contingent shall not be required.

The second section shall include analysis of compliance of activities of the organisation of education and/or partner organisations of education in quality assurance of the joint educational programme (programme cluster) with international accreditation standards.

The text of the section shall be organised in accordance with the sequence specified in these standards and guidelines for international accreditation of joint educational programmes. The Self-Assessment Report shall provide responses to all key questions and include all necessary documentary evidence in the appendices.

The organisation of education shall provide information on achievements of the organisation of education and/or partner organisation of education in development of the joint educational programme over the past 3–5 years for each standard. The report is also expected to identify problems and areas requiring improvement revealed through SWOT analysis.

The third section of the report shall include general conclusions and a summary of the self-assessment process, providing grounds for submission of an application for the external quality evaluation procedure.

The Self-Assessment Report shall be submitted on behalf of the head of the organisation of education and/or partner organisation of education and shall be signed by them.

The main provisions and conclusions of the report shall be communicated to all participants involved in the self-assessment process and published on the internet resources of the organisation of education.

The final section of the Self-Assessment Report shall include the completed table “Conclusion of the Self-Assessment Commission”. Completion of the table shall be objective, as shall the information presented in the Self-Assessment Report. All persons responsible for the self-assessment process and reliability of the information presented in the report shall participate in completion of the table. These standards and guidelines contain two “Conclusion of the Self-Assessment Commission” tables: Table 3 shall be completed for international specialised

¹ Large-volume documents may be submitted in the original language, provided that they are accompanied by a brief summary in English.

accreditation (SA) of the joint educational programme, while Table 4 shall be completed for international initial specialised accreditation (ISA) of the joint educational programme.

The External Expert Panel shall also complete this table, and results of comparison of information presented in these tables shall be taken into account during discussion of accreditation outcomes during the visit of the External Expert Panel to the organisation of education and/or partner organisation of education.

The table “Conclusion of the Self-Assessment Commission” includes the following evaluation categories for each criterion:

✓ “**Strong**” – characterised by a high level of indicators of the accreditation standard for the joint educational programme in healthcare. This position of the standard may serve as an example of good practice for dissemination among other organisations of education.

✓ “**Satisfactory**” – defined by an average level of indicators of the accreditation standard for the joint educational programme in healthcare.

✓ “**Requires improvement**” – characterised by a low level of indicators of the accreditation standard for the joint educational programme in healthcare.

✓ “**Unsatisfactory**” – means that indicators of the joint educational programme of the organisation of education do not comply with the accreditation standard for the joint educational programme in healthcare.

III. STANDARDS OF INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION OF JOINT DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES IN THE FIELD OF HEALTHCARE

Scope of Application

These standards define the regulatory requirements for the main provisions of the standards of international accreditation of joint doctoral programmes in the field of healthcare during the procedure of accreditation of the JEP, regardless of its status, organisational and legal form, forms of ownership and departmental subordination.

These standards can also be used:

- a) educational organisations for internal self-assessment and external evaluation of JEP;
- b) to develop appropriate regulatory documentation.

Regulatory References

This standard uses references to the following regulatory documents:

1. ORPHEUS Best Practices for PhD Training, 2024.
2. Standards for PhD Education in Biomedicine and Health Sciences in Europe, 2012
3. World Federation for Medical Education: Basic Medical Education WFME Global Standards for Quality Improvement (2015 Revision)
4. World Federation for Medical Education: Medical Education: Basic Medical Education WFME Global Standards for Quality Improvement (2020 Revision)
5. Guidelines on the use of ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System), approved at the Yerevan Conference of Ministers of Education on May 14-15, 2015
6. Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015)

Terms and Definitions

The following terms and definitions are used in this standard:

- 1) **Accreditation** — a formal external process of recognition that an educational programme complies with established national and international quality standards.
- 2) **Academic integrity** — a set of principles and norms governing honest conduct in education and research, including the prohibition of plagiarism, data fabrication and falsification, and the requirement of proper authorship and citation.
- 3) **Bioethics** — the field of ethics regulating the moral and legal aspects of biomedical and clinical research.
- 4) **Doctoral thesis (PhD thesis)** — the final qualifying research work demonstrating the doctoral candidate's ability to conduct independent and original research, perform critical analysis, and make a substantive contribution to science.
- 5) **Doctoral education (PhD education)** — the third cycle of higher education (Level 8 of the QF-EHEA), aimed at the training of researchers and leading to the award of a doctoral degree.
- 6) **Internationalisation** — the integration of international experience and cooperation into education and research, including mobility, joint programmes and involvement of international experts.
- 7) **Supervisor** — an appointed academic responsible for providing guidance, academic advice and quality assurance of the doctoral candidate's research.
- 8) **Quality assurance (QA)** — a system of internal and external processes (monitoring, self-evaluation, accreditation) aimed at maintaining and enhancing the quality of educational programmes.
- 9) **Joint Educational Programme** — an educational programme based on comparability and synchronisation of educational programmes of partner organisations of higher and/or postgraduate education and characterised by the parties undertaking joint obligations in such matters as defining the objectives and content of the programme, organisation of the educational process, and

awarding of degrees or qualifications.

10) **Plagiarism** — the appropriation of authorship or the use of others' results or texts without proper acknowledgement of the source.

11) **Public defence (oral defence)** — an open procedure in which the doctoral candidate presents and defends the doctoral thesis before an independent assessment committee and the academic community.

12) **Institutional repository** — a digital archive for theses, abstracts and publications ensuring long-term preservation and open access.

13) **Learning outcomes** — verifiable knowledge, skills and competences that graduates of doctoral programmes are expected to demonstrate.

14) **Ethics committee (research ethics committee)** — an independent body responsible for reviewing research projects for compliance with ethical principles and legal requirements.

Designations and Abbreviations

The following abbreviations and designations are used in these standards in accordance with the regulatory documents specified in Paragraph 2. In addition, the following abbreviations and designations are used in these standards:

AC – Accreditation Council;

HEI – Higher Education Institution;

EEP – External Expert Panel;

IAAR – Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating;

R&D – Research and Development;

CME – Continuing Medical Education;

CPD – Continuing Professional Development;

NQS – National Qualifications System;

EO – Educational Organisation;

JEP – Joint Educational Programme;

SER – Self-Evaluation Report;

Academic Staff – Teaching and Academic Staff;

Mass Media – Mass Media;

ECTS – European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System;

ESG – Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area;

QF-EHEA – Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area;

WFME – World Federation for Medical Education.

General Provisions

The main objectives of implementing the international accreditation standards for joint programmes in healthcare are:

- implementation of an accreditation model harmonised with international practices of quality assurance in education;

- evaluation of the quality of joint educational programmes in order to enhance the competitiveness of the higher and postgraduate education system in healthcare;

- promotion of the development of a quality culture within medical education organisations;

- facilitation of improvement and continuous enhancement of the quality of joint educational programmes of the educational organisation and/or partner educational organisation in accordance with the requirements of a rapidly changing external environment;

- consideration and protection of public interests and consumer rights through provision of reliable information on the quality of the joint educational programme;

- promotion of the use of innovations and scientific research;

- public disclosure and dissemination of information on accreditation results of the joint educational programme of the educational organisation and/or partner educational organisation.

STANDARD 1. «RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT»

Partner organisations of education shall:

1.1. be recognised by the authorities of the countries in which they are located that regulate education in healthcare and confirm compliance with established quality standards and requirements.

1.2. ensure participation in implementation of the joint educational programme and compliance of the awarded academic degree/qualification with the national qualifications framework and regulatory acts of the countries in which the educational organisations are located.

1.3. have a Cooperation Agreement between partner educational organisations, which shall specify:

- information on the academic degree (qualification) awarded upon completion of the joint educational programme;

- coordination and responsibilities of involved partner educational organisations regarding governance and financial arrangements (including funding, sharing of costs and revenues, etc.);

- admission and selection rules for learners;

- language of instruction, mobility of learners and academic staff;

- examination regulations, methods for assessment of achieved learning outcomes, recognition of ECTS credits and procedures for awarding joint academic degrees (qualifications).

1.4. ensure availability of sufficient, accessible and purpose-appropriate resources for conducting scientific research, including infrastructure, laboratories, databases, funding and scientific schools; provide opportunities for independent research work of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students and implementation of projects relevant and adequate to programme objectives.

1.5. guarantee that all scientific research is conducted in accordance with international and national ethical standards, principles of academic integrity, and approved by a competent ethics committee; provide training for doctoral candidates/postgraduate students in principles of research ethics.

1.6. provide doctoral candidates/postgraduate students with opportunities to complete part of the programme, conduct research or undertake internships in other organisations, including foreign universities and research centres, with recognition of learning and research outcomes.

1.7. maintain sustainable cooperation with domestic and international educational organisations, laboratories, scientific centres and institutes in order to ensure high quality of doctoral/postgraduate programmes and development of research competences of learners.

1.8. develop and implement joint (double/joint degree) educational and research programmes providing opportunities for obtaining joint or double scientific degrees, as well as international recognition of research results.

1.9. include in the programme mission provisions related to achievements and development of medical research in biomedical, clinical, behavioural and social sciences, reflecting contribution to development of science, healthcare and society.

Indicative areas for evaluation:

The self-evaluation report is recommended to include:

- ✓ *valid licences/registrations and recognition of each partner organisation by governmental authorities regulating education in healthcare;*

- ✓ *compliance of the awarded degree/qualification with the national qualifications framework and legislative requirements;*

- ✓ *availability and content of the Cooperation Agreement between partner educational organisations; procedures ensuring transparency, accountability and risk management within the partnership;*

- ✓ *procedures, frequency and results of revision/updating of the Agreement;*

- ✓ *description of the research environment and conditions for programme implementation (infrastructure, laboratories, databases, libraries, scientific schools, funding sources);*
- ✓ *information on the number of competent researchers and scientific units, their qualifications and research areas;*
- ✓ *data on publication and research activity of academic staff and employees over the last 3 years (articles, monographs, patents, grants, participation in competitions);*
- ✓ *information on volumes and sources of funding and implemented research projects;*
- ✓ *list of scientific centres, laboratories, departments and units of the educational organisation conducting research, indicating their functions;*
- ✓ *characteristics of additional scientific and clinical bases used by doctoral candidates/postgraduate students for research, including description of types of activities performed;*
- ✓ *research ethics assurance system (activities of the ethics committee, procedures for project approval, compliance with international and national standards);*
- ✓ *information on training of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students in bioethics and academic integrity (courses, seminars, disciplines); procedures for discussing compliance of dissertation research with ethical standards;*
- ✓ *experience of cooperation with domestic and international organisations (joint projects, research internships, network and double-degree programmes);*
- ✓ *procedures for recognition of learning and research outcomes; information on steps undertaken for development and implementation of joint (double/joint degree) programmes with international recognition;*
- ✓ *provisions within the programme mission related to development of biomedical, clinical, behavioural and social research and their contribution to development of science, healthcare and society.*

STANDARD 2. «TRAINING OUTCOMES»

Partner organisations of education shall ensure that:

2.1. the joint educational programme provides formation of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for development of competent researchers capable of conducting responsible, independent, original and innovative scientific research in accordance with principles of international research practice and academic integrity.

2.2. the content and outcomes of the joint educational programme take into account the needs, interests and professional preferences of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students, ensuring preparation for diverse career pathways in academic, clinical, research, managerial or industrial sectors.

2.3. the joint educational programme is aimed at development of the following key competences:

- ability for critical analysis, solving research and practical problems, technology transfer and synthesis of new ideas;
- systematic understanding of the field of study and mastery of modern scientific research methods within the relevant professional area;
- ability to analyse data, design and conduct original research at a level corresponding to publications in international peer-reviewed journals;
- ability to engage in academic and professional discussion, interact with reviewers, the scientific community and society as a whole;
- ability to disseminate and apply new knowledge in academic, clinical and socio-economic contexts, including implementation of technological and cultural achievements.

2.4. the joint educational programme is oriented towards development of leadership qualities, skills in scientific supervision and mentoring, management of research projects, effective communication and transfer of knowledge to different audiences.

2.5. the expected learning outcomes of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students in biomedicine and healthcare reflect the specifics of the professional field and simultaneously correspond to universal doctoral learning outcomes in other scientific disciplines, ensuring academic equivalence and comparability.

