



# REPORT

on the activities of the  
National Accreditation and  
Rating Agency (IAAR) for  
the year 2025



Astana, 2025



**REPORT**  
**on the Activities of the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR)**  
**for 2025**

**Astana, 2025**

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## **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

**ABET** - Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology  
**ACQUIN** - Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute  
**APQN** - Asia-Pacific Quality Network  
**ASIIN** - Accreditation Agency for Degree Programs in Engineering, Informatics, Natural Sciences and Mathematics  
**CEENQA** - Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education  
**CIQG** - Council for Higher Education Accreditation International Quality Group (USA)  
**ENQA** - European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education  
**EQAR** - European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education  
**ESG** - Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area  
**ISQua** - International Society for Quality in Health Care  
**IAAR** - Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating  
**INQAAHE** - International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education  
**IREG** - International Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence  
**PhD** - Doctor of Philosophy programme  
**MA** - Master's programme  
**MQA** - Malaysian Qualifications Agency  
**QA** - Quality Assurance  
**AC** - Accreditation Council  
**BA** - Bachelor's programme  
**IQAS** - Internal Quality Assurance System  
**HEI** – Higher Education Institution  
**HPE** - Higher and Postgraduate Education  
**WFME** - World Federation for Medical Education  
**EEP** - External Expert Panel  
**CE** - Continuing Education  
**ДОО** - Preschool Educational Organisation  
**EHEA** - European Higher Education Area  
**IA** - Institutional Accreditation  
**IA (Ex-Ante)** - Initial Institutional Accreditation  
**KR** - Kyrgyz Republic  
**MSHE RK** - Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan  
**MES KR** - Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic  
**HKCAAVQ** - Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications  
**NCHDE** - National Centre for Higher Education Development  
**SRI** - Scientific Research Institute  
**NCE** - National Chamber of Entrepreneurs of the Republic of Kazakhstan  
“Atameken”

**NCEQE** - National System for Education Quality Evaluation  
**EO** - Education Organisation  
**EP** - Educational Programme  
**BEP** - Basic Educational Programme  
**HEP** - Higher Education Programmes  
**CPEO** – Continuing Professional Education Organisation  
**AS** – Academic Staff  
**ISA** - Initial Specialised (programme) Accreditation  
**RK** - Republic of Kazakhstan  
**PA** - Programme Accreditation  
**PA (Ex-Ante)** - Initial Programme Accreditation of Educational Programmes  
**TVET** - Technical and Vocational Education and Training  
**FSBI** - Federal State Budgetary Institution  
**EC** - Expert Council



## INTRODUCTION

The Non-Profit Institution “Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating” (hereinafter - IAAR) is one of the leading international accreditation agencies in the field of education quality assurance and operates in accordance with recognised international approaches and best practices in quality assessment.

IAAR is a full member of leading international and regional networks and associations in the field of education quality assurance, including INQAAHE (International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education), CHEA/CIQG (Council for Higher Education Accreditation International Quality Group, USA), IREG (International Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence), CEENQA (Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education), APQN (Asia-Pacific Quality Network), APQR (Asia-Pacific Quality Register), and IQA (Association of Quality Assurance Agencies of the Islamic World).

IAAR’s activities are carried out in strict compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), as well as the requirements of the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME), ensuring international recognition of the Agency’s accreditation results. IAAR is the first accreditation body in the Republic of Kazakhstan to obtain full membership status in ENQA, confirming a high level of institutional maturity and the sustainability of its internal quality assurance system.

By decision of the Register Committee of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) dated 27–28 June 2022, IAAR was re-included in the Register for a period of five years. Inclusion in EQAR confirms the consistency, transparency, and comparability of IAAR’s activities with European standards of quality assessment. In June 2024, the Agency successfully underwent ENQA follow-up monitoring, during which experts noted IAAR’s positive development dynamics, strengthened governance and expert processes, and a systematic approach to continuous quality improvement.

Particular importance is IAAR’s recognition by the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME): the Agency became the first accreditation body among CIS countries to receive this high status. This confirms IAAR’s contribution to the development of internationally comparable mechanisms for evaluating the quality of medical education and strengthens its reputation as a reliable and authoritative partner in the global educational space.

Full membership in international and European quality assurance networks ensures international recognition of IAAR’s accreditations and grants educational institutions and programs the status of international accreditation.

IAAR’s strategic development priorities are aimed at strengthening its position as a recognised and competitive entity within the national and international education quality assurance system. In 2025, the Agency operated in accordance with the goals and objectives defined by strategic and program documents, national education legislation, international regulatory acts, and the IAAR Development Strategy for 2022–2026, which defines its mission, vision, priorities, key performance indicators, and expected results.

Demonstrating sustainable competitiveness, IAAR consistently implements independent, objective, and professional evaluation of educational activities. In 2025, IAAR's accreditation procedures were conducted in the Republic of Kazakhstan and in 14 foreign countries, including the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Republic of Belarus, Ukraine, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Armenia, as well as Caribbean states (Barbados, Dominica, etc.). IAAR operates based on concluded agreements and official recognition by the authorised bodies of the respective countries.

By applying best international quality assurance practices, IAAR contributes to enhancing the effectiveness of educational and research activities of educational institutions, ensuring their sustainable development in line with national priorities and global trends in education system transformation.

During 2011-2025, 321 educational institutions and 6,225 educational programmes in 15 countries underwent IAAR international accreditation.

In 2025, IAAR's activities focused on the development of the education quality assurance system based on the "triple helix" model (universities – business – government), which enhanced the practice-oriented nature of educational programs, their alignment with labor market requirements, and strengthened cooperation among key stakeholders. Significant attention was also given to academic excellence initiatives, the development of corporate governance, and the expansion of university academic freedom.

In the context of digital transformation, IAAR consistently advanced internationalisation and digitalisation processes, including the active use of digital formats, analytical tools, and elements of artificial intelligence in quality assessment procedures. This ensured greater transparency, objectivity, and efficiency of accreditation processes, as well as strengthened the international competitiveness of educational institutions.

The IAAR Annual Report for 2025 has been prepared to summarise the Agency's activities, analyse the implementation of strategic objectives, assess the effectiveness of accreditation procedures, and ensure openness, transparency, and accountability to government authorities, the academic community, educational institutions, the expert community, and other key stakeholders. The Report serves as a tool for monitoring the Agency's performance, planning further actions, and improving its internal quality assurance system.

## ***1 Continuous activities for the development of the education quality assurance system in the national and international educational space***

IAAR conducts independent external evaluation of educational organisations and programmes in Kazakhstan and abroad, ensuring enhancement of education quality, competitiveness and compliance with international standards. The Agency promotes a culture of quality at all levels, supports initiatives in academic excellence, the development of corporate governance and the expansion of university academic freedom.

Particular attention is given to digitalisation and the application of modern instruments, including electronic formats and elements of artificial intelligence, which ensure transparency, objectivity and efficiency of accreditation procedures. IAAR's international activities contribute to the integration of educational organisations into the global community and to the worldwide recognition of their programmes.

### ***1.1 Strengthening IAAR's position in the national and international accreditation services market through quality enhancement, geographical expansion, and improvement of accreditation procedures***

In 2025, IAAR's activities were structured in accordance with international and national priorities in education development, including the Concept for the Development of Higher Education and Science for 2023–2029, international best practice, and the indicators of the IAAR Development Strategy for 2022–2026. The Agency implements its quality assurance policy by providing high-quality services in the evaluation of educational programmes and organisations for the state, society, educational organisations, employers and learners. IAAR's international accreditation aligns with the Agency's mission, values and strategic objectives, approved by its collegial governing bodies and developed with the participation of external stakeholders.

In 2025, IAAR conducted external evaluations within the framework of institutional and specialised (programme) accreditation of educational organisations and educational programmes at the levels of secondary, higher, postgraduate, medical and continuing education, including joint programmes.