Indicative areas for evaluation:

The self-evaluation report is recommended to include:

- ✓ *expected learning outcomes of the doctoral/postgraduate programme: knowledge, skills, attitudes and professional values developed in learners;*
- ✓ *alignment of learning outcomes with the programme mission, national educational standards, international requirements (QF-EHEA, Dublin Descriptors, WFME) and principles of academic integrity;*
- ✓ *key competences of graduates:*
 - *ability for critical analysis and solving research and practical problems;*
 - *systematic understanding of the field of study and mastery of modern scientific research methods;*
 - *skills in data analysis, design and implementation of original research corresponding to the level of international publications;*
 - *ability to conduct academic and professional communication, including interaction with reviewers and the scientific community;*
 - *leadership qualities, research mentoring, project management and transfer of knowledge to different audiences;*
 - *ability for technology transfer, dissemination and implementation of new knowledge in academic, clinical and socio-economic contexts;*

- ✓ *mechanisms for development and assessment of the indicated competences: academic courses, research work, publication activity, participation in conferences, projects, internships and mentoring;*
- ✓ *consideration of interests, needs and career preferences of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students, ensuring preparation for diverse professional pathways (academic, clinical, research, managerial and industrial sectors);*
- ✓ *mechanisms ensuring academic equivalence and comparability of learning outcomes with doctoral programmes in other scientific fields (universal descriptors of Level 8 of QF-EHEA / Dublin Descriptors);*
- ✓ *distribution of responsibilities among academic staff and structural units for development and assessment of learning outcomes, including description of their roles and contributions;*
- ✓ *procedures for documentation, analysis and revision of learning outcomes: use of internal monitoring tools, feedback from learners, graduates and employers, as well as external expertise;*
- ✓ *data demonstrating the impact of achieved learning outcomes on academic and professional prospects of graduates: publication activity, participation in international projects, career advancement, contribution to healthcare and development of science;*
- ✓ *confirmation that joint implementation of the programme by partner organisations ensures equivalence, comparability and international recognition of achieved learning outcomes.*

STANDARD 3. «POLICY AND CRITERIA FOR APPLICANT SELECTION»

Partner organisations of education shall:

3.1. develop, approve, publish and consistently apply policies and procedures for selection of candidates for doctoral/postgraduate programmes based on principles of transparency, open competition, fairness and non-discrimination, ensuring their accessibility to all applicants.

3.2. admit candidates on the basis of their prior educational level that complies with legislative requirements and academic standards, with confirmation of qualifications necessary for commencement of research training.

3.3. establish, publish and consistently apply regulations governing all stages of the programme “life cycle”, including:

- evaluation of quality and feasibility of the proposed research project;
- determination of the possibility of obtaining new scientific results sufficient for completion of a dissertation of the required quality within the established timeframe;
- analysis of the degree of novelty, originality and creativity of the project;
- verification of qualifications and research competence of scientific advisers/supervisors.

3.4. ensure accessibility of support services for doctoral candidates/postgraduate students (academic advising, library, digital, laboratory and other resources) necessary for successful completion of the joint educational programme.

3.5. implement the programme only where adequate resources (financial, human and infrastructural) are available and sufficient for full implementation and completion of research work.

3.6. evaluate both academic performance and research potential, motivation and readiness for independent scientific activity during candidate selection.

3.7 SA: organise evaluation of applicants’ research projects by a group of independent experts/reviewers using written reviews and/or oral presentation assessment, ensuring objectivity and academic integrity of the selection process.

ISA: ensure functioning of a system of external evaluation of projects (written reviews or oral presentations) with mandatory involvement of independent experts.

3.8. provide the possibility of granting additional time for programme completion in justified cases (for example, need for additional funding, combination with clinical or teaching duties), while maintaining quality of training and academic requirements.

Indicative areas for evaluation:

The self-evaluation report is recommended to include:

✓ *policy and procedures for admission of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students: regulatory framework, rules, criteria and application procedures, compliance with national legislation and international principles of transparency, fairness, academic integrity and non-discrimination;*

✓ *information on the structure (unit/body) responsible for admission and selection of candidates, including its authority, composition and decision-making mechanisms;*

✓ *academic and additional admission criteria: level of prior education, confirmed qualifications and competences, research potential, motivation and readiness for independent scientific activity;*

✓ *measures ensuring equal access to the programme for candidates from socially vulnerable groups (persons with disabilities, low-income families, national minorities), including support mechanisms and non-discriminatory selection procedures;*

✓ *mechanisms for appeal of admissions committee decisions, procedures for consideration and documentation of appeals, ensuring transparency and fairness of procedures;*

✓ *practice of regular review of admission policies and criteria, sources of feedback (employers, professional communities, governmental authorities, graduates), and documentary evidence of introduced changes;*

- ✓ *process for evaluation of quality of candidates' research projects: criteria (novelty, originality, feasibility, significance), procedures for external review (written reviews, oral presentations), and procedures for documenting decisions;*
- ✓ *composition of independent experts/reviewers participating in evaluation of research projects, mechanisms for their selection, ensuring objectivity and prevention of conflicts of interest;*
- ✓ *procedures for participation of candidates in selection and formulation of dissertation topics, including procedures for their coordination and approval by partner organisations;*
- ✓ *resources and support services for admitted doctoral candidates/postgraduate students: academic advising, library, digital, laboratory and other resources ensuring successful completion of the programme;*
- ✓ *information on financial, human and infrastructural resources of partner organisations sufficient for full implementation and completion of research work within the programme;*
- ✓ *practice of granting additional time for programme completion in justified cases (combination with clinical or teaching duties, need for additional funding), with confirmation of maintaining quality of training and academic requirements;*
- ✓ *coordination and consistency of admission policies and procedures among partner organisations, confirming uniformity of standards, criteria and selection procedures.*

STANDARD 4. «TRAINING PROGRAMME»

Partner organisations of education shall:

4.1. define and document procedures for development, approval and revision of the educational programme in accordance with legislative requirements and national and international quality standards.

4.2. implement training programmes based on conducting original research, structured courses and other academic activities aimed at developing analytical, critical and research thinking among learners.

4.3. guarantee that educational programmes comply with standards and requirements for quality of education, and that research work is carried out under supervision of qualified scientific supervisors/advisers in accordance with principles of academic integrity.

4.4. ensure that educational programmes develop learners' knowledge and skills in the areas of research ethics, academic integrity, protection of human rights and good research practice.

4.5. provide learners with opportunities to complete part of their research or programme at another accredited institution, including foreign universities and research centres, with mutual recognition of results.

4.6. guarantee that doctoral/postgraduate programmes combined with clinical or other professional activities provide an equivalent amount of time and opportunities for research and learning comparable to standard programmes.

4.7. ensure transparency of assessment procedures and their results, and provide timely information to learners regarding applied criteria, forms and procedures of assessment, including feedback mechanisms.

4.8. provide doctoral candidates/postgraduate students with opportunities to undertake relevant educational courses or internships in other organisations, as well as to gain additional academic and professional experience.

4.9. ensure provision of leave or release from clinical duties for learners working as clinicians in order to complete academic courses and research activities.

4.10. guarantee access to confidential counselling for learners regarding educational programmes, scientific supervision, academic ethics, and personal and professional issues.

4.11. establish a committee/council on dissertation research ensuring objective evaluation of learners' progress, quality of dissertation projects and scientific achievements.

4.12. ensure participation of learner representatives in governance and evaluation of doctoral/postgraduate programmes; support activities of learner associations in order to strengthen the role of student self-governance within the academic process.

4.13. have a formalised and accessible appeals mechanism enabling learners to challenge decisions related to the educational programme, assessment and dissertation defence, in accordance with principles of fairness and transparency.

Indicative areas for evaluation:

The self-evaluation report is recommended to include:

✓ *structure of the educational programme: compulsory and elective components, research component, disciplines, practices and internships, as well as regulatory documents governing their implementation in partner organisations;*

✓ *competences developed through completion of disciplines, implementation of original research and participation in academic activities; confirmation of their reflection in curricula, course syllabi and working programmes;*

✓ *list of disciplines and courses aimed at development of analytical, critical and research thinking, including examples of their implementation within curricula;*

✓ *integration into the programme of issues related to bioethics, academic integrity, protection of human rights and research conduct regulations; confirmation through relevant courses, regulations and ethical review practices;*

- ✓ *information on review of research projects by local and national ethics committees: procedures, regulations, decisions and examples of implementation;*
- ✓ *international component of the programme: mechanisms of internationalisation, criteria for selection of foreign institutions for internships and study, procedures for mutual recognition of results and transfer of credits;*
- ✓ *information on places of internships and research activities (research centres, medical organisations, foreign universities) over the past three years, indicating areas and duration;*
- ✓ *system for quality assurance and effectiveness control of education and research implemented in other organisations: internal and external monitoring, reporting and evaluation of outcomes;*
- ✓ *mechanisms ensuring transparency and fairness of assessment: criteria, forms and procedures of assessment, procedures for informing learners about results, and feedback mechanisms;*
- ✓ *learner support and counselling system (academic, scientific, career and personal counselling), including guarantees of confidentiality and accessibility for all categories of learners;*
- ✓ *equivalence of academic workload and research time for programmes combined with clinical or other professional activities; mechanisms for documentary confirmation;*
- ✓ *provision of leave or release from clinical duties for learners working as clinicians in order to complete courses and research activities;*
- ✓ *existence and activities of dissertation research committees/councils: functions, composition, authority, and examples of decisions regarding evaluation of progress, dissertation quality and scientific achievements;*
- ✓ *representation of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students in governance and evaluation of the programme: forms of participation, authority and examples of activities of learner associations;*
- ✓ *appeals mechanism: regulatory documents, procedures for submission and consideration of appeals, and examples of practical implementation;*
- ✓ *coordination and consistency of the educational programme among partner organisations, including procedures for joint development, approval, revision, documentation of changes and distribution of responsibilities.*

STANDARD 5. «SCIENTIFIC SUPERVISION»

Partner organisations of education shall:

5.1. guarantee that each doctoral candidate/postgraduate student has an appointed scientific supervisor/adviser and, where necessary, a co-supervisor, ensuring coverage of all aspects of the programme and research project.

5.2. guarantee that the number of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students assigned to one scientific supervisor is proportionate to the supervisor's workload and allows provision of high-quality supervision and individual support.

5.3. have transparent and objective procedures for selection and approval of scientific supervisors, confirming their competence, qualifications and active involvement in research activities within the relevant field of science.

5.4 SA: confirm the existence of regular consultations between scientific supervisors and doctoral candidates/postgraduate students, documenting meetings, progress discussions and corrective actions.

ISA: regulate the conduct of regular consultations and their documentation.

5.5. provide mechanisms (courses, seminars, professional development programmes) for preparation and continuous development of competences of scientific supervisors and potential supervisors in the areas of mentoring and research ethics.

5.6. have a policy regulating relations between the scientific supervisor and doctoral candidate/postgraduate student, based on principles of mutual respect, academic integrity, transparency of responsibilities, shared responsibility and shared contribution to research.

5.7. define areas of responsibility of each scientific supervisor and establish a documented policy for distribution of rights and responsibilities of supervisors, including mechanisms for resolution of conflict situations.

5.8. guarantee that scientific supervisors provide learners with opportunities for integration into the scientific community, including participation in conferences, publications, network projects and professional associations.

5.9. guarantee that scientific supervisors actively facilitate development of academic and professional careers of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students, including research, educational and managerial pathways.

5.10. consider the possibility of concluding supervisory agreements describing the supervision process, roles, responsibilities and mutual obligations of the parties; such agreements shall be signed by the scientific supervisor, doctoral candidate/postgraduate student and the administration of the organisation.

5.11. establish requirements that the principal scientific supervisor has confirmed experience of successful supervision of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students and/or formal training in supervision.

5.12. provide opportunities for scientific supervisors to participate as co-supervisors of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students from other organisations both nationally and internationally in order to expand research experience and network cooperation.

Indicative areas for evaluation:

The self-evaluation report is recommended to include:

✓ *procedures for appointment of scientific supervisors and co-supervisors: approval procedures, responsible bodies, regulatory documents governing the process in partner organisations;*

✓ *national requirements for scientific supervisors (academic degree, academic title, publication activity, indexed publications, research experience) and compliance of programme supervisors with these requirements;*

✓ *institutional criteria for selection of supervisors: qualifications, relevance to programme profile, research and teaching activity, recognition within the scientific community;*

- ✓ *procedures for assessing compliance of supervisors' qualifications and scientific profiles with programme areas and research projects;*
- ✓ *mechanisms ensuring balanced workload of supervisors: ratio of "number of assigned doctoral candidates/postgraduate students – workload", measures for maintaining quality of individual mentoring;*
- ✓ *documents defining duties and responsibilities of scientific supervisors (regulations, procedures, job descriptions, internal policies);*
- ✓ *mechanisms for monitoring supervisors' activities: documentation of consultations, progress reporting, meeting minutes, monitoring of implementation of research plans;*
- ✓ *extent of supervisors' participation in preparation of dissertation work: research planning, publications, conference participation, network projects, integration into the scientific community;*
- ✓ *procedures for advisory support of learners: individual plans, regular consultations, reporting and corrective actions;*
- ✓ *policy for recognition and encouragement of contributions of scientific supervisors: salary supplements, bonuses, acknowledgement in reports, institutional recognition;*
- ✓ *mechanisms for evaluation of supervisors' activities: attestation, KPIs, feedback from doctoral candidates/postgraduate students, analysis of publication and mentoring activity;*
- ✓ *professional development programmes and competence development for scientific supervisors: courses, seminars, internships, projects on research ethics and mentoring (with attached plans and training programmes);*
- ✓ *policy regulating "scientific supervisor – doctoral candidate/postgraduate student" relations: mutual respect, academic integrity, shared responsibility, documented distribution of rights and responsibilities;*
- ✓ *mechanisms for resolution of conflicts between supervisors and learners, confirmed by regulations and examples of practice;*
- ✓ *existence and use of supervisory agreements describing the process, roles, responsibilities and mutual obligations of the parties;*
- ✓ *information on cases where scientific supervisors acted as co-supervisors for learners from other organisations (national and international), as well as documents regulating inter-university and international cooperation;*
- ✓ *confirmation that the principal scientific supervisor has experience of successful supervision of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students and/or has completed supervision training.*

STANDARD 6. «DISSERTATION»

Partner organisations of education shall:

6.1. guarantee that the doctoral dissertation is a final qualification work confirming the ability of the doctoral candidate/postgraduate student to conduct independent, original and scientifically grounded research, as well as critical analysis and interpretation of results within the relevant field of science.

6.2. define a standard duration of doctoral/postgraduate studies (3–4 years of full-time study), the outcome of which shall include publications in journals recommended by authorised bodies and internationally recognised peer-reviewed journals.

6.3. guarantee that the dissertation complies with international requirements for scientific research and includes: a comprehensive literature review; clearly formulated aim and objectives; justified methodology; reliable and reproducible results; critical discussion; conclusions; identification of prospects for further research.

6.4. guarantee that where the dissertation is presented in alternative formats (for example, cumulative dissertation or monograph), the evaluation committee ensures equivalence of the scientific contribution to established requirements and its compliance with national and international standards.

6.5. in order to enhance international recognition, provide the possibility of writing and defending the dissertation in English (where not contrary to national regulations); dissertation abstracts and summaries shall be published at least in the state language and English.

6.6. provide documentation of the individual contribution of the doctoral candidate/postgraduate student to joint publications and the dissertation, ensuring transparency and compliance with principles of academic integrity.

6.7. provide for placement of full dissertation texts or their protected electronic copies in the institutional repository; where legislation restricts publication, ensure accessibility of the abstract or extended summary.

6.8. guarantee publication of a short dissertation summary in the state language and English in open access on the official website of the educational organisation.

Indicative areas for evaluation:

The self-evaluation report is recommended to include:

✓ *institutional and national requirements for doctoral dissertations: structure, volume and mandatory components (literature review, aim and objectives, methodology, results, discussion, conclusions and prospects for further research);*

✓ *mechanisms ensuring the ability of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students to conduct independent, original and scientifically grounded research: individual projects, publications, participation in conferences and expert reviews;*

✓ *procedures for internal and external quality assurance during preparation and defence of dissertations: stages of review, activities of dissertation councils/committees, conclusions of ethics committees;*

✓ *standard duration of study (3–4 years of full-time study) and mechanisms for monitoring compliance with timelines, including data on extensions and justification thereof;*

✓ *statistics on defended dissertations over the past three years (number, research areas, defence outcomes) and trends in their quality;*

✓ *list of current research topics of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students by year, indicating scientific supervisors and implementation stage;*

✓ *publication requirements for dissertations: articles in national and international peer-reviewed journals, indexed databases; compliance with state and institutional regulations;*

✓ *mechanisms ensuring compliance of dissertations with international quality standards (WFME, ESG, QF-EHEA, Dublin Descriptors);*

- ✓ *regulatory documents governing dissertation requirements and defence procedures at national and institutional levels, including examples of their implementation;*
- ✓ *academic comparability of dissertation requirements and defence practices in medicine with other scientific fields (biomedical, social and engineering sciences);*
- ✓ *examples of use of alternative dissertation formats (cumulative dissertation, monograph) and mechanisms ensuring equivalence of scientific contribution to established requirements;*
- ✓ *additional requirements of evaluation committees during dissertation preparation and defence (for example, minimum number of publications, participation in international projects, implementation of research results);*
- ✓ *practice of writing and defending dissertations in English, institutional support measures for English-language research (scientific editing, peer review, publications);*
- ✓ *confirmation of publication of dissertation abstracts and summaries at least in the state language and English, including examples of publicly accessible materials;*
- ✓ *procedures for documenting individual contributions of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students to joint publications and research, mechanisms for preventing duplication of publications across different dissertations;*
- ✓ *measures for protection of copyright of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students: citation rules, plagiarism checks, authorship agreements and data storage;*
- ✓ *existence of an institutional repository and procedures for placement of defended dissertations or their electronic copies, and where restrictions apply — abstracts or extended summaries;*
- ✓ *mechanisms ensuring preservation, accessibility and relevance of materials in the institutional repository, including mandatory placement of short summaries in the state language and English;*
- ✓ *consistency of policies and procedures related to dissertations among partner organisations: distribution of responsibilities, unified requirements and procedures for mutual recognition of results.*

STANDARD 7. «DISSERTATION ASSESSMENT»

Partner organisations of education shall:

7.1. ensure a multi-level process of dissertation assessment, including independent review, public defence and presentation of results in the form of an oral presentation, with mandatory recording of the procedure in official minutes.

7.2. guarantee that awarding of the doctoral/candidate of sciences degree is based on the decision of the evaluation committee of the educational organisation that conducted a comprehensive assessment of the written dissertation and oral defence, provided compliance with the requirements of Standard 6 and national regulatory norms.

7.3. ensure that the evaluation committee consists of researchers actively engaged in research within the relevant field, who are not connected with the doctoral candidate's/postgraduate student's research topic and do not have conflicts of interest; provide participation of at least two representatives from other organisations (preferably international).

7.4. guarantee that, in order to avoid conflicts of interest, scientific supervisors, co-supervisors and scientific advisers are not members of the evaluation committee and do not participate in decision-making regarding the dissertation.

7.5. ensure a fair and transparent resubmission procedure: in the event of a negative decision regarding the written dissertation, the doctoral candidate/postgraduate student shall be given the opportunity to revise the work; in the event of a negative decision regarding the oral defence, an opportunity for repeated defence shall be provided (where not contrary to legislation). In exceptional cases, the evaluation committee may deny the right to repeated defence in the presence of serious violations of academic integrity.

7.6. guarantee that the oral defence of the dissertation is conducted as an open and public procedure ensuring academic transparency, with the possibility of participation of external experts and representatives of the professional community.

7.7 SA: implement a policy of internationalisation of the assessment procedure by ensuring participation in the evaluation committee of at least one representative of a foreign university or research centre (offline or online format).

ISA: provide for participation of representatives of foreign organisations in the committee (offline or online).

7.8 SA: ensure that the defence evaluates not only research results, but also competences developed during the programme: critical thinking, methodological literacy, academic integrity, ability for scientific communication and ethical conduct of research.

ISA: include learner competences (critical thinking, methodology, ethics, scientific communication) within the assessment criteria.

Indicative areas for evaluation:

The self-evaluation report is recommended to include:

✓ *institutional policy and regulations governing dissertation assessment procedures: regulatory documents, responsible bodies, procedures for organisation and control of the process;*

✓ *mechanisms for determining dissertation readiness for defence: internal review, expert opinions of departments/councils, recommendations of dissertation or academic councils;*

✓ *procedures for independent review: appointment of reviewers, qualification requirements and independence, number of reviewers, documentation of reviews;*

✓ *procedures for public defence: stages, structure of oral presentation, participation of external experts and representatives of the professional community, recording of the process and results in official minutes;*

✓ *requirements for formation of the evaluation committee: active research activity of members, absence of conflicts of interest, procedures for approval of committee composition (order, council decision);*

- ✓ *confirmation of participation of representatives from other organisations (national and foreign universities, research centres) in the evaluation committee, either offline or online;*
- ✓ *measures for prevention of conflicts of interest: exclusion of scientific supervisors, co-supervisors and advisers from participation in decision-making regarding the defence;*
- ✓ *examples of dissertation defences conducted over the past three years: organisation procedures, composition of committees, participation of external experts, documentation and publication of information on results;*
- ✓ *procedures for awarding the academic degree: stages of decision-making, approving bodies, procedures for issuing diplomas/certificates;*
- ✓ *procedures in cases of negative decisions: opportunities for revision of the written dissertation, repeated defence of the oral presentation, conditions and number of attempts, exceptional situations (serious violations of academic integrity);*
- ✓ *examples of revision cases or repeated defences (if available), including adopted decisions and corrective measures;*
- ✓ *criteria for evaluation of research outcomes and competences of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students: critical thinking, methodological literacy, academic integrity, scientific communication and research ethics;*
- ✓ *list of documents required for admission to defence: application, list of publications, reviewer reports, supervisor's review, department/council conclusion and other regulated materials;*
- ✓ *documents prepared following the defence: minutes of the meeting, committee conclusion, recommendations, decisions on awarding the degree;*
- ✓ *practice of publishing information on dissertation defences on the official website of the organisation: dissertation summaries, date and venue of defence, committee composition, decisions, as well as timelines and procedures for maintaining materials in open access;*
- ✓ *measures for internationalisation of the assessment procedure: participation of representatives of foreign universities or research centres (offline or online), confirmed by documentation and examples of practice;*
- ✓ *consistency of dissertation assessment policies and procedures among partner organisations, ensuring uniformity of standards, transparency of decisions and international recognition of results.*

STANDARD 8. «SCHOOL STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE»

Partner organisations of education shall:

8.1 SA: have a published and regularly updated quality assurance policy integrated into the strategic management of the organisation. The policy shall be developed with participation of internal and external stakeholders, include mechanisms for monitoring, self-assessment, CAPA procedures (corrective and preventive actions), and be accessible to all interested parties.

ISA: adopt and publish a quality assurance policy integrated into strategic management.

8.2 SA: have a clearly defined governance structure for doctoral/postgraduate programmes ensuring transparency of decision-making, accountability, stakeholder participation, and alignment with the mission and functions of the university. The structure shall ensure long-term sustainability of programmes and continuity of academic leadership.

ISA: define a governance structure for the doctoral/postgraduate programme ensuring transparency and accountability.

8.3 SA: guarantee systematic collection, analysis and use of relevant information (academic, research, human resources, financial, graduate employment data) for effective management of doctoral/postgraduate programmes, applying digital data management tools and BI systems to ensure transparency and analytical capacity of processes.

ISA: establish procedures for collection and analysis of information for programme management; implement basic digital data management tools.

8.4 SA: inform the public about the activities of the organisation (including doctoral/postgraduate training programmes) through regular publication of clear, reliable, objective and up-to-date information. Information shall cover mission, objectives, curricula, admission procedures, learning outcomes, and achievements of learners and graduates.

ISA: ensure publication of reliable information about the programme (mission, objectives, curricula, admission procedures, learning outcomes).

8.5 SA: open and maintain an official web section dedicated to doctoral/postgraduate programmes in the state language and English. The section shall contain information on programme structure, admission criteria, learning outcomes, research projects, graduate employment and international cooperation.

ISA: create an official web section for doctoral/postgraduate programmes in the state language and English.