All the above-mentioned activities and initiatives are aimed at the further development of the national education quality assurance system, strengthening its transparency, effectiveness and compliance with international standards, and enhancing confidence in the results of evaluation of educational organisations and programmes. Regulatory documents governing accreditation procedures are published on the Agency's official website: <https://iaar.agency/en>

#### ***Development, Improvement and Updating of IAAR Standards and Documents.***

IAAR develops and systematically improves standards and criteria for various types of accreditation to ensure objective and high-quality external evaluation of educational organisations. The standards are based on the principles of the Bologna Process, including objectivity, transparency, academic mobility and public information. They serve both as a self-assessment tool for higher education institutions and as a mechanism for harmonising the national education quality assurance system with the international requirements of the European Higher Education Area.

IAAR standards fully comply with ESG and WFME requirements and are developed with the participation of stakeholders. In accordance with ENQA recommendations, procedures for the review and updating of accreditation standards have been systematised and regulated by the “Instruction on the Development and Improvement of IAAR Standards”, approved by Order of the Director of IAAR No. 19-15-01 dated 2 September 2015.

In 2025, to enhance the quality and effectiveness of the Agency’s activities, work was undertaken to improve regulatory and methodological documentation, as well as to introduce amendments and additions to the standards of institutional and specialised accreditation of higher education institutions, taking into account current priorities and the requirements of the state, society and the labour market.

During the reporting period, amendments and additions were introduced to the Standards and Guidelines for International Accreditation of all levels of medical education, including basic medical and pharmaceutical education, Master’s, doctoral and residency programmes. The documents were updated on the basis of WFME, AMSE and ESG standards, taking into account the Global Standards for Quality Improvement for Master’s Programmes in Medical and Health Professions Education (WFME, 2016), and harmonised with WFME standards for Basic Medical Education (2015, 2020).

New standards were also developed and approved for the international accreditation of joint educational programmes in basic medical and pharmaceutical education, Master’s and doctoral studies. These standards are based on WFME, AMSE and ESG requirements and are aligned with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015), taking into account the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes (Yerevan, 2015).

In 2025, IAAR developed the Standards and Guidelines for Preschool Educational Organisations (approved by Order of the General Director of the Non-Profit Institution “Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating” No. 138-25-OD dated 21 August 2025), establishing requirements for the activities of preschool educational organisations and for conducting their institutional accreditation. These standards may be used for self-assessment, activity monitoring, the development and improvement of quality systems, and the formulation of strategies and regulatory documentation. Compliance of the self-assessment report with the requirements of the standard serves as the basis for evaluating the activities of preschool organisations and making accreditation decisions.

***Training Seminars in Educational Organisations.*** In accordance with the IAAR Work Plan for 2025 and agreements concluded with educational organisations, seminars were organised and conducted to explain IAAR international accreditation standards and methodology.

In 2025, seminars were conducted for the following foreign and Kazakhstani educational organisations:

1. Swiss International Institute of Lausanne
2. Harmony School
3. East Kazakhstan Technical University
4. International Institute of Technical Innovations

5. Kazakh Academy of Sport and Tourism
6. Nakhchivan State University (Azerbaijan)
7. Branches of the Republican Physics and Mathematics School in Astana, Almaty and Oral.

During the reporting year, IAAR also conducted training seminars and consultation activities concerning international accreditation procedures for medical educational organisations. Consultations covered the following institutions:

1. Grodno State Medical University
2. Kursk State Medical University
3. Novosibirsk National Research State University
4. Erebuni Medical Academy (Foundation)
5. Gomel State Medical University

The organisation of training seminars and consultations contributed to raising awareness among managerial and academic teams regarding international accreditation standards, developing unified approaches to self-assessment and evidence preparation, and reducing institutional risks during external evaluation. The guidance and recommendations provided enabled educational organisations to purposefully develop their internal quality assurance systems, enhance readiness for international accreditation, and strengthen their positions within the international educational space.

Thus, taking into account international standards, national requirements and the requirements of the European Higher Education Area, IAAR carried out extensive work on the development and improvement of its own standards and criteria for various types of accreditation in line with international requirements. This work included the dissemination of new and updated standards to the academic community, as well as clarification of the existing and amended provisions of the standards.

***Participation in National, Regional and International Projects.*** IAAR participates in the implementation of the international project AGROKAZ – “Development of Bachelor Programme in Agroecology with Dual Education in Kazakhstan” (2023–2026), implemented within the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme.

The primary objective of the project is to reduce the gap between the structure, volume and quality of workforce training and the actual needs of agricultural enterprises, as well as to develop practice-oriented competences among graduates related to the application of modern agricultural technologies. The project contributes to the development of dual education, enhances the practical orientation of educational programmes, and strengthens cooperation between educational organisations and employers in the agricultural sector.

IAAR’s participation in the AGROKAZ project also contributes to strengthening the Agency’s institutional capacity, expanding international cooperation and facilitating the exchange of best European practice in the field of quality assurance and dual education. The involvement of IAAR staff in project activities enhances their professional competencies in the development, expert review and evaluation of labour market-oriented educational programmes, and further strengthens the Agency’s expert and methodological capacity. The results and experience gained are subsequently used by IAAR in improving accreditation standards and providing consultancy to

educational organisations, thereby contributing to the overall development of the national education quality assurance system.

**International Accreditation.** In 2025, IAAR conducted institutional and specialised (programme) accreditation of educational organisations in the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Switzerland, Moldova, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Belize.

During the reporting year, 28 organisations underwent IAAR international institutional accreditation, including 7 foreign educational organisations (6 higher education institutions and 1 academy of sciences), as well as 21 educational organisations of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The latter comprised 4 higher education institutions, 5 medical technical and vocational education organisations, 6 secondary education organisations and 6 continuing education organisations.

International specialised (programme) accreditation covered 461 educational programmes at various levels delivered by educational organisations of the Republic of Kazakhstan and 63 educational programmes delivered by foreign educational organisations. Information on organisations that underwent IAAR international institutional accreditation is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Quantitative Indicators of Accredited Educational Organisations in 2025 (Institutional Accreditation)**

Education Organisation	7 years	5 years	3 years	1 year	refused	Total
<b>HEI:</b>						
National			1			
State	1	4				
JSC						
Private		2	2			
<b>National Academies of Sciences</b>			1			
<b>TVET</b>						
<b>TVET (medical)</b>		4				
<b>Research Institutes and Continuing Professional Education Organisations</b>		1	5	1		
<b>School</b>	1	4	1			
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>28</b>

**International Accreditation in the Republic of Kazakhstan.** Quality assessment of educational organisations in the Republic of Kazakhstan was carried out based on the Standards and Guidelines for Institutional and Specialised Accreditation in higher and postgraduate education, technical and vocational education, higher and postgraduate medical education, medical colleges, continuing professional education organisations, as well as schools implementing international educational programmes at primary, lower secondary and upper secondary levels, with the active participation of stakeholders.

Detailed information on accreditation procedures and methodology in the Republic of Kazakhstan is available on the IAAR official website: <https://iaar.agency/en>, in the section “Accreditation”.

**Institutional Accreditation in the Republic of Kazakhstan.** External quality evaluation of educational organisations was conducted in accordance with the

Standards and Guidelines for Institutional Accreditation in higher education, technical and vocational education, higher and postgraduate medical education, medical colleges, and continuing professional education organisations. In 2025, 21 educational organisations of the Republic of Kazakhstan underwent IAAR international institutional accreditation, including 4 higher education institutions, 5 medical colleges, 6 continuing professional education organisations, and 6 international and private schools. Information on educational organisations of the Republic of Kazakhstan that underwent IAAR international institutional accreditation is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Quantitative Indicators of Accredited Educational Organisations of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2025 (Institutional Accreditation)**

Education Organisation	7 years	5 years	3 years	1 year	refused	Total
<b>HEI:</b>						
National			1			
State	1					
JSC						
Private		2				
<b>National Academies of Sciences</b>						
<b>TVET</b>						
<b>TVET (medical)</b>		5				
<b>Research Institutes and Continuing Professional Education Organisations</b>		1	4	1		
<b>School</b>	1	4	1			
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>21</b>

The data presented in Table 2 demonstrate that, of the 21 educational organisations accredited in 2025, the majority 12 organisations were granted accreditation for a period of 5 years: (*Republican Physics and Mathematics School (Astana), Republican Physics and Mathematics School (Almaty), Republican Physics and Mathematics School (Uralsk), Shokan Ualikhanov Private School, De Montfort University Kazakhstan, Lenger Medical College “Meiir-Beis”, National Centre for Civil Protection and Healthcare “ZdravAtameken”, Balkhash Higher Medical College, Uralsk Higher Medical College “MAKSAT”, Astana IT University, Karaganda Higher Medical Intercollege, and Central Asian Higher Medical College.*), **2** organisations for 7 years (*Karaganda Technical University named after Abylkas Saginov and Haileybury Astana School.*), **6** organisations for 3 years (*HARMONY SCHOOL, Research Centre of Internal Medicine “Interna Clinic”, SALITEDA KZ, International Institute of Technical Innovations, Kazakh National University of Water Management and Irrigation, and AGSA Training Centre*) and 1 organisations for 1 year (*the National Centre for Occupational Hygiene and Occupational Diseases*). The distribution of accreditation periods reflects varying levels of institutional maturity and the degree of compliance with IAAR institutional accreditation standards. Overall, the results of the external evaluation confirm that the accredited educational organisations comply with IAAR standards, demonstrating the reliability and effectiveness of the Agency’s institutional accreditation procedures.

**Specialised (Programme) Accreditation in the Republic of Kazakhstan**  
Quality assessment of educational programmes was carried out on the basis of the Standards and Guidelines for Specialised (Programme) Accreditation in higher and

postgraduate education, technical and vocational education, continuing professional education, basic and postgraduate medical education, as well as medical colleges.

In 2025, a total of 478 educational programmes were accredited within the framework of specialised (programme) accreditation, including: 461 programmes delivered by higher and postgraduate education institutions; 5 programmes delivered by a medical college; 12 programmes delivered by continuing professional education organisations.

From the 461 programmes in higher and postgraduate education, 302 programmes underwent specialised (programme) accreditation; 138 programmes underwent initial specialised accreditation; 21 programmes underwent specialised accreditation of joint (double-degree) programmes.

**Table 3. Quantitative Indicators of Accredited Educational Programmes in 2025**  
(*Specialised/Programme Accreditation*)

Name of EO/EP	Accreditation period				Refusal of Accreditation	Total accredited
	7 years	5 years	3 years	1 years		
<b>HEI</b>	2	364	24			<b>390</b>
BA		216	15			231
MA	1	108	9			118
PhD	1	40				41
<b>Medical HEIs</b>		<b>71</b>				<b>71</b>
BA		16				16
MA		24				24
PhD		4				4
Residency		27				27
<b>TVET</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>			<b>5</b>
<b>CPEO</b>		<b>12</b>			1	<b>12</b>
<b>Total Accredited</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>26</b>			<b>478</b>

In 2025, within the framework of specialised (programme) accreditation across all levels of education, a total of 478 educational programmes were accredited. The distribution by accreditation period was as follows: 2 educational programmes were accredited for 7 years, 450 programmes for 5 years, and 26 programmes for 3 years. The predominance of the five-year accreditation period (over 94% of the total number) indicates a stable level of quality of the programmes delivered and their compliance with established standards. Short-term accreditation for three years was granted to programmes for which recommendations were issued requiring further development and subsequent monitoring.

Of the total 478 educational programmes accredited in 2025, 344 programmes underwent specialised (programme) accreditation of existing programmes, 126 programmes underwent initial specialised accreditation, and 8 programmes underwent accreditation of joint (including double-degree) programmes. The predominance of accreditation procedures for existing programmes (approximately 72% of the total number) reflects the Agency’s stable cooperation with operating educational organisations and systematic efforts to confirm the quality of already implemented programmes. The share of initial specialised accreditation (around 26%) demonstrates the renewal and development of the educational portfolio of higher education institutions, including the launch of new programmes aligned with current labour market requirements. Although joint educational programmes constitute a relatively small proportion (around 2%), their accreditation demonstrates continued interest among educational organisations in developing international cooperation and implementing double-degree and partnership-based models of training.

In higher and postgraduate education institutions, a total of 390 educational programmes were accredited, including 231 Bachelor’s programmes, 118 Master’s programmes and 41 doctoral programmes. This structure reflects the traditionally high proportion of Bachelor’s programmes (approximately 59%), alongside the steady development of postgraduate education.

In the medical field, 71 educational programmes were accredited, including 16 Bachelor’s programmes, 24 Master’s programmes, 27 residency programmes and 4 doctoral programmes. The significant proportion of residency programmes indicates priority attention to the training of practice-oriented medical specialists. Accreditation periods for medical programmes vary depending on the level of compliance with standards and the specific features of the educational process.

During the reporting year, 5 educational programmes in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and 12 programmes in Continuing Professional Education were also accredited, reflecting the Agency’s systematic work to ensure quality across different levels and formats of education and training.

**Table 4. International Accreditation in Republic of Kazakhstan for 2025**

№	EO	Institutional		Specialised/Programme		
		IA	IA initial (Ex-Ante)	SA/P A	SA/PA initial (Ex-Ante)	SA/PA of joint EP
1.	Kostanay Engineering and Economic University			10	4	
2.	Kazakh National Agrarian Research University			37	11	3
3.	West Kazakhstan Innovative-Technological University			1		
4.	Narxoz University			4		
5.	Academy of Civil Aviation				5	
6.	Esil University				3	
7.	Korkyt ata University			23		
8.	Dulaty University			36	2	1

9.	Semey Medical University			13	7	
10.	Almaty University of Power Engineering and Telecommunications			1	2	
11.	Toraygirov University			2	2	
12.	Kazakh University of International Relations and World Languages			9		
13.	Kazakh University of Technology and Business			10	2	
14.	Kazakh National University of Water Resources and Irrigation		1		20	
15.	Astana IT University	1		3	2	1
16.	West Kazakhstan Medical University			1	2	
17.	Karagandy Medical University			3		
18.	South Kazakhstan Medical Academy			7		
19.	East Kazakhstan Technical University			6		
20.	Karagandy Industrial University			7	1	
21.	Kazakh National Conservatory named after Kurmangazy			11	3	
22.	Eurasian National University			9	1	
23.	Kokshetau University named after Sh. Ualikhanov			12	8	
24.	Al-Farabi Kazakh National University			16		
25.	Kostanay Regional University			4	1	
26.	Caspian Public University			1	1	
27.	Kazakh National Academy of Arts			22	7	1
28.	East Kazakhstan University			20	20	
29.	North Kazakhstan University			23	1	2
30.	Kazakh Automobile and Road Institute			1	3	
31.	Astana Medical University			8	4	
32.	Almaty Technological University				12	
33.	Asfendiyarov Kazakh National Medical University			20		
34.	Turan University			7	2	
35.	De Montfort University Kazakhstan	1				
36.	Karagandy Technical University	1				
37.	Higher Medical College of Balkhash	1				
38.	Lenger Medical College	1				
39.	Ural Higher Medical College "MAKSAT"	1				
40.	Central Asian Higher Medical College	1		5		
41.	Karagandy Higher Medical Intercollege	1				
42.	Republican Physics and Mathematics School, Oral	1				
43.	Republican Physics and Mathematics School, Astana	1				
44.	Republican Physics and Mathematics School, Almaty	1				
45.	Ualikhanov school	1				
46.	Haileybury Astana School	1				
47.	HARMONY SCHOOL	1				

48.	National Centre for Civil Protection and Healthcare “ZdravAtameken”	1				
49.	SALITEDA KZ	1				
50.	Scientific Centre of Internal Medicine “Interna Clinic”	1				
51.	National Centre for Occupational Hygiene and Professional Diseases	1				
52.	International Institute of Technical Innovations	1				
53.	AGSA Training Centre	1				
54.	National Professional Development Centre “Orleu”			12		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>8</b>

\* IA (Ex-Ante) – initial institutional accreditation

\* SA/PA (Ex-Ante) – initial programme accreditation

\* SA/PA (Joint EP) – programme accreditation of joint/dual degree EP

**Transnational Accreditation.** During the reporting period, one of the Agency’s priority areas of activity was the implementation of international institutional and specialised (programme) accreditation of educational organisations in the countries of Central Asia and Europe, based on ESG and WFME standards. In pursuing the objectives of developing transnational accreditation and strengthening IAAR’s position in the international accreditation services market, the Agency was guided in its work by the “Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education” (UNESCO and OECD), as well as the ENQA document “Co-operation in Cross-border Higher Education: a Toolkit for Quality Assurance Agencies”.