Indicative areas for evaluation:

The self-evaluation report is recommended to include:

✓ *quality assurance policy: objectives, goals, integration into the strategic management of partner universities; publication and regular updating of the policy (website links, orders, regulations);*

✓ *mechanisms for participation of internal and external stakeholders in development, revision and implementation of the quality policy (working groups, expert councils, surveys, discussions), including examples of stakeholder involvement;*

✓ *governance structure of doctoral/postgraduate programmes: governing bodies, distribution of authority and responsibilities, decision-making procedures, mechanisms of transparency and accountability;*

✓ *measures to ensure long-term sustainability of programmes and continuity of academic leadership (mentoring systems, кадровые reserves, regulations for replacement of leadership positions);*

✓ *types of information systematically collected and analysed for programme management (academic, human resources, research, financial and graduate employment data), as well as forms and regularity of analysis;*

- ✓ *digital tools used for collection, monitoring and analytical processing of information (BI systems, LMS, HEROSS, internal registries, databases), including examples of their use in managerial decision-making;*
- ✓ *practice of publishing information about educational programmes: list of published information (mission, objectives, curricula, admission criteria, learning outcomes, achievements of learners and graduates), dissemination channels (official website, reports, media);*
- ✓ *measures for informing the public about results of activities: graduate employment indicators, scientific achievements, publications, international projects and participation in network initiatives;*
- ✓ *description of the web section dedicated to doctoral/postgraduate programmes: structure, content, availability of information in the state language and English, procedures for updating information, responsible units;*
- ✓ *publication of information on international cooperation, partnerships, joint and network projects involving doctoral candidates/postgraduate students;*
- ✓ *system for monitoring management effectiveness: procedures, indicators and mechanisms for evaluating compliance with the mission and objectives of partner universities; use of monitoring results for corrective and preventive actions (CAPA);*
- ✓ *consistency and coordination of quality policies and governance procedures among partner organisations to ensure unified standards, transparency of processes and international recognition of the programme.*

STANDARD 9. «CONTINUOUS RENEWAL»

This standard applies during specialised accreditation (SA).

Partner organisations of education shall:

9.1. conduct regular monitoring and systematic evaluation of doctoral/postgraduate programmes, including analysis of mission, structure, content, teaching methods and training outcomes. Ensure the use of the PDCA cycle (Plan–Do–Check–Act) for continuous improvement of the educational programme.

9.2. guarantee that results of programme monitoring and evaluation take into account the needs of learners, the academic community, employers, the healthcare system and society. Ensure transparency of results and communication of planned and implemented improvements to all stakeholders.

9.3. conduct external quality assurance and accreditation procedures in accordance with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG), WFME and other recognised international requirements on a regular basis. Use results of external evaluation for implementation of corrective and preventive actions (CAPA).

9.4. use benchmarking with leading national and international educational and research programmes to identify best practices and introduce innovations into the educational process. Take into account data on graduate employment, scientific productivity and career pathways when revising programmes.

Indicative areas for evaluation:

The self-evaluation report is recommended to include:

✓ *mechanisms for regular monitoring and systematic evaluation of doctoral/postgraduate programmes: regulations, self-assessment procedures, PDCA cycles (Plan–Do–Check–Act), reporting formats and internal regulations;*

✓ *procedures for regular revision of mission, structure, content, teaching methods and training outcomes; examples of recent changes introduced based on monitoring and analysis results;*

✓ *indicators used to monitor achievement of objectives and expected learning outcomes: academic indicators (academic performance, programme completion rates); research indicators (publications, grants); staffing indicators (workload and qualifications of academic staff); career indicators (graduate employment and career progression);*

✓ *mechanisms for considering the needs of learners, academic staff, employers, the healthcare system and society in programme updates; examples of implemented changes based on such considerations;*

✓ *feedback instruments (surveys, interviews, focus groups, satisfaction monitoring) and procedures for their use in adjusting programme content and teaching methods;*

✓ *participation of learners, graduates, employers and other stakeholders in programme monitoring and revision: forms of involvement and examples of actual contributions to decision-making;*

✓ *mechanisms ensuring transparency of monitoring results: publication of reports, informing stakeholders, accessibility of decisions regarding programme changes;*

✓ *information on external quality assurance and accreditation procedures (national and international): frequency, outcomes, examples of reports and publications;*

✓ *use of external evaluation results for implementation of corrective and preventive actions (CAPA) and development of the internal quality assurance system;*

✓ *examples of changes implemented following recent external evaluation procedures, as well as measures undertaken in preparation for upcoming accreditations or reviews;*

✓ *benchmarking practices: list of national and international programmes used for comparison, applied indicators, examples of implemented innovations and best practices;*

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- ✓ *use of data on graduate employment, publication activity, career pathways and contribution to the healthcare system for improvement of educational programmes;*
- ✓ *role of continuous programme improvement in strengthening the academic reputation of partner universities and enhancing compliance with international quality standards (WFME, ESG, QF-EHEA).*

VI. APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Recommended Form of the Site Visit Programme

AGREED

Rector _____

(name of the EO)

_____ Full name

« ___ » _____ 202_

APPROVED

General Director of NPI

"Independent

Agency for Accreditation and Rating"

_____ Zhumagulova A.B.

« ___ » _____ 202_

VISIT PROGRAMME OF IAAR EXTERNAL EXPERT PANEL

To _____
name of the EO

Date of visit: _____ 202_

Arrival day: _____ 202_

Departure day: _____ 202_

Accredited EP
(in case of programme accreditation)

Cluster 1	JEP
	JEP
	JEP
Cluster 2	JEP
	JEP
	JEP
Cluster 3	JEP
	JEP
	JEP

Date and time	Work of EEP with target groups	Full name and position of target group members	Location
« ___ » _____ 202_ z.			
During the day	Arrival of EEP members		Hotel
16.00-18.00	Preliminary meeting of the EEP (distribution of responsibility,	<i>External experts of IAAR</i>	Hotel

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Date and time	Work of EEP with target groups	Full name and position of target group members	Location
	discussion of key issues and the programme of the visit)		
18.00-19.00	Dinner (EEP members only)	<i>External experts of IAAR</i>	
Day 1: " " 202			
9.00-9.30	Discussion of organisational issues with experts	<i>External experts of IAAR</i>	Main building, office for EEP
9.30-10.00	Meeting with the head of the EO	<i>Director (Full management)</i>	Director's office at EO
10.00-10.30	Meeting with deputy heads of EO (vice-rector, deputy director, vice-presidents)	<i>Position, full name</i>	Main building, Conference office
10.30-11.15	Meeting with heads of organisational units of EO	<i>Position, full name (or Appendix №)</i>	Main building, Conference office
11.15-11.30	Coffee break with internal discussion	<i>EEC members only</i>	EEP office
11.30-12.45	Visual inspection of the EO (in the case of programme accreditation, only objects under the accredited JEP)	<i>Position, full name</i>	Along the route
13.00-14.00	Lunch (EEP members only)	Lunch break	
14.00-14.15	EEP work		EEP office
14.15-15.00	Meeting with the heads of the accredited JEP	<i>Position, full name (or Appendix №)</i>	Main building, Conference office
15.00-15.45	Meeting with heads of departments of accredited JEP	<i>Position, full name (or Appendix №)</i>	Main building, Conference office
15.45-16.00	Coffee break with internal discussion	<i>EEP members only</i>	
16.00-17.00	Meeting with teachers of accredited JEP	<i>Lists of teachers (Appendix №)</i>	11-cluster: course lecture room 1 2-cluster: course lecture room 2 3-cluster: course lecture room 3
17.00-18.00	Survey by teachers (in parallel)	<i>Teaching staff of accredited EP</i>	Computer room №513-519
17.00-18.00	EEP work (discussion of the results and summing up the results of 1 day)		EEP office
18.00-19.00	Dinner (EEP members only)		
Day 2: " " 202			

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Date and time	Work of EEP with target groups	Full name and position of target group members	Location
09.00-09.30	EEP work (discussion of organisational issues)		EEP office
09.30-12.30	Visiting the graduating departments of JEP (in the case of programme accreditation)	<i>Position, full name</i>	Academic building №5 Academic building №2
09.30-12.30	Attendance at classes	<i>According to the schedules of accredited EP</i>	Academic buildings №2, 5
12.30-13.00	Work of EEP (exchange of views)		Academic building №2
13.00-14.00	Lunch (EEP members only)	Lunch break	
14.00-15.00	Meeting with students	<i>Students of accredited JEP (Appendix No._)</i>	1-cluster: course lecture room №1 2-cluster: course lecture room №2 3-cluster: course lecture room №3
15.00-16.00	Student survey (in parallel)	<i>Students of accredited JEP</i>	Comp.cl. №513-519
15.00-16.00	Meeting with employers	<i>Representatives of state and financial institutions, heads of industrial enterprises and organisations (Appendix No._)</i>	Course lecture room №1
16.00-16.30	Coffee break with internal discussion	<i>only EEP members</i>	EEP office
16.30-17.00	Meeting with JEP alumni	<i>Graduates - representatives for each JEP (Appendix No._)</i>	Course lecture room №1
17.00-18.00	EEP work (discussion of the estimated parameters of profile, discussion of the results and summarising conclusions 2 days)	<i>only EEP members</i>	EEP office
18.00-19.00	Dinner (EEP members only)		
Day 3: " _ " _____ 202 _			
09.00-09.30	EEP work (discussion of organisational issues)		EEP office
09.30-12.30	Visiting practice bases, branches of departments (clinical bases, educational and clinical centers)	<i>Full name, practice base</i>	Visiting practice bases, branches of departments (clinical bases, educational and clinical centers)
12.30-13.00	EEP work (collegial agreement and preparation of oral preliminary review on results of visit by EEP)		EEP office
13.00-	Lunch (EEP	Lunch break	

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Date and time	Work of EEP with target groups	Full name and position of target group members	Location
14.00	members only)		
14.00-16.30	EEP work		EEP office
16.30-17.00	Final meeting of EEP with management of the EO	Heads of the university and structural divisions	Main building, conference office
18.00-19.00	Dinner (EEP members only)		
According to the schedule	<i>Departure of the EEP members</i>		
« » _____ 202_ z.			
According to the schedule	<i>Departure of the EEP members</i>		

Appendix 2. Direction of interaction with the EO coordinator

The coordinator is appointed by the head of the EO. The coordinator does not have to be the head of the working group on the preparation of the self-assessment of the JEP.

The Coordinator interacts with the IAAR Coordinator on planning and organising a visit to the EO.

To ensure maximum efficiency of the accreditation procedure, the coordinator of the EO contributes to:

- coordination of the process of preparing the self-assessment report of the JEP;
- ensuring timely submission of the self-assessment report to IAAR;
- assistance in the timely coordination of the programme of the visit of the EEP;
- ensuring the organisation of visits to facilities according to the visit programme, including the provision of transport;
- ensuring meetings of EEP members with the target groups of the EO during the visit of the EEP;
- organisation of the approval of the EEP report for the presence of actual inaccuracies.

The EO Coordinator facilitates the provision of the necessary additional information about the JEP at the request of the members of the external expert commission.

Appendix 3. Recommended Structure of the Self-Assessment Report

The report should be submitted according to the following structure:

Title page with the name of the EO and the Accreditation Body (1 page) *See Appendix 4 below.*

Statement confirming the reliability and accuracy of the submitted data, signed by the first head of the EO (usually given in Appendix 1 of the self-assessment report) (1 page)

Contents (with an automatically editable table of contents) (1 page)

Designations and Abbreviations (1-2 pages)

A list of designations and abbreviations used in the text of the Self-Assessment Report is provided.

I. Introduction (1 page)

1.1 Education Organisation Profile (1-2 pages)

The basis for the external assessment, the result of the previous accreditation (the Accreditation body, the accreditation standards according to which the external assessment was carried out and the status of accreditation) in the case of reaccreditation are indicated.

A brief description of the methods used in the development of the Self-assessment Report of the EO is reflected (appointment of a working group, involvement of stakeholders, etc.).

The following tables are also included in this section.