In the course of international accreditation procedures, IAAR ensured that external quality assurance processes complied with the requirements of European quality assurance networks, ESG standards, and the regulatory requirements and procedures established by the authorised bodies in the field of education of foreign states. The main instrument for external quality evaluation consisted of the “Standards and Guidelines for International Accreditation of Foreign Educational Organisations and Educational Programmes (based on ESG)”, approved and enacted by IAAR Order No. 68/1-18-OD of 25 May 2018.

In 2025, within the framework of international institutional accreditation, IAAR carried out an external quality evaluation of the activities of 7 foreign educational organisations. In the same reporting period, 63 educational programmes delivered by foreign higher education institutions successfully underwent IAAR international specialised (programme) accreditation.

**International Accreditation in Educational Organisations of the Russian Federation.** In accordance with the “Agreement on Co-operation and Interaction for Quality Evaluation of Higher Education and Accreditation of Educational Programmes” dated 6 May 2019 with the Federal State Budgetary Institution “Rosakkreditagentstvo”, IAAR’s international accreditation is recognised in the territory of the Russian Federation. In 2025, IAAR conducted international accreditation in 2 higher education institutions. Expert panels of IAAR prepared conclusions on the levels of compliance of educational programmes with the standards’

criteria, with justifications set out in the reports on the completed accreditation procedures.

From 27 to 28 January 2025, an external evaluation procedure for compliance with the standards of international institutional accreditation was conducted in respect of the “Online Institute Smart”. The expert panel was chaired by S. I. Sydykova, Candidate of Medical Sciences, Associate Professor, IAAR Category I Expert. By decision of the Accreditation Council, “Online Institute Smart” was accredited for a period of 3 years. Within the framework of international specialised (programme) accreditation, the doctoral programme in Psychology did not receive accreditation.

From 13 to 15 May 2025, IAAR conducted an international programme accreditation procedure at the Privolzhsky Research Medical University of the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation. The expert panel was chaired by K. K. Toleubekov, Candidate of Medical Sciences, Associate Professor. By decision of the IAAR Accreditation Council, the University was accredited for a period of 5 years.

From 26 to 28 May 2025, an international institutional accreditation procedure was carried out at the Saint Petersburg State Paediatric Medical University of the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation. The expert panel was chaired by B. S. Turdaliyeva, Academician of the Academy of Preventive Medicine of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Doctor of Medical Sciences, Professor. By decision of the Accreditation Council, the University was accredited for a period of 5 years.

Information on educational organisations that underwent external evaluation is presented in Table 5.

**Table 5. International Accreditation in Educational Organisations of the Russian Federation in 2025**

№	Educational Organisation	Accreditation Type/Name of EP	Accreditation period
1	«Online Institute Smart»	Institutional	3 years 12.02.2025 -11.02.2028
		Programme/ 1) Doctoral programme in Psychology	Not accredited
2	Saint Petersburg State Paediatric Medical University	Institutional	5 years 20.06.2025-19.06.2030
3	Privolzhsky Research Medical University	Programme/ 1) Medicine 2) Dentistry 3) Cardiology 4) Traumatology and Orthopaedics 5) Orthodontics 6) Cardiovascular Surgery	5 years 20.06.2025-19.06.2030

Thus, of the 6 educational programmes of higher education institutions submitted to IAAR for accreditation in 2025, 6 were accredited for a period of 5 years, and 1 programme was not accredited.

**International Accreditation in Switzerland.** From 3 to 5 March 2025, IAAR conducted institutional accreditation of one medical educational organisation in Switzerland: Swiss International Institute Lausanne. The expert panel was chaired by

Milan Pol, PhD, Professor at Masaryk University (Brno, Czech Republic). The expert panel prepared conclusions on the organisation’s compliance with the standards’ criteria, with justifications set out in the report on the completed accreditation procedures.

Information on the educational organisation that underwent external evaluation is presented in Table 6.

**Table 6. International Accreditation in Switzerland in 2025**

№	Educational Organisation	Accreditation Type/Name of EP	Accreditation period
1	Swiss International Institute Lausanne	International accreditation of educational organisations and educational programmes delivered using digital technologies	3 years 29.03.2025-28.03.2028

**International Accreditation in Moldova.** From 17 to 19 March 2025, IAAR conducted programme accreditation in one educational organisation of the Republic of Moldova. The IAAR expert panel prepared conclusions on the organisation’s compliance with the standards’ criteria, with justifications set out in the report on the completed accreditation procedures. Information on the educational organisation that underwent external evaluation is presented in Table 7.

**Table 7. International Accreditation in Moldova in 202**

№	Educational Organisation	Accreditation Type/Name of EP	Accreditation period
1	Nicolae Testemițanu State University of Medicine and Pharmacy	International institutional accreditation of educational organisations in the field of healthcare (based on WFME/AMSE/ESG)	5 years 30.04.2025-29.04.2030

**IAAR International Accreditation in the Republic of Tajikistan.** IAAR systematically conducts international accreditation of educational organisations in Central Asian countries, including the Republic of Tajikistan. Quality evaluation of the activities of higher education institutions and Bachelor’s, Master’s and PhD educational programmes in the Republic of Tajikistan is carried out in accordance with the “Standards and Guidelines for International Accreditation of Foreign Educational Organisations and Educational Programmes (based on ESG)”, enacted by IAAR in 2018, and for medical educational organisations and programmes — also based on WFME standards. In accordance with the international Agreement concluded with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan on 13 May 2019, IAAR’s activities are officially recognised in Tajikistan.

In 2025, 3 organisations of the Republic of Tajikistan underwent IAAR accreditation: from 11 to 13 December 2024, accreditation was conducted at the State Educational Institution “Tajik State Medical University named after Abu Ali Ibn Sino”; from 17 to 19 December 2024 — at the National Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan; from 3 to 5 December 2025 — at Tajik National University. The expert panels were

chaired respectively by K. B. Kurmangaliev, Candidate of Medical Sciences (Republic of Kazakhstan); V. N. Kosov, Doctor of Physical and Mathematical Sciences, Professor, Academician of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Republic of Kazakhstan); T. A. Tabishev, Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor (Russian Federation). Information on the organisations that underwent external evaluation is presented in Table 8.