Table 1

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE ORGANISATION OF EDUCATION (example)

Full name of the EO	
Contact Information	
Full name of the EO-partner	
Contact Information of the EO-partner	
Founders	
Founders of the EO-partner	
Year of foundation (name, renaming (when implemented))	
Current accreditation status	
Location / registration	
Location / registration of the EO-partner	
Rector / Head of EO	
Rector / Head of EO of the EO-partner	
License (title document)	

License of the EO-partner (title document)	
Number of students (total, in terms of forms of study: full-time, part-time)	
Number of students of the EO-partner (total, in terms of forms of study: full-time, part-time)	
Cooperation agreement/document	
Specialised profile	<i>Double-degree programme</i>
Date of submission of the self-assessment report	
Name of contact person for preparation of the report	
Level of education of the joint educational programme in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) (for example, levels 6, 7, 8) and the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA) (for example, first, second or third cycle)	
Information about the group that conducted the self-assessment	

Table 2

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE JOINT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME(S)
UNDERGOING INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION (example)**

PART I	<i>Samples</i>
JEP (S)	<i>"Public health" (programme code)</i>
Level / Period of study	<i>"Medicine" (programme code)</i>
Structural unit (head)	<i>Undergraduate / ___ years</i>
Main departments (heads of departments)	<i>Faculty / Department "Name"</i>
Dates of the external site visit	<i>Head name, position, academic degree, title</i>
Person in charge of accreditation (tel./fax / e-mail)	<i>Department of "Public Healthcare"</i>
Number of ECTS credits	<i>Head name, position, academic degree, title</i>
Duration of study, form of study	<i>Day month Year.</i>
Training start date	<i>Name, position, academic degree, title</i>
Date of introduction of the educational programme	<i>Contact details</i>
Previous accreditation	
Requirements for applicants	<i>Number of semesters, form of study (full-time, distance, mixed)</i>
Further education opportunities (upon completion of the programme)	<i>winter semester / summer semester</i>
Goals and objectives of the JEP	<i>Day month Year</i>
Brief description of the JEP	<i>Date, duration, accreditation agency</i>
Learning outcomes	<i>Requirements according to state and EO documents</i>
Specialisation	<i>List the levels and titles of the EP</i>
Additional characteristics	
Number of admitted students	<i>Briefly describe structure of EP</i>
Cost of education	<i>List final learning outcomes</i>

Employability	Direction of training
---------------	-----------------------

1.2 Presentation of EO, JEP EO (1-2 pages)

A brief history, information about the types of activities of the EO, the directions of educational services, indicating quantitative data on the levels of education, information about the position and status of the EO in the national and international educational space is provided.

The uniqueness of the internal quality assurance system functioning in the EO is noted.

The information about the accredited JEP of the EO is provided.

1.3 Previous Accreditation (1-2 pages)

A brief description of the results of the previous accreditation is provided with an analysis and the degree of implementation of each recommendation of the EEP.

II. Main part. Compliance with the Standards of Accreditation (70-80 pages)

The evidentiary and analytical material developed based on the results of the self-assessment of the JEP of the EO for compliance with the criteria of each standard of specialised/programme accreditation is presented. The result of the analysis of the current state of the JEP EO is reflected, material is presented on the effectiveness of the functioning of the internal quality assurance system and the effectiveness of its mechanisms, achievements for the last 5 years in accordance with the criteria of standards.

Each Standard is drawn up as follows:

It contains evidentiary and analytical materials on the compliance of the JEP EO with the criteria of this standard, thus consistently reflects the results of self-assessment.

Justifications of the positions of the EO JEP (strong, satisfactory, suggests improvement, unsatisfactory) are given in accordance with the evaluation of the criteria by the JEP self-assessment working group. In the case of the assessment "suggests improvement" and "unsatisfactory", the proposed measures to strengthen the position are indicated.

At the end of each section, the conclusions of the EO working group on the standard are given, for example, "According to the standard "......" (name of the Standard), the JEP (name) has ___ "strong" positions, ___ "satisfactory" and ___ "suggesting improvement" positions.

III. SWOT ANALYSIS (1-3 pages)

The analysis of strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified during the self-assessment of the JEP EO for compliance with the standards of specialised/programme accreditation is given.

IV. Conclusion of the Self-Assessment Commission (7-8 pages)

The evaluation table "Parameters of the JEP profile" (section "Conclusion of the Self-Assessment Commission") is provided with a note on the compliance of the JEP with the criteria (strong/ satisfactory/ suggest improvements/ unsatisfactory) of the evaluation table, considered as the conclusions of the self-assessment working group.

Conclusion of the Self-Assessment Commission

* Completed in the case of international specialised accreditation (SA) of the joint educational programme.

№	№	№	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	Assessment Indicators			
				Strong	Satisfactory	Suggests improvement	Unsatisfactory
STANDARD 1. «RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT»							
Partner organisations of education shall:							
1	1	1.1.	be recognised by the authorities of the countries in which they are located that regulate education in healthcare and confirm compliance with established quality standards and requirements				
2	2	1.2.	ensure participation in implementation of the joint educational programme and compliance of the awarded academic degree/qualification with the national qualifications framework and regulatory acts of the countries in which the educational organisations are located				
3	3	1.3	have a Cooperation Agreement between partner educational organisations, which shall specify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information on the academic degree (qualification) awarded upon completion of the joint educational programme; • coordination and responsibilities of involved partner educational organisations regarding governance and financial arrangements (including funding, sharing of costs and revenues, etc.); • admission and selection rules for learners; • language of instruction, mobility of learners and academic staff; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ examination regulations, methods for assessment of achieved learning outcomes, recognition of ECTS credits and procedures for awarding joint academic degrees (qualifications) 				
4	4	1.4.	ensure availability of sufficient, accessible and purpose-appropriate resources for conducting scientific research, including infrastructure, laboratories, databases, funding and scientific schools; provide opportunities for independent research work of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students and implementation of projects relevant and adequate to programme objectives				
5	5	1.5.	guarantee that all scientific research is conducted in accordance with international and national ethical standards, principles of academic integrity, and approved by a competent ethics committee; provide training for doctoral candidates/postgraduate students in principles of research ethics				
6	6	1.6.	provide doctoral candidates/postgraduate students with opportunities to complete part of the programme, conduct research or undertake internships in other organisations, including foreign universities and research centres, with recognition of learning and research outcomes				

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7	7	1.7.	maintain sustainable cooperation with domestic and international educational organisations, laboratories, scientific centres and institutes in order to ensure high quality of doctoral/postgraduate programmes and development of research competences of learners				
8	8	1.8.	develop and implement joint (double/joint degree) educational and research programmes providing opportunities for obtaining joint or double scientific degrees, as well as international recognition of research results				
9	9	1.9.	include in the programme mission provisions related to achievements and development of medical research in biomedical, clinical, behavioural and social sciences, reflecting contribution to development of science, healthcare and society				
<i>Total by Standard</i>							
STANDARD 2. «TRAINING OUTCOMES»							
Partner organisations of education shall ensure that:							
10	1	2.1.	the joint educational programme provides formation of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for development of competent researchers capable of conducting responsible, independent, original and innovative scientific research in accordance with principles of international research practice and academic integrity				
11	2	2.2.	the content and outcomes of the joint educational programme take into account the needs, interests and professional preferences of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students, ensuring preparation for diverse career pathways in academic, clinical, research, managerial or industrial sectors				
12	3	2.3.	the joint educational programme is aimed at development of the following key competences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ability for critical analysis, solving research and practical problems, technology transfer and synthesis of new ideas; • systematic understanding of the field of study and mastery of modern scientific research methods within the relevant professional area; • ability to analyse data, design and conduct original research at a level corresponding to publications in international peer-reviewed journals; • ability to engage in academic and professional discussion, interact with reviewers, the scientific community and society as a whole; • ability to disseminate and apply new knowledge in academic, clinical and socio-economic contexts, including implementation of technological and cultural achievements 				
13	4	2.4.	the joint educational programme is oriented towards development of leadership qualities, skills in scientific supervision and mentoring, management of research projects, effective communication and transfer of knowledge to different audiences				
14	5	2.5.	the expected learning outcomes of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students in biomedicine and healthcare reflect the specifics of the professional field and simultaneously correspond to universal doctoral learning outcomes in other scientific disciplines, ensuring academic equivalence and comparability				
<i>Total by Standard</i>							
STANDARD 3. «POLICY AND CRITERIA FOR APPLICANT SELECTION»							
Partner organisations of education shall:							
15	1	3.1.	develop, approve, publish and consistently apply policies and procedures for selection of candidates for doctoral/postgraduate programmes based on principles of transparency, open competition, fairness and non-discrimination, ensuring their accessibility to all applicants				

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16	2	3.2.	admit candidates on the basis of their prior educational level that complies with legislative requirements and academic standards, with confirmation of qualifications necessary for commencement of research training				
17	3	3.3.	establish, publish and consistently apply regulations governing all stages of the programme “life cycle”, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluation of quality and feasibility of the proposed research project; • determination of the possibility of obtaining new scientific results sufficient for completion of a dissertation of the required quality within the established timeframe; • analysis of the degree of novelty, originality and creativity of the project; • verification of qualifications and research competence of scientific advisers/supervisors 				
18	4	3.4.	ensure accessibility of support services for doctoral candidates/postgraduate students (academic advising, library, digital, laboratory and other resources) necessary for successful completion of the joint educational programme				
19	5	3.5.	implement the programme only where adequate resources (financial, human and infrastructural) are available and sufficient for full implementation and completion of research work				
20	6	3.6.	evaluate both academic performance and research potential, motivation and readiness for independent scientific activity during candidate selection				
21	7	3.7.	organise evaluation of applicants’ research projects by a group of independent experts/reviewers using written reviews and/or oral presentation assessment, ensuring objectivity and academic integrity of the selection process.				
22	8	3.8.	provide the possibility of granting additional time for programme completion in justified cases (for example, need for additional funding, combination with clinical or teaching duties), while maintaining quality of training and academic requirements				
Total by Standard							
STANDARD 4. «TRAINING PROGRAMME»							
Partner organisations of education shall:							
23	1	4.1.	define and document procedures for development, approval and revision of the educational programme in accordance with legislative requirements and national and international quality standards				
24	2	4.2.	implement training programmes based on conducting original research, structured courses and other academic activities aimed at developing analytical, critical and research thinking among learners				
25	3	4.3.	guarantee that educational programmes comply with standards and requirements for quality of education, and that research work is carried out under supervision of qualified scientific supervisors/advisers in accordance with principles of academic integrity				
26	4	4.4.	ensure that educational programmes develop learners’ knowledge and skills in the areas of research ethics, academic integrity, protection of human rights and good research practice				
27	5	4.5.	provide learners with opportunities to complete part of their research or programme at another accredited institution, including foreign universities and research centres, with mutual recognition of results				
28	6	4.6.	guarantee that doctoral/postgraduate programmes combined with clinical or other professional activities provide an equivalent amount of time and opportunities for research and learning comparable to standard programmes				

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29	7	4.7.	ensure transparency of assessment procedures and their results, and provide timely information to learners regarding applied criteria, forms and procedures of assessment, including feedback mechanisms				
30	8	4.8.	provide doctoral candidates/postgraduate students with opportunities to undertake relevant educational courses or internships in other organisations, as well as to gain additional academic and professional experience				
31	9	4.9.	ensure provision of leave or release from clinical duties for learners working as clinicians in order to complete academic courses and research activities				
32	10	4.10.	guarantee access to confidential counselling for learners regarding educational programmes, scientific supervision, academic ethics, and personal and professional issues				
33	11	4.11.	establish a committee/council on dissertation research ensuring objective evaluation of learners' progress, quality of dissertation projects and scientific achievements				
34	12	4.12.	ensure participation of learner representatives in governance and evaluation of doctoral/postgraduate programmes; support activities of learner associations in order to strengthen the role of student self-governance within the academic process				
35	13	4.13.	have a formalised and accessible appeals mechanism enabling learners to challenge decisions related to the educational programme, assessment and dissertation defence, in accordance with principles of fairness and transparency				
Total by Standard							
STANDARD 5. «SCIENTIFIC SUPERVISION»							
Partner organisations of education shall:							
36	1	5.1.	guarantee that each doctoral candidate/postgraduate student has an appointed scientific supervisor/adviser and, where necessary, a co-supervisor, ensuring coverage of all aspects of the programme and research project				
37	2	5.2.	guarantee that the number of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students assigned to one scientific supervisor is proportionate to the supervisor's workload and allows provision of high-quality supervision and individual support				
38	3	5.3.	have transparent and objective procedures for selection and approval of scientific supervisors, confirming their competence, qualifications and active involvement in research activities within the relevant field of science				
39	4	5.4.	SA: confirm the existence of regular consultations between scientific supervisors and doctoral candidates/postgraduate students, documenting meetings, progress discussions and corrective actions.				
40	5	5.5.	provide mechanisms (courses, seminars, professional development programmes) for preparation and continuous development of competences of scientific supervisors and potential supervisors in the areas of mentoring and research ethics				
41	6	5.6.	have a policy regulating relations between the scientific supervisor and doctoral candidate/postgraduate student, based on principles of mutual respect, academic integrity, transparency of responsibilities, shared responsibility and shared contribution to research				
42	7	5.7.	define areas of responsibility of each scientific supervisor and establish a documented policy for distribution of rights and responsibilities of supervisors, including mechanisms for resolution of conflict situations				
43	8	5.8.	guarantee that scientific supervisors provide learners with opportunities for integration into the scientific community, including participation in conferences, publications, network projects and professional associations				