**Table 8. International Accreditation in the Republic of Tajikistan**

№	Educational Organisation	Accreditation Type/Name of EP	Accreditation period
1	Tajik State Medical University	Institutional	5 years 12.02.2025 - 11.02.2030
		Programme 1) 1-790107 Dentistry (Level: Specialty) 2) 1-790103 Public Health (Level: Specialty)	5 years 12.02.2025 - 11.02.2030
2	National Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan	Institutional	3 years 12.02.2025 - 11.02.2028
3	Tajik National University	1) 1-25 01 08 Accounting, Analysis and Audit 2) 1-26 02 02 Management 3) 1-25 01 03 World Economy 4) 1-24 01 01 International Law 5) 1-23 01 08 Journalism 6) 1-51 01 01 Geology, Exploration and Prospecting of Mineral Deposits 7) 1-31 03 04 Informatics 8) 1-21 06 01-02 Modern Foreign Languages (English) 9) 1-21 05 01 Tajik Philology 10) 1-21 05 02 Russian Language and Literature 11) 1-79 01 07 Dentistry	5 years 25.12.2025- 24.12.2030

**IAAR International Accreditation in the Kyrgyz Republic.** In 2025, IAAR conducted institutional and specialised (programme) accreditation procedures in 7 higher education organisations of the Kyrgyz Republic, as a result of which 27 educational programmes were accredited.

Following external evaluation, IAAR updates the Register of Accredited Educational Organisations and Educational Programmes of the Kyrgyz Republic by submitting and reviewing documents confirming compliance of educational organisations and programmes with the standards of institutional, specialised and initial programme (ex-ante) accreditation.

Information on the organisations that underwent external evaluation is presented in Table 9.

**Table 9. International Accreditation in the Kyrgyz Republic**

<b>№</b>	<b>Educational Organisation</b>	<b>Accreditation Type/Name of EP</b>	<b>Accreditation period</b>
1	“Kyrgyz-Uzbek International University named after Batyraly Sydykov”	<b>Institutional</b>	5 years 12.02.2025 -11.02.2030
		<b>Programme</b> 1) 550300 Philological Education	5 years 12.02.2025-11.02.2030
		2) 560001 General Medicine (for foreign nationals)	5 years 30.10.2025-29.10.2030
2	Kyrgyz State Technical University	<b>Programme</b> 1) 531200 Computational Linguistics 2) 650200 Metallurgy 3) 630001 Applied Geology 4) 630003 Mining 5) 700500 Mechatronics and Robotics 6) 580600 Logistics 7) 650500 Theoretical and Applied Mechanics 8) 750500 Construction 9) 630100 Applied Geology 10) 630300 Mining	5 years 30.04.2025-29.04.2030
3	Osh State University	<b>Programme</b> 1) 560001 General Medicine 2) 560002 Paediatrics 3) 560003 Preventive Medicine 4) 560004 Dentistry 5) 560005 Pharmacy 6) 560100 Public Health 7) 580100 Economics	5 years 30.05.2025-29.05.2030
4	Scientific-Educational Production Complex “Jalal-Abad State University named after B. Osmonov”	<b>Programme</b> 1) 560001 General Medicine 2) 560001 General Medicine (for foreigners)	5 years 25.12.2025-24.12.2030
5	Jalal-Abad International University	<b>Programme</b> 1) 560001 General Medicine	3 years 25.12.2025-24.12.2028
6	Университет Адам»	<b>Programme</b> 1) 560001 General Medicine	3 years 25.12.2025-24.12.2028
7	Osh State Pedagogical University named after A. Myrsabekov	<b>Programme</b> 1) 550700 Pedagogy 2) 550300 Philological Education 3) 550200 Physics and Mathematics Education	5 years 25.12.2025-24.12.2030
		4) 550100 Natural Science Education	3 years 25.12.2025-24.12.2028

**IAAR international accreditation in Uzbekistan.** In 2025, IAAR conducted accreditation procedures in two higher education organisations in Uzbekistan, as a result of which several educational programmes were accredited. The external expert panel was chaired by Dosmagambetova R.S., Doctor of Medical Sciences, Professor.

Information on organisations that underwent external evaluation is presented in Table 10.

**Table 10. International accreditation in the Republic of Uzbekistan**

<b>№</b>	<b>Educational organisation</b>	<b>Type of accreditation/Name of EP</b>	<b>Accreditation period</b>
<b>1</b>	State Institution “Tashkent State University of Economics”	<b>Programme</b> 1) 70410701 Statistics 2) 70411001 Human Resource Management 3) 70411201 Marketing 4) 71010101 Tourism and Hospitality 5) 70410301 Taxes and Taxation	<i>5 years</i> 12.02.2025 - 11.02.2030
<b>2</b>	Fergana Medical Institute of Public Health	<b>Programme</b> 1) 60910100 Dentistry 2) 60910700 Pharmacy	<i>3 years</i> 25.12.2025-24.12.2028
		3) 60910300 Paediatrics	<i>5 years</i> 25.12.2025-24.12.2030

**IAAR international accreditation in the Republic of Azerbaijan.** From 6 to 8 October 2025 IAAR conducted accreditation at Baku Engineering University, as a result of which six educational programmes were accredited. The external expert panel was chaired by Kiyan V.S., PhD, Associate Professor (Republic of Kazakhstan). Information on organisations that underwent external evaluation is presented in Table 11.

**Table 11. International accreditation in Azerbaijan**

<b>№</b>	<b>Educational organisation</b>	<b>Type of accreditation/Name of EP</b>	<b>Accreditation period</b>
<b>1</b>	Baku Engineering University	<b>Programme</b> 1) 6006017 Information Security 2) 6006022 Computer Engineering 3) 6006016 Information Technologies 4) 6006020 Chemical Engineering 5) 6006028 Mechanical Engineering 6) 6006008 Electrical and Electronic Engineering	<i>5 years</i> 25.12.2025-24.12.2030

**IAAR international accreditation in Belize.** By decisions of the Accreditation Council in 2025, two universities in Belize successfully underwent IAAR programme accreditation: EEP visits took place from 2 to 4 December 2024 at Columbus Central University School of Medicine and from 5 to 7 December 2024 at Washington University of Health and Science. The EEP was chaired by Konrad Juskiewicz, Doctor of Medical Sciences, Associate Professor (Lublin, Poland). Information on organisations that underwent external evaluation is presented in Table 12.

**Table 12. International accreditation in Belize**

<b>№</b>	<b>Educational organisation</b>	<b>Type of accreditation/Name of EP</b>	<b>Accreditation period</b>
1	Columbus Central University School of Medicine	<i>Programme</i> 1) Doctor of Medicine	<i>1 year</i> 12.02.2025-11.02.2026
2	Washington University of Health and Science	<i>Programme</i> 1) Doctor of Medicine	<i>3 years</i> 12.02.2025-11.02.2028

Accreditation procedures are carried out with active participation of stakeholders, including employers, students, international experts, and IAAR coordinators. Stakeholders are involved both at the stage of self-assessment conducted by educational organisations and during EEP visits, which ensures the objectivity and transparency of external evaluation procedures.

External expert panel reports on accredited organisations and educational programmes, as well as Accreditation Council decisions, are published on IAAR’s official website [www.iaar.agency](http://www.iaar.agency) in the sections “External Expert Panel Reports and Decisions” and “Register” and are publicly accessible. Additional information on accreditation procedures and methodology in the Republic of Kazakhstan and abroad is available on the IAAR website in the “Accreditation” section.

All educational organisations and programmes accredited by IAAR are automatically included in the DEQAR database of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR). DEQAR is a pan-European database of programmes and institutions accredited by quality assurance agencies recognised at the European level.

Inclusion of programmes and institutions in the DEQAR database confirms their compliance with ESG quality assurance standards and serves as a basis for international recognition of accreditation results within the European Higher Education Area. Detailed information on organisations and programmes included in DEQAR by IAAR is available at: <https://www.eqar.eu/register/agencies/agency/?id=30&cn-reloaded=1>

Thus, by implementing international institutional accreditation of educational organisations and specialised (programme) accreditation of educational programmes at foreign universities, IAAR contributes to enhancing the effectiveness and quality of educational and research activities, updating educational programmes, introducing modern educational technologies, developing a quality culture, and integrating institutions into the international educational space.