Standards and Guidelines for International Initial Accreditation of Joint Doctoral Programmes in the Field of Healthcare (based on WFMEAMSE/ESG)

44	9	5.9.	guarantee that scientific supervisors actively facilitate development of academic and professional careers of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students, including research, educational and managerial pathways				
45	10	5.10.	consider the possibility of concluding supervisory agreements describing the supervision process, roles, responsibilities and mutual obligations of the parties; such agreements shall be signed by the scientific supervisor, doctoral candidate/postgraduate student and the administration of the organisation				
46	11	5.11.	establish requirements that the principal scientific supervisor has confirmed experience of successful supervision of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students and/or formal training in supervision				
47	12	5.12.	provide opportunities for scientific supervisors to participate as co-supervisors of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students from other organisations both nationally and internationally in order to expand research experience and network cooperation				
Total by Standard							
STANDARD 6. «DISSERTATION»							
Partner organisations of education shall:							
48	1	6.1.	guarantee that the doctoral dissertation is a final qualification work confirming the ability of the doctoral candidate/postgraduate student to conduct independent, original and scientifically grounded research, as well as critical analysis and interpretation of results within the relevant field of science				
49	2	6.2.	define a standard duration of doctoral/postgraduate studies (3–4 years of full-time study), the outcome of which shall include publications in journals recommended by authorised bodies and internationally recognised peer-reviewed journals				
50	3	6.3.	guarantee that the dissertation complies with international requirements for scientific research and includes: a comprehensive literature review; clearly formulated aim and objectives; justified methodology; reliable and reproducible results; critical discussion; conclusions; identification of prospects for further research				
51	4	6.4.	guarantee that where the dissertation is presented in alternative formats (for example, cumulative dissertation or monograph), the evaluation committee ensures equivalence of the scientific contribution to established requirements and its compliance with national and international standards				
52	5	6.5.	in order to enhance international recognition, provide the possibility of writing and defending the dissertation in English (where not contrary to national regulations); dissertation abstracts and summaries shall be published at least in the state language and English				
53	6	6.6.	provide documentation of the individual contribution of the doctoral candidate/postgraduate student to joint publications and the dissertation, ensuring transparency and compliance with principles of academic integrity				
54	7	6.7.	provide for placement of full dissertation texts or their protected electronic copies in the institutional repository; where legislation restricts publication, ensure accessibility of the abstract or extended summary				
55	8	6.8.	guarantee publication of a short dissertation summary in the state language and English in open access on the official website of the educational organisation				
Total by Standard							
STANDARD 7. «DISSERTATION ASSESSMENT»							
Partner organisations of education shall:							
56	1	7.1.	ensure a multi-level process of dissertation assessment, including independent review, public defence and presentation				

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			of results in the form of an oral presentation, with mandatory recording of the procedure in official minutes				
57	2	7.2.	guarantee that awarding of the doctoral/candidate of sciences degree is based on the decision of the evaluation committee of the educational organisation that conducted a comprehensive assessment of the written dissertation and oral defence, provided compliance with the requirements of Standard 6 and national regulatory norms				
58	3	7.3.	ensure that the evaluation committee consists of researchers actively engaged in research within the relevant field, who are not connected with the doctoral candidate's/postgraduate student's research topic and do not have conflicts of interest; provide participation of at least two representatives from other organisations (preferably international)				
59	4	7.4.	guarantee that, in order to avoid conflicts of interest, scientific supervisors, co-supervisors and scientific advisers are not members of the evaluation committee and do not participate in decision-making regarding the dissertation				
60	5	7.5.	ensure a fair and transparent resubmission procedure: in the event of a negative decision regarding the written dissertation, the doctoral candidate/postgraduate student shall be given the opportunity to revise the work; in the event of a negative decision regarding the oral defence, an opportunity for repeated defence shall be provided (where not contrary to legislation). In exceptional cases, the evaluation committee may deny the right to repeated defence in the presence of serious violations of academic integrity				
61	6	7.6.	guarantee that the oral defence of the dissertation is conducted as an open and public procedure ensuring academic transparency, with the possibility of participation of external experts and representatives of the professional community				
62	7	7.7.	implement a policy of internationalisation of the assessment procedure by ensuring participation in the evaluation committee of at least one representative of a foreign university or research centre (offline or online format).				
63	8	7.8.	ensure that the defence evaluates not only research results, but also competences developed during the programme: critical thinking, methodological literacy, academic integrity, ability for scientific communication and ethical conduct of research.				
Total by Standard							
STANDARD 8. «SCHOOL STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE»							
Partner organisations of education shall:							
64	1	8.1.	have a published and regularly updated quality assurance policy integrated into the strategic management of the organisation. The policy shall be developed with participation of internal and external stakeholders, include mechanisms for monitoring, self-assessment, CAPA procedures (corrective and preventive actions), and be accessible to all interested parties.				
65	2	8.2.	have a clearly defined governance structure for doctoral/postgraduate programmes ensuring transparency of decision-making, accountability, stakeholder participation, and alignment with the mission and functions of the university. The structure shall ensure long-term sustainability of programmes and continuity of academic leadership.				
66	3	8.3.	guarantee systematic collection, analysis and use of relevant information (academic, research, human resources, financial, graduate employment data) for effective management of doctoral/postgraduate programmes, applying digital data management tools and BI systems to ensure transparency and analytical capacity of processes.				
67	4	8.4.	inform the public about the activities of the organisation (including doctoral/postgraduate training programmes) through				

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			regular publication of clear, reliable, objective and up-to-date information. Information shall cover mission, objectives, curricula, admission procedures, learning outcomes, and achievements of learners and graduates.				
68	5	8.5.	open and maintain an official web section dedicated to doctoral/postgraduate programmes in the state language and English. The section shall contain information on programme structure, admission criteria, learning outcomes, research projects, graduate employment and international cooperation.				
<i>Total by Standard</i>							
STANDARD 9. «CONTINUOUS RENEWAL»							
Partner organisations of education shall:							
69	1	9.1.	conduct regular monitoring and systematic evaluation of doctoral/postgraduate programmes, including analysis of mission, structure, content, teaching methods and training outcomes. Ensure the use of the PDCA cycle (Plan–Do–Check–Act) for continuous improvement of the educational programme				
70	2	9.2.	guarantee that results of programme monitoring and evaluation take into account the needs of learners, the academic community, employers, the healthcare system and society. Ensure transparency of results and communication of planned and implemented improvements to all stakeholders				
71	3	9.3	conduct external quality assurance and accreditation procedures in accordance with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG), WFME and other recognised international requirements on a regular basis. Use results of external evaluation for implementation of corrective and preventive actions (CAPA)				
72	4	9.4	use benchmarking with leading national and international educational and research programmes to identify best practices and introduce innovations into the educational process. Take into account data on graduate employment, scientific productivity and career pathways when revising programmes				
<i>Total by Standard</i>							
GRAND TOTAL ACCORDING TO ALL STANDARDS							

Conclusion of the Self-Assessment Commission

* Completed in the case of international initial specialised accreditation (ISA) of the joint educational programme

№	№	№	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	Assessment Indicators			
				Strong	Satisfactory	Suggests improvement	Unsatisfactory
STANDARD 1. «RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT»							
Partner organisations of education shall:							
1	1	1.1.	be recognised by the authorities of the countries in which they are located that regulate education in healthcare and confirm compliance with established quality standards and requirements				
2	2	1.2.	ensure participation in implementation of the joint educational programme and compliance of the awarded academic degree/qualification with the national qualifications framework and regulatory acts of the countries in which the educational organisations are located				
3	3	1.3.	have a Cooperation Agreement between partner educational organisations, which shall specify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information on the academic degree (qualification) awarded upon completion of the joint educational programme; • coordination and responsibilities of involved partner educational organisations regarding governance and financial arrangements (including funding, sharing of costs and revenues, etc.); • admission and selection rules for learners; • language of instruction, mobility of learners and academic staff; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ examination regulations, methods for assessment of achieved learning outcomes, recognition of ECTS credits and procedures for awarding joint academic degrees (qualifications) 				
4	4	1.4.	ensure availability of sufficient, accessible and purpose-appropriate resources for conducting scientific research, including infrastructure, laboratories, databases, funding and scientific schools; provide opportunities for independent research work of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students and implementation of projects relevant and adequate to programme objectives				
5	5	1.5.	guarantee that all scientific research is conducted in accordance with international and national ethical standards, principles of academic integrity, and approved by a competent ethics committee; provide training for doctoral candidates/postgraduate students in principles of research ethics				
6	6	1.6.	provide doctoral candidates/postgraduate students with opportunities to complete part of the programme, conduct research or undertake internships in other organisations, including foreign universities and research centres, with recognition of learning and research outcomes				
7	7	1.7.	maintain sustainable cooperation with domestic and international educational organisations, laboratories, scientific centres and institutes in order to ensure high quality of				

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			doctoral/postgraduate programmes and development of research competences of learners				
8	8	1.8.	develop and implement joint (double/joint degree) educational and research programmes providing opportunities for obtaining joint or double scientific degrees, as well as international recognition of research results				
9	9	1.9.	include in the programme mission provisions related to achievements and development of medical research in biomedical, clinical, behavioural and social sciences, reflecting contribution to development of science, healthcare and society				
<i>Total by Standard</i>							
STANDARD 2. “TRAINING OUTCOMES”							
Partner organisations of education shall ensure that:							
10	1	2.1.	the joint educational programme provides formation of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for development of competent researchers capable of conducting responsible, independent, original and innovative scientific research in accordance with principles of international research practice and academic integrity				
11	2	2.2.	the content and outcomes of the joint educational programme take into account the needs, interests and professional preferences of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students, ensuring preparation for diverse career pathways in academic, clinical, research, managerial or industrial sectors				
12	3	2.3.	the joint educational programme is aimed at development of the following key competences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ability for critical analysis, solving research and practical problems, technology transfer and synthesis of new ideas; • systematic understanding of the field of study and mastery of modern scientific research methods within the relevant professional area; • ability to analyse data, design and conduct original research at a level corresponding to publications in international peer-reviewed journals; • ability to engage in academic and professional discussion, interact with reviewers, the scientific community and society as a whole; • ability to disseminate and apply new knowledge in academic, clinical and socio-economic contexts, including implementation of technological and cultural achievements 				
13	4	2.4.	the joint educational programme is oriented towards development of leadership qualities, skills in scientific supervision and mentoring, management of research projects, effective communication and transfer of knowledge to different audiences				
14	5	2.5.	the expected learning outcomes of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students in biomedicine and healthcare reflect the specifics of the professional field and simultaneously correspond to universal doctoral learning outcomes in other scientific disciplines, ensuring academic equivalence and comparability				
<i>Total by Standard</i>							
STANDARD 3. “POLICY AND CRITERIA FOR APPLICANT SELECTION”							
Partner organisations of education shall:							
15	1	3.1.	develop, approve, publish and consistently apply policies and procedures for selection of candidates for doctoral/postgraduate programmes based on principles of transparency, open competition, fairness and non-discrimination, ensuring their accessibility to all applicants				
16	2	3.2.	admit candidates on the basis of their prior educational level that complies with legislative requirements and academic standards,				