Demonstrating high competitiveness in the international accreditation services market, IAAR conducts external evaluation of educational organisations and programmes in 15 countries of Eastern Europe, the Americas, and Central Asia. An important outcome of the Agency’s international accreditation activities in 2025 is preparation for the forthcoming 2026 review by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

## ***1.2 Increasing the Qualitative Potential of National and International Experts***

Implementing its mission and strategic priorities, IAAR prioritises developing and strengthening expert potential as a key factor in the effectiveness of external higher education quality assurance procedures. Ensuring objective, comprehensive, and

professional evaluation of educational organisations (EOs) and educational programmes (EPs) requires a systematic approach to forming, selecting, and training the expert corps.

For participation in accreditation procedures, IAAR forms a multi-level expert database including representatives of the academic community, international specialists, employers, and students. Such a composition ensures balanced consideration of academic, professional, and student perspectives during external evaluation.

In 2025, the agency conducted systematic monitoring and targeted updating of the expert database aimed at enhancing IAAR expert potential quality and sustainability. During the reporting year, over 300 new experts were added to the database. As of the end of the reporting period, the IAAR expert database included over 4,000 representatives of academic and professional communities from 39 countries worldwide. Clear selection criteria are established for each expert category to engage specialists with high qualifications, relevant professional experience, and recognised expert reputation in external evaluation procedures.

Requirements for experts and their engagement procedures are regulated by the IAAR Regulation on External Expert Activities. In 2025, experts from all three categories were involved in accreditation procedures, with mandatory student participation ensured in all evaluation clusters in full compliance with ENQA requirements.

Expert selection considers professional experience in education, presence of academic degrees and/or titles, as well as recommendations from accreditation agencies, professional associations, educational organisations, and student unions. This approach contributes to forming a sustainable, competent, and internationally recognised IAAR expert community.

**Engagement of highly qualified national experts.** In 2025, new national experts were engaged in IAAR international accreditation procedures, representing a significant step in expanding the Agency's expert potential and strengthening domestic professional community participation in international education quality assurance processes: Serikbaeva A.T., PhD, Associate Professor, Toraygyrov University (Pavlodar); Alimseitova Zh.K., PhD, Associate Professor, Satbayev Kazakh National Research Technical University (Almaty); Nabieva G.S., Candidate of Technical Sciences, Kazakh National Medical University named after S.D. Asfendiyarov (Almaty); Shadyarova Zh.K., PhD, Kazakh Agrotechnical Research University named after S. Seifullin (Astana); Nietbai S.Ye., PhD, International Educational Corporation (Almaty); Mergaliev D.M., Candidate of Art History, Associate Professor, Amre Kashaubayev State Philharmonic; Garkusha K.G., Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Karaganda Buketov University (Karaganda); Sultanova N.K., Doctor of Medical Sciences, Semey Medical University (Semey); Galieva A.N., Candidate of Philological Sciences, Zhetysu University (Taldykorgan); Kushnir M.P., Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, "Örleu" branch for Karaganda region (Karaganda); Abenova B.T., Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Kazakh Agrotechnical Research University named after S. Seifullin (Astana); Turganbaeva B.Sh., Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Acting Associate Professor, Shakariim University of Semey (Semey); Tulekenova D.T., PhD,

Kazakh University of International Relations and World Languages named after Abylai Khan (Almaty); Buribaev Zh.A., PhD, Acting Associate Professor, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (Almaty); Qadylbekqyzy E., PhD, Almaty University of Energy and Communications named after G. Daukeyev (Almaty); Kabieva T.K., PhD, Kazakh National Academy of Arts named after K. Baysetova (Astana); Sarsembaeva A.T., PhD, Associate Professor, Deputy Director of the Centre for Accreditation and Institutional Research at Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (Almaty); Baitak A., Candidate of Technical Sciences, Associate Professor, East Kazakhstan Technical University named after D. Serikbayev (Ust-Kamenogorsk); Akmullaeva A.S., Candidate of Biological Sciences, Associate Professor, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (Almaty); Zhaparova S.B., Candidate of Technical Sciences, Associate Professor, Sh. Ualikhanov Koksherau University (Koksherau); Manabaeva Sh.A., Candidate of Biological Sciences, Head of Plant Genetic Engineering Laboratory, National Biotechnology Centre (Astana); Sarsembaeva E.Yu., PhD, Pavlodar Pedagogical University named after Alkey Margulan (Pavlodar); Umralieva B.I., Candidate of Technical Sciences, Associate Professor, Acting Professor, Kazakh University of Technology and Business named after K. Kulaidzhanov (Astana); Begimbetova A.S., PhD, Associate Professor, Almaty University of Energy and Communications named after G. Daukeyev (Almaty); Almutanov S.Kh., Candidate of Philosophical Sciences, Professor, Toraygyrov University (Pavlodar); Bodeev K.T., PhD, Karaganda Buketov University (Karaganda); Reznikova E.N., Candidate of Art History, Honoured Worker of Kazakhstan, Scientific Secretary of the National Museum of Art of the Republic of Kazakhstan named after A. Kasteev (Almaty); Abisheva A.K., PhD, L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University (Astana); Zhandarbekova A.M., Candidate of Technical Sciences, Kazakh Agrotechnical Research University named after S. Seifullin (Astana); Kaipbayev Ye.T., PhD, Kazakh National Agrarian Research University (Almaty); Tinistanova S.S., Candidate of Historical Sciences, Professor, Zhetysu University named after I. Zhansugurov (Taldykorgan).

In accordance with ENQA requirements and ESG standards, students from Kazakh higher education organisations participated as student community experts in IAAR accreditation procedures in 2025: Orazkan A.B., 3rd-year student of Acting programme, Toraygyrov University (Pavlodar); Saylau M.K., 4th-year student of Vocal Art programme, Kazakh National Conservatoire named after Kurmangazy (Almaty); Ormakhanova A.N., 2nd-year student of Performing Arts programme, Kazakh National Conservatoire named after Kurmangazy (Almaty); Skvortsova M.N., 3rd-year student, West Kazakhstan University named after M. Utemisov (Uralsk); Omarova D.Zh., 1st-year student, Astana Medical University (Astana); Zholdygaliev Ye., 3rd-year student, West Kazakhstan Innovation and Technology University (Uralsk); Abdibekova A.A., 4th-year student, Karaganda Buketov University (Karaganda); Nurtazinova D.T., 4th-year student, A. Baytursynov Kostanay Regional University (Kostanay); Molnar O.V., 3rd-year student, M. Kozybayev North Kazakhstan University (Petropavlovsk); Kadyrova A.K., 3rd-year student, Ahmet Baitursynov Kostanay Regional University (Kostanay); Ametkhanova K.A., 3rd-year student, Kazakh Road and Automotive Institute named after L.B. Goncharov (Almaty);

Kopbayev Ye.N., 2nd-year student, Satbayev Kazakh National Research Technical University (Almaty); Burkhanov R.R., 2nd-year master's student, M. Kozybayev North Kazakhstan University (Petropavlovsk).

At the same time, in 2025, within the framework of the medical direction, new national experts were also involved in the IAAR international accreditation procedures, which contributed to the further strengthening of the specialized expert base and improving the quality of evaluation procedures. The following academic experts participated in the accreditation: Muratbekova S.K., Doctor of Medical Sciences, Director of the Higher School of Medicine, Sh. Ualikhanov Kokshetau University (Kokshetau); Seidullaeva A.Zh., PhD, Associate Professor of the Department of Pediatric Infectious Diseases, Astana Medical University (Astana); Nurkhodzhaev N.S., Master, Assistant of the Department, South Kazakhstan Medical Academy (Shymkent); Nalgieva F.Kh., Candidate of Medical Sciences, Associate Professor, Head of Department, National Scientific Oncological Centre (Astana); Toguzbaeva D.E., Candidate of Medical Sciences, Associate Professor, Kazakhstan-Russian Medical University (Almaty); Zhazibekova P.M., Candidate of Medical Sciences, Phthisiatrician, Centre of Phthisiopulmonology (Almaty); Artykbayev A.Zh., Master, Senior Lecturer, Kazakhstan Medical University Higher School of Public Health (Almaty); Toleubekov K.K., Candidate of Medical Sciences, Associate Professor, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, Karaganda Medical University (Karaganda); Molotov-Luchansky V.B., Doctor of Medical Sciences, Professor of the Department, Chief Therapist, Karaganda Medical University (Karaganda); Kadyrbayeva G.M., PhD, Associate Professor of the Department, S.D. Asfendiyarov Kazakh National Medical University (Almaty); Asilbayeva D.M., Candidate of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Associate Professor of the Department, Astana Medical University (Astana); Bitanova E.Zh., Candidate of Medical Sciences, Associate Professor, Head of Department, S.D. Asfendiyarov Kazakh National Medical University (Almaty); Altaeva N.Z., Candidate of Biological Sciences, Associate Professor, Head of Department, Astana Medical University (Astana); Seiduanova L.B., PhD, Associate Professor of the Department, S.D. Asfendiyarov Kazakh National Medical University (Almaty); Kushkarova A.M., Director of Medical College under South Kazakhstan Medical Academy (Shymkent); Atagulov E.K., Chair of CMC “Dentistry”, Kazakhstan-Russian Higher Medical College (Almaty); Zhanteliyeva L.A., Doctor of Medical Sciences, Deputy Chair of the Board for Science and Postgraduate Education, Scientific Centre of Urology named after B.U. Dzharbusynov (Almaty); Musabekova G.A., Candidate of Medical Sciences, Program Coordinator for Tuberculosis in the Grant Implementation Group of the Global Fund under the “Tuberculosis” component (Almaty); Slivkina N.V., Doctor of Medical Sciences, Associate Professor, Head of the Department of Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine, Astana Medical University (Astana); Tolybekova A.A., Candidate of Medical Sciences, Head of the Department of Dermatovenereology, Kazakhstan-Russian Medical University (Almaty); Kauyzbai Zh.A., Candidate of Medical Sciences, Associate Professor, Head of the Department of Family Medicine, South Kazakhstan Medical Academy (Shymkent); Umirbekova B.B., Doctor of the Highest Category, Head of the Department of Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation, Corporate Fund “University Medical Centre”; Aitbayeva A.Sh.,

Master, Senior Lecturer of the Department of Anesthesiology and Reanimatology, Kazakhstan Medical University “Higher School of Public Health” (Almaty); Iskakova N.S., PhD, Senior Lecturer of the Department of Public Health, Semey Medical University (Semey).

In 2025, national experts – representatives of employers from medical organisations – also took part in the accreditation procedures, which made it possible to take into account the practical needs of the labor market and improve the quality of the evaluation of educational programs: Katbayev S.A., Chair of the Public Association “Local Trade Union of Healthcare Workers ‘DENSAULYQ’” (Shymkent); Saidyrasulova S.T., Chief Nurse, City Polyclinic No. 12, Department of Healthcare of the City of Shymkent (Shymkent); Kopbayeva M.I., Deputy Director for Nursing, Multidisciplinary Hospital named after Professor Kh.Zh. Makazhanov (Karaganda); Dzhumatayeva G.T., Chief Nurse, Polyclinic No. 2 (Balkhash); Nyshanov Zh.S., Deputy Chief Physician, Lenger City Hospital (Lenger); Karakuzova G.A., Chief Nurse, City Multidisciplinary Hospital (Uralsk).

In 2025, national experts – students of medical universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan – also took part in the accreditation procedures, which made it possible to take into account the opinion of students in the evaluation of EP and increase the practical value of accreditation results: Altai A.N., 4th-year student, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (Almaty); Kamyspaeva A.O., Master's student, West Kazakhstan Medical University (Aktobe); Nurmakova A.D., Master's student, S.D. Asfendiyarov Kazakh National Medical University (Almaty); Hammer D.A., Master's student, Karaganda Medical University (Karaganda); Mirtemerova A.M., student, Sayram College (Shymkent); Aimuratova R.K., student, Karaganda Regional Higher Nursing College (Karaganda); Kazieva A.M., resident, S.D. Asfendiyarov Kazakh National Medical University (Almaty); Ikramova Sh.A., student, Shymkent Medical College; Salikov T.G., resident, Karaganda Medical University (Karaganda); Ermek A.E., student, A. Musin Balkhash Humanitarian-Technical College (Balkhash); Adilbekov A.A., Master, expert physician, State Enterprise on the Right of Economic Management “City Polyclinic No. 14” of the Almaty Healthcare Department (Almaty); Kurmangalieva E.N., 1st-year resident, educational program “General Surgery”, NAO “Astana Medical University” (Astana); Qapsemetova T.S., 2nd-year resident, educational program “Hematology (adult)”, NAO “Semey Medical University” (Semey); Amankulova K.A., 2nd-year resident, educational program “Clinical Pharmacology”, NAO “M. Ospanov West Kazakhstan Medical University” (Aktobe); Bektar Zh.S., 1st-year Master's student, educational program “Business Administration in Healthcare”, NAO “Al-Farabi Kazakh National University” (Almaty); Gaidai A.E., 2nd-year resident, educational program “Radiology”, NAO “Marat Ospanov West Kazakhstan Medical University” (Aktobe); Maqsutkhan P.N., 2nd-year resident, educational program “Neurosurgery”, NAO “Astana Medical University” (Astana); Batae B., 1st-year Master's student, educational program “Nursing”, NAO “Karaganda Medical University” (Karaganda); Qulbayeva A.B., 2nd-year Master's student, educational program “Medico-Preventive Care”, NAO “Marat Ospanov West Kazakhstan Medical University” (Aktobe); Satpaeva A.K., 2nd-year Master's student, educational program “Public Health”, NAO “Astana Medical University” (Republic of

Kazakhstan, Astana); Tolganbayeva K.A., 3rd-year doctoral student, educational program “Public Health”, NAO “S.D. Asfendiyarov Kazakh National Medical University” (Almaty); Islyamgalieva A.R., 3rd-year student in the educational program “Nursing”, LLP “West Kazakhstan Higher Medical College” (Uralsk); Yandutkina K.G., 2nd-year Master's student, educational program “Public Health”, NAO “Karaganda Medical University” (Karaganda).

***Involvement of highly qualified foreign experts.*** In 2025, new foreign experts with significant professional and academic experience were involved in the IAAR accreditation procedures, which made it possible to expand international expert participation, strengthen the comparability of evaluation procedures with foreign practice, and increase the objectivity and quality of accreditation decisions:

M. Kulish, Doctor of Technical Sciences, Lublin University of Technology (Lublin, Poland); Bagautlinova N.G., Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor, Kazan Federal University; Tegin R.A.A., PhD, Associate Professor, Kyrgyz-Turkish University “Manas” (Bishkek); Gasymova F.R., PhD Doctor, Azerbaijan University of Architecture and Construction (Baku); Guchua A.K., Doctor of Political Sciences, Associate Professor, Caucasus International University (Tbilisi, Georgia); Spetaru T., Doctor of Sociology, Independent University of Moldova (Chisinau, Moldova); Aniskin A., PhD Doctor, Professor, University of the North in Varazdin (Varazdin, Croatia); Gasanov E.E., Doctor of Technical Sciences, Azerbaijan Architectural and Construction University (Baku); Schultz R., Doctor of Engineering Sciences, Professor, Certified Professional (CP), Head of the Remote Sensing and Analysis Laboratory, Interdisciplinary Research Centre for Aviation and Space Research, King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia); Turgunbayev M.S., Candidate of Technical Sciences, Associate Professor, Vice-Rector for Educational and Scientific Work, Talas State University (Talas, Kyrgyz Republic); Gadoev K.Kh., Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Tajik State Institute of Languages named after S. Ulugzoda (Dushanbe); Dzhonibekova R.N., Candidate of Medical Sciences, Associate Professor, Head of the Department of Maxillofacial Surgery, Tajik State Medical University named after Abu Ali ibn Sino (Dushanbe); Mammadzade G., Doctoral student, Ganja State University (Ganja, Azerbaijan). Dvuzhlnaya I.F., Doctor of Art Studies, Associate Professor, Professor, Yanka Kupala State University of Grodno (Grodno); Linkova T.S., Candidate of Technical Sciences, Associate Professor, Higher School of Science and Technology (Nizhnekamsk).