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			with confirmation of qualifications necessary for commencement of research training				
17	3	3.3.	<p>establish, publish and consistently apply regulations governing all stages of the programme “life cycle”, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluation of quality and feasibility of the proposed research project; • determination of the possibility of obtaining new scientific results sufficient for completion of a dissertation of the required quality within the established timeframe; • analysis of the degree of novelty, originality and creativity of the project; • verification of qualifications and research competence of scientific advisers/supervisors 				
18	4	3.4.	ensure accessibility of support services for doctoral candidates/postgraduate students (academic advising, library, digital, laboratory and other resources) necessary for successful completion of the joint educational programme				
19	5	3.5.	implement the programme only where adequate resources (financial, human and infrastructural) are available and sufficient for full implementation and completion of research work				
20	6	3.6.	evaluate both academic performance and research potential, motivation and readiness for independent scientific activity during candidate selection				
21	7	3.7.	<p>SA: organise evaluation of applicants’ research projects by a group of independent experts/reviewers using written reviews and/or oral presentation assessment, ensuring objectivity and academic integrity of the selection process.</p> <p>ISA: ensure functioning of a system of external evaluation of projects (written reviews or oral presentations) with mandatory involvement of independent experts</p>				
22	8	3.8.	provide the possibility of granting additional time for programme completion in justified cases (for example, need for additional funding, combination with clinical or teaching duties), while maintaining quality of training and academic requirements				
Total by Standard							
STANDARD 4. “TRAINING PROGRAMME”							
Partner organisations of education shall:							
23	1	4.1.	define and document procedures for development, approval and revision of the educational programme in accordance with legislative requirements and national and international quality standards				
24	2	4.2.	implement training programmes based on conducting original research, structured courses and other academic activities aimed at developing analytical, critical and research thinking among learners				
25	3	4.3.	guarantee that educational programmes comply with standards and requirements for quality of education, and that research work is carried out under supervision of qualified scientific supervisors/advisers in accordance with principles of academic integrity				
26	4	4.4.	ensure that educational programmes develop learners’ knowledge and skills in the areas of research ethics, academic integrity, protection of human rights and good research practice				
27	5	4.5.	provide learners with opportunities to complete part of their research or programme at another accredited institution, including foreign universities and research centres, with mutual recognition of results				
28	6	4.6.	guarantee that doctoral/postgraduate programmes combined with clinical or other professional activities provide an				

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			equivalent amount of time and opportunities for research and learning comparable to standard programmes				
29	7	4.7.	ensure transparency of assessment procedures and their results, and provide timely information to learners regarding applied criteria, forms and procedures of assessment, including feedback mechanisms				
30	8	4.8.	provide doctoral candidates/postgraduate students with opportunities to undertake relevant educational courses or internships in other organisations, as well as to gain additional academic and professional experience				
31	9	4.9.	ensure provision of leave or release from clinical duties for learners working as clinicians in order to complete academic courses and research activities				
32	10	4.10.	guarantee access to confidential counselling for learners regarding educational programmes, scientific supervision, academic ethics, and personal and professional issues				
33	11	4.11.	establish a committee/council on dissertation research ensuring objective evaluation of learners' progress, quality of dissertation projects and scientific achievements				
34	12	4.12.	ensure participation of learner representatives in governance and evaluation of doctoral/postgraduate programmes; support activities of learner associations in order to strengthen the role of student self-governance within the academic process				
35	13	4.13.	have a formalised and accessible appeals mechanism enabling learners to challenge decisions related to the educational programme, assessment and dissertation defence, in accordance with principles of fairness and transparency				
Total by Standard							
STANDARD 5. "SCIENTIFIC SUPERVISION"							
Partner organisations of education shall:							
36	1	5.1.	guarantee that each doctoral candidate/postgraduate student has an appointed scientific supervisor/adviser and, where necessary, a co-supervisor, ensuring coverage of all aspects of the programme and research project				
37	2	5.2.	guarantee that the number of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students assigned to one scientific supervisor is proportionate to the supervisor's workload and allows provision of high-quality supervision and individual support				
38	3	5.3.	have transparent and objective procedures for selection and approval of scientific supervisors, confirming their competence, qualifications and active involvement in research activities within the relevant field of science				
39	4	5.4.	regulate the conduct of regular consultations and their documentation				
40	5	5.5.	provide mechanisms (courses, seminars, professional development programmes) for preparation and continuous development of competences of scientific supervisors and potential supervisors in the areas of mentoring and research ethics				
41	6	5.6.	have a policy regulating relations between the scientific supervisor and doctoral candidate/postgraduate student, based on principles of mutual respect, academic integrity, transparency of responsibilities, shared responsibility and shared contribution to research				
42	7	5.7.	define areas of responsibility of each scientific supervisor and establish a documented policy for distribution of rights and responsibilities of supervisors, including mechanisms for resolution of conflict situations				
43	8	5.8.	guarantee that scientific supervisors provide learners with opportunities for integration into the scientific community, including participation in conferences, publications, network projects and professional associations				

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44	9	5.9.	guarantee that scientific supervisors actively facilitate development of academic and professional careers of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students, including research, educational and managerial pathways				
45	10	5.10.	consider the possibility of concluding supervisory agreements describing the supervision process, roles, responsibilities and mutual obligations of the parties; such agreements shall be signed by the scientific supervisor, doctoral candidate/postgraduate student and the administration of the organisation				
46	11	5.11.	establish requirements that the principal scientific supervisor has confirmed experience of successful supervision of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students and/or formal training in supervision				
47	12	5.12.	provide opportunities for scientific supervisors to participate as co-supervisors of doctoral candidates/postgraduate students from other organisations both nationally and internationally in order to expand research experience and network cooperation				
Total by Standard							
STANDARD 6. “DISSERTATION”							
Partner organisations of education shall:							
48	1	6.1.	guarantee that the doctoral dissertation is a final qualification work confirming the ability of the doctoral candidate/postgraduate student to conduct independent, original and scientifically grounded research, as well as critical analysis and interpretation of results within the relevant field of science				
49	2	6.2.	define a standard duration of doctoral/postgraduate studies (3–4 years of full-time study), the outcome of which shall include publications in journals recommended by authorised bodies and internationally recognised peer-reviewed journals				
50	3	6.3.	guarantee that the dissertation complies with international requirements for scientific research and includes: a comprehensive literature review; clearly formulated aim and objectives; justified methodology; reliable and reproducible results; critical discussion; conclusions; identification of prospects for further research				
51	4	6.4.	guarantee that where the dissertation is presented in alternative formats (for example, cumulative dissertation or monograph), the evaluation committee ensures equivalence of the scientific contribution to established requirements and its compliance with national and international standards				
52	5	6.5.	in order to enhance international recognition, provide the possibility of writing and defending the dissertation in English (where not contrary to national regulations); dissertation abstracts and summaries shall be published at least in the state language and English				
53	6	6.6.	provide documentation of the individual contribution of the doctoral candidate/postgraduate student to joint publications and the dissertation, ensuring transparency and compliance with principles of academic integrity				
54	7	6.7.	provide for placement of full dissertation texts or their protected electronic copies in the institutional repository; where legislation restricts publication, ensure accessibility of the abstract or extended summary				
55	8	6.8.	guarantee publication of a short dissertation summary in the state language and English in open access on the official website of the educational organisation				
Total by Standard							
STANDARD 7. “DISSERTATION ASSESSMENT”							
Partner organisations of education shall:							
56	1	7.1.	ensure a multi-level process of dissertation assessment, including independent review, public defence and presentation				

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			of results in the form of an oral presentation, with mandatory recording of the procedure in official minutes				
57	2	7.2.	guarantee that awarding of the doctoral/candidate of sciences degree is based on the decision of the evaluation committee of the educational organisation that conducted a comprehensive assessment of the written dissertation and oral defence, provided compliance with the requirements of Standard 6 and national regulatory norms				
58	3	7.3.	ensure that the evaluation committee consists of researchers actively engaged in research within the relevant field, who are not connected with the doctoral candidate's/postgraduate student's research topic and do not have conflicts of interest; provide participation of at least two representatives from other organisations (preferably international)				
59	4	7.4.	guarantee that, in order to avoid conflicts of interest, scientific supervisors, co-supervisors and scientific advisers are not members of the evaluation committee and do not participate in decision-making regarding the dissertation				
60	5	7.5.	ensure a fair and transparent resubmission procedure: in the event of a negative decision regarding the written dissertation, the doctoral candidate/postgraduate student shall be given the opportunity to revise the work; in the event of a negative decision regarding the oral defence, an opportunity for repeated defence shall be provided (where not contrary to legislation). In exceptional cases, the evaluation committee may deny the right to repeated defence in the presence of serious violations of academic integrity				
61	6	7.6.	guarantee that the oral defence of the dissertation is conducted as an open and public procedure ensuring academic transparency, with the possibility of participation of external experts and representatives of the professional community				
62	7	7.7.	provide for participation of representatives of foreign organisations in the committee (offline or online)				
63	8	7.8.	include learner competences (critical thinking, methodology, ethics, scientific communication) within the assessment criteria				
Total by Standard							
STANDARD 8. "SCHOOL STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE"							
Partner organisations of education shall:							
64	1	8.1.	adopt and publish a quality assurance policy integrated into strategic management				
65	2	8.2.	define a governance structure for the doctoral/postgraduate programme ensuring transparency and accountability				
66	3	8.3.	establish procedures for collection and analysis of information for programme management; implement basic digital data management tools				
67	4	8.4.	ensure publication of reliable information about the programme (mission, objectives, curricula, admission procedures, learning outcomes)				
68	5	8.5.	create an official web section for doctoral/postgraduate programmes in the state language and English				
Total by Standard							
GRAND TOTAL ACCORDING TO ALL STANDARDS							

Appendices to the self-assessment report (issued as a separate file in accordance with the requirements of standards and guidelines for international accreditation of joint doctoral education programmes or applications can be made in the form of hyperlinks in the text of the self-assessment report

Appendix 4. Example of the title page

Name of the EO

APPROVED
Rector
_____ Full name
sign
« _____ » _____ 20____
seals

SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT

**on the joint educational programme
"Name of the programme" of
"Name of the educational institution"
or
for the cluster of joint educational programmes
"Name of the programmes" of
"Name of the educational institution"
prepared for
the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR)**

City, year

Appendix 5. Functions and responsibilities of the members of the EEP

Functions of the Chairman:

- participation in the development of the programme of the visit to the EO and responsibility for its implementation, leadership and coordination of the work of the members of the EEP, preparation of the final report of the EEP with recommendations for improving the quality of the EP and recommendations for the Accreditation Council;
- interaction with the IAAR coordinator prior to conducting an external evaluation on the organisation and visit and programme approval;
- setting the agenda and holding meetings;
- ensuring the participation of members of the expert commission at meetings with various target groups, as well as monitoring compliance by experts with the main purpose of the external assessment and visit to the EO;
- ensuring collegial discussion of the evaluation table of parameters by the entire composition of the EEP in accordance with international standards IAAR;
- holding a final meeting with the members of the EEP to coordinate recommendations on the accreditation of the JEP;
- Presentation of the results of the visit to the EO and the main provisions of the EEP report at the meeting of the Accreditation Council. In case of his absence for a valid reason, the presentation of the results of the visit to the EO is carried out by one of the members of the EEP.

Duties of the Chairman

Before the visit:

- get acquainted with the data of the EO and JEP;
- study the EP self-assessment report and write a review according to the requirements of the IAAR;
- take part in the development of the programme of the visit of the EEP;
- officially present all the members of the EEP at a preliminary meeting, inform the purpose of the visit, discuss the programme of the visit and the self-assessment report of the EP.

During the visit:

- to hear the opinions of the members of the EEP on the self-assessment of the JEP and identify areas that require clarification;
- distribute responsibilities among the members of the EEP;
- speak at meetings with target groups;
- hold a final meeting with the members of the EEP to agree on recommendations;
- to provide oral feedback on the results of the visit of the EEP, to familiarise with the draft recommendations of a general nature in time for the final meeting with the management of the EO.

After the visit:

- to prepare a draft report on the results of the visit of the EEP and coordinate it with the members of the EEP;
- send a draft report on the results of the EEP visit for consideration by the IAAR;
- if there are actual inaccuracies identified after the approval of the EEP report with the EO, make the necessary changes to the EEP report and coordinate them with the EEP members;
- in case of disagreement with the comments of the EO to the EEP report, prepare together with the IAAR coordinator an official response with justification in the EO;
- To prepare a report of the EEP for submission to the Accreditation Council for consideration.