In 2025, foreign experts, including students, were also involved in the international accreditation procedures in the medical direction, which contributed to the expansion of international experience and the exchange of best practices in the field of quality assurance of medical education: Akmalova G.M., Doctor of Medical Sciences, Professor of the Department of Pediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics, Bashkir State Medical University (Bashkir Republic, Ufa); Volotovska A.I., Doctor of Medical Sciences, Professor of the Department of Traumatology and Orthopedics, Belarusian State Medical University (Minsk); Galandaro V.M., Doctor of Medical Sciences, Professor, plastic and reconstructive surgeon, Professor of the Department of Oral Cavity Surgery and Maxillofacial Surgery, Azerbaijan Medical University (Baku, Azerbaijan); Dodkhokh D.S., Doctor of Medical Sciences, Professor, Vice-Rector for

Educational and Methodological Work, Tajik State Medical University named after Abu Ali ibn Sino (Dushanbe, Tajikistan); Medveva D.M., Candidate of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Associate Professor, Acting Dean of the Pharmaceutical Faculty, Associate Professor of the Department of Pharmacy Management and Economics, Saint Petersburg State Chemical Pharmaceutical University; Skugarevsky O.A., Doctor of Medical Sciences, Professor, Chairman of the Board of the Psychiatric Association, Minsk Regional Clinical Centre "Psychiatry-Narcology"; "Edelweiss Territory" (Minsk); Pashaev A.Ch., Doctor of Medical Sciences, Professor of the Department of Therapeutic Dentistry, Azerbaijan Medical University; Chechetova S.V., Doctor of Medical Sciences, Associate Professor of the Department of Pediatric Infectious Diseases, Kyrgyz State Medical Academy named after I.K. Akhunbayev (Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic); Samaeva E.V., Senior Lecturer of the Department of Pathology, Institution "International Higher School of Medicine" (Bishkek); Lim E.F., Candidate of Medical Sciences, Head of the Department of Special Surgical Disciplines, Institution "International Higher School of Medicine" (Kyrgyz Republic, Bishkek); Muntianu D., student of the educational program "Pharmacy", "Nicolae Testemitanu State University of Medicine and Pharmacy" (Moldova); Khudayberdiev M.B., student of the Medical Faculty of the educational program "General Medicine", Institution "Kyrgyz-Uzbek International University named after Batyrally Sydykov" (Osh, Kyrgyz Republic); Krylov I.D., trainee in the residency educational program "Anesthesiology and Reanimatology", Bashkir State Medical University (Ufa). Foreign experts – employers were also involved in the accreditation of medical educational organisations and educational programs, including Otajonov N.Zh., Deputy Director of the Fergana Branch of the Republican Centre for Emergency Medical Care (Uzbekistan).

***Involvement of experts from international networks and partners.*** Involvement of experts from international networks and partners. IAAR systematically cooperates with foreign accreditation agencies, including the mutual exchange of experts. Over the past 10 years, experts from agencies ASIIN, ACQUIN, FIBAA, WFME, AIC, ANACEC, as well as representatives of educational organisations from Great Britain, Germany, France, Greece, Turkey, Poland, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Kyrgyzstan and other countries have been included in the IAAR external expert panels. Experts recommended by IAAR's foreign partners are characterised by a high level of professionalism, competence, and academic culture.

In 2025, the following experts were recommended to the National Centre for Education Quality Development of Georgia:

- Dauen D.B., PhD Doctor, Associate Professor, Kazakh University of International Relations and Foreign Languages (Almaty, Kazakhstan);

- Safarov R.Z., PhD Doctor, Associate Professor, L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University (Astana, Kazakhstan).

Also in the reporting year, an expert was recommended to the National Centre for Professional Public Accreditation of the Russian Federation:

- Aldungarova A.K., PhD, Doctor, Associate Professor, International Educational Corporation (Almaty, Kazakhstan).

In order to form a qualified pool of experts, as well as to appoint them as chairs of the External Expert Panel (VEX), IAAR annually conducts an analysis of the

activities of specialists of various categories. Throughout 2025, systematic interaction was maintained with Agency experts when forming the External Expert Panel, including explaining to new members the methodology of institutional and specialized (program) accreditation in accordance with the current IAAR Standards and Guidelines.

***Training of national and foreign experts.*** One of the key areas for enhancing IAAR's expert potential is the training and preparation of specialists. The preparation and certification of experts is carried out in accordance with the "Regulations on the Training, Retraining, and Advanced Training of External Experts." As part of the annual plans, the agency organises training seminars aimed at developing the professional competencies of expert candidates in quality assessment.

At the seminars, participants study theoretical aspects: IAAR requirements, the content of procedures for various types of accreditation, IAAR standards and ESG, as well as principles of ethical behaviour. Completion of this stage is mandatory for including candidates in the External Expert Panel (VEX).

At the second level of training, candidates perform practical tasks corresponding to the functions of an expert in the External Expert Panel. Successful completion of these tasks allows the specialist to be included in the expert database and assigned a category (1, 2, or 3). The assigned categories enable the agency to track the number of expert involvements and evaluate the quality of their work.

In 2025, IAAR organised and conducted training seminars for new and existing Agency experts from universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan and foreign countries, including medical organisations, as well as for External Expert Panel chairs, in accordance with the approved schedule. Thus, on February 21 and October 23, 2025, project leaders for institutional and specialised accreditation of universities, Nazyrova G.R. and Auezkhanova Zh.A., organised and conducted international methodological seminars on accreditation procedures aimed at preparing academic experts for participation in External Expert Panel visits to educational organisations. The seminars thoroughly covered the role, key tasks, and functions of the External Expert Panel expert in the accreditation process, as well as issues of conducting external quality assessment in accordance with IAAR international accreditation standards and the Guidelines for Organising and Conducting External Assessment Procedures in the Accreditation of Educational Organisations and/or Educational Programs.

Special emphasis was placed on mechanisms for collegial discussion of preliminary assessment results taking into account the educational program profile parameters, principles of preparing a substantiated evidence base and the analytical section of the External Expert Panel report, and the correct reflection of strengths and formulation of recommendations. Based on the results of completing practical tasks, seminar participants confirmed their readiness for expert activities and received appropriate certificates.

Also, on April 18 and September 23, 2025, IAAR organized and conducted training seminars for managers and representatives of secondary education organisations with subsequent selection of experts from among the participants. The seminars were attended by school leaders and teachers, methodologists from 12 regions of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as representatives of foreign educational

organisations. The events covered international school accreditation standards and criteria, the role of international accreditation in ensuring education quality, and the functions and responsibilities of the external expert panel (VEX) experts.

The seminar held on April 18, 2025, at Astana IT University was conducted in a hybrid format and brought together 48 offline participants and 160 online participants. The moderator of the event was the General Director of the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating, head of the "Äyel amanaty" party "AMANAT" project, Zhumagulova A.B. Welcoming remarks were given by and as honorary guests: Rector of Astana IT University Khikmetov A.K., Majilis Deputy of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan Imasheva S.V., Deputy Chairman of the Committee for Secondary Education of the Ministry of Enlightenment of the Republic of Kazakhstan Karambayev Zh.P., Deputy Executive Secretary of the Astana City Branch of the "AMANAT" party Utebaeva M.M., Head of the Methodological Centre Department of the Astana City Administration Kasenova A.B., Head of the Employment and Social Programs Coordination Department of Aktobe Region Urazbaeva L.A.

The seminar program covered a wide range of relevant and practice-oriented issues. IAAR Advisor