Functions of an external expert

- assessment of the completeness and reliability of the results of the self-assessment of the JEP in accordance with international standards IAAR;
- preparation for each meeting with the target groups of the EO with the definition of key issues in accordance with international standards IAAR;
- preparation of a report on the results of an external evaluation of the EP for compliance with international IAAR standards;
- development of recommendations for improving the quality of JEP;
- development of recommendations for the Accreditation Council for Accreditation in accordance with the level of preparedness of the EO for accreditation of doctoral educational programmes.

Responsibilities of an external expert

Before the visit:

- study all documentation, including the self-assessment report and any other available information (Standards, legal acts in the field of education, the relevant country where accreditation is carried out, IAAR websites, EO, etc.);
- keep in touch with IAAR and the Chairman of the EEP;
- prepare a review (except for employers and students) for compliance with international accreditation standards according to IAAR requirements;
- discuss with the IAAR Coordinator and Chairman a visit to the EO;
- coordinate with the IAAR coordinator the details of the trip;
- participate in the preliminary meeting of the EEP.

During the visit:

- actively participate in all meetings and discussions, contribute to the work of the EEP;
- perform duties within the EEP related to the direction of the assessment;
- inform the IAAR Coordinator and the Chairman of any doubts and questions that arise during the work of the EEP;
- to continue working as part of the EEP during the entire period of the visit;
- to speak at meetings in agreement with the Chairman of the EEP;
- document the received data;
- provide the Chairman of the EEP with the necessary documentation on the data obtained during the external evaluation;
- conduct interviews with target groups;
- attend various types of classes, training facilities, practice base, etc. according to the programme of the visit of the EEP;
- participate in conducting online surveys of teachers and students aimed at identifying the degree of satisfaction with the educational process;
- receive through the IAAR Coordinator and the Chairman additional information necessary to analyse the prospects of the JEP.

After the visit:

- participate in the preparation of the EEP report;
- destroy confidential materials received during the visit;
- not to disclose the results of the external evaluation of the JEP until the official decision of the AC is made.

Appendix 6. Preparation of an External Expert Panel for the Site Visit

The purpose of the visit of the External Expert Panel of the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating to the educational organisation is to evaluate the quality of the joint educational programme in accordance with the IAAR international accreditation standards and to develop recommendations on accreditation for consideration by the Accreditation Council. To achieve this purpose, the following objectives have been defined:

- verification of completeness and reliability of the results of the self-evaluation of the joint educational programme;
- conducting evaluation in accordance with the IAAR international standards developed on the basis of ESG;
- preparation of the External Expert Panel report based on the results of evaluation of the joint educational programme;
- development of recommendations for improvement of the quality of the joint educational programme;
- preparation of recommendations for the Accreditation Council regarding accreditation in accordance with the level of preparedness of the educational organisation and the joint educational programme for accreditation.

Materials considered by the EEP before the visit to the EO

The following methodological and regulatory documentation is sent to the members of the external expert commission:

- Regulatory documents concerning the external audit of the EO, JEP;
- Standards and Guidelines for International IAAR Accreditation (based on WFME/AMSE/ESG);
- Self-assessment report submitted within the framework of the accredited JEP;
- Information about the composition of the expert panel;
- Schedule of the visit to the EO;
- Additional information about the EO, JEP (at the request of members of the external expert commission).

Review of the self-assessment report of the accredited JEP

After receiving the self-assessment report (SAR) of the EP accredited by IAAR, copies of the SAR are sent to the expert commission no later than 6 weeks before the date of the visit.

Each member of the expert commission must carefully study the SAR and write a review (except for the employer and the student) in accordance with the requirements of the IAAR.

Preliminary meeting of the EEP

The preliminary meeting is held in order to coordinate and distribute the responsibilities of the members of the EEP by the Chairman, discuss the programme of the visit, the self-assessment report of the JEP to identify key points and issues requiring additional information. The preliminary meeting of the EEP is held according to the programme the day before the visit to the EO. Only EEP members are present at the meeting. The preliminary meeting provides for consideration of the following issues:

- Does the SAR provide sufficient information on all aspects specified in this Manual at the EO level?
- What additional information about EO and JEP should be provided?
- Is the specifics of EO and JEP sufficiently reflected?
- Have the strategic goals been achieved?
- Are the mechanisms of strategic management of the EO and the management of the JEP clearly defined?

- What are the main areas of issues that should be taken into account during the visit in particular?

The Chairman of the external expert commission and its members should discuss their impressions on the results of the information received prior to the visit, in order to identify any additional documentation they would like to access, and the main structure and strategy of the visit should also be determined.

Recommendations for planning the work of the EEP

The EO submits a preliminary schedule of events planned during the visit to the IAAR and the Chairman of the expert commission for consideration.

The plan of activities during the visit should be well drawn up to improve the efficiency of the work schedule. The planned meeting should provide an opportunity to cross-check the facts presented in the self-assessment report.

The work schedule should include meetings with the management of the EO and its departments, employees, students, graduates and representatives of professional associations.

When planning a visit, it should be provided that the expert commission needs sufficient time to hold group meetings at which the members of the expert commission can review the evidence presented, formulate and discuss preliminary conclusions, as well as resolve issues on the main structure and agenda of the next meetings and interviews with key employees and stakeholders of the EO and EP. The expert group should also have sufficient time for individual meetings with employees and students of the EO.

The schedule of the visit of the EO by the expert group for external evaluation should also include information about the participants of the EO JEP.

In order to make the most effective use of the time allocated for the visit, the expert group can be divided into small subgroups for meetings and interviews in the EO.

Meetings and interviews during the visit

During meetings and interviews with EO representatives, the expert group verifies the information provided by the EO in the self-assessment report. It is expected that the scheduled meetings should provide an opportunity for cross-checking the facts.

The results of the meetings and interviews serve as the basis for evaluating the JEP. For this purpose, each member of the expert commission receives reference tables with verification criteria.

Meeting with management

The meeting with the management staff is aimed at obtaining general information about the activities of the EO, quality assurance policies and mechanisms, compliance with regional and national quality assurance requirements.

During the interaction, the parties discuss the participation of all stakeholders (administrative bodies, teachers, students and employers) in determining the goals and development strategy of the EO in the field of education.

Meetings with the management of departments

Interviews with the heads of departments are aimed at discussing issues related to the development and implementation of JEP and the processes that ensure their implementation, as well as research activities and general management.

The optimal number of participants in group discussions is from ten to twenty people.

Meetings with students

Students are a valuable source of information, and the opinions of students should be compared with the information provided by the teaching staff.

From interviews with students, the expert group receives information about the workload, the level of professional competence of teachers, the systematicity and consistency of the JEP, the clarity of goals and objectives, the development of curricula, as well as the material resources available for the implementation of the educational process.

Interviews with students should be conducted in a favorable environment, at meetings organised for interviews only with students. The optimal number of students for the meeting is no more than twenty people. Students invited to the interview should be familiar with the programme accreditation considered.

It is recommended that the selection of candidates for interviews from among the students be carried out by members of the expert commission.

Meetings with the teaching staff

During meetings and interviews with the teaching staff, issues related to the implementation of the educational process, quality assurance, as well as research, mobility, resources and funding are discussed.

Topics/questions that were previously discussed at meetings with students are also raised. The preferred number of participants is 15-25 people.

Meeting with Master's Students (if applicable)

Interviews with Master's students provide information on the degree of continuity and consistency of educational levels; the role of research at each level of education; and the quality and availability of material and technical resources for research.

The expert group should include Master's students from various years of study and graduates of specialized educational programs.

Meeting with graduates

Graduates are a very important source of information. The opinions of graduates provide information about satisfaction with the level of education, the realisation of expectations for promotion and salary increases, employment opportunities and opportunities for further education.

Interviews should be conducted in the absence of teaching staff so that respondents can express their opinions. The optimal number of group members is up to 25 people. The group should include graduates of this JEP EO.

Meeting with employers

The key issues that should be discussed during meetings with employers are the level of competence of graduates of the EO, the demand for graduates in the regional labor market. The meetings also discuss the problems of cooperation and interaction with an educational institution in the field of management, coordination of the content of the JEP and quality assessment.

Teachers should not participate in this meeting. The group of employers should include representatives of organisations that regularly hire graduates of the EO. If possible, the employer organisations should not be represented by former students of the EO. The optimal number of group members is 15-25 people.

Summing up and preparing recommendations

Summing up the results in accordance with the evaluation table "Parameters of the JEP profile" is carried out on the basis of an individual external assessment collectively.

The evaluation table "Parameters of the JEP profile" is the final document for summarising the work of the EEP.

The evaluation table "JEP Profile Parameters" allows the EEP to determine the position of the EO, which is evaluated according to each criterion as follows:

"Strong" is characterised by a high level of indicators of the accreditation standard. This position of the standard allows us to serve as an example of good practice for dissemination among other public organisations.

"Satisfactory" is determined by the average level of indicators of the accreditation standard.

"Suggests improvement" is characterised by a low level of indicators of the standard of accreditation.

"Unsatisfactory" means that the indicators of the JEP EO do not meet the standard of accreditation of the JEP.

Based on the collegial decision of the EEP, based on the results of the assessment, it prepares a report with recommendations on accreditation for the AC and on improving the quality of the EO JEP.

The EEP recommends one of the following decisions to the Accreditation Council:

to accredit the JEP EO and (or) for a period of 1/3/5/7 years;

not to accredit JEP EO.

In case of compliance with the IAAR Standards, the EEP makes a recommendation to improve the quality.

In case of non-compliance of the JEP EO with the IAAR Standards, the EEP recommends determining the measures necessary to bring the JEP EO into compliance with the IAAR Standards.

Final meeting of the members of the external expert panel with representatives of the EO

The chairman of the external expert commission should clearly and concisely present the key issues that are important for the effective implementation of the JEP, indicate the advantages and disadvantages of the JEP EO under consideration, suggest alternative ways to solve the identified problems and recommendations on the action plan aimed at improving the quality of educational activities.

The conclusions of the review should not be mentioned. The results of the audit are also not discussed.

Workplace of the external expert commission

During the visit to the EO, it should provide a separate workplace for the expert commission for panel meetings and review sessions. During the entire visit, only members of the expert commission should have access to the premises.

The room for the expert commission should be spacious and separate from other rooms, also have a large desk for documents, a desk for collegial work, an international telephone, a computer with Internet access and a printer.

All documentation related to the external evaluation process, including the list of teachers, JEP, work programmes, student papers, research documents, catalogs, leaflets, etc. should be collected in the specified working room.

Appendix 7. Responsibilities of the IAAR Coordinator within the framework of the international accreditation procedure for joint educational programmes

Before the visit:

- provide normative and methodological materials on the organisation and conduct of the self-assessment of the EO developed by IAAR;
- keep in touch with the EO and participate in meetings on the accreditation procedure;
- advise the EO on the accreditation procedure, including on self-assessment and the preparation of a self-assessment report;
- carry out technical proofreading of the self-assessment report for completeness and applicability (if important omissions are found, request missing materials from the EO coordinator);
- Instruct external experts on the requirements of international accreditation.
- Provide external experts with regulatory and methodological materials (developed by IAAR) defining the activities of the external expert commission.
- provide the necessary information in a timely manner, including a self-assessment report to the members of the EEP for study and review;
- send, if necessary, recommendations to the EO on finalising the self-assessment report based on expert reviews;
- coordinate the time frame of the EEP visit to the EO;
- organise a visit to the EEP (accommodation, meals, transfer, etc.);
- provide the EEP with an approved visit program;
- send the composition of the EEP to the EO to exclude a conflict of interest 14 calendar days before the visit;
- act as the main contact person and maintain communication between the EEP, EO and IAAR;
- to organise information support for the preliminary meeting of the members of the external expert commission before the visit to the EO.

During the visit:

- regulate the activities of the EEP, provide the necessary methodological materials;
- to create a favorable psychological climate for the work of the EEP;
- monitor the integrity of the accreditation process and ensure compliance with IAAR requirements.

After the visit:

- send the draft of the EEP report to the EO in order to prevent factual inaccuracies in the content of the report;
- Ensure timely transfer of materials to the AC Secretary;
- send the report of the EEP to the EO after the decision of the AC on the accreditation of the JEP of the EO (in case of a positive decision of the AC on accreditation, provide a request for an Action Plan to implement the recommendations of the EEP);
- inform the members of the EEP about the decision of the AC;
- to provide feedback on the accreditation procedure of the JEP of the EO (online survey of the members of the EEP and the EO after the decision on accreditation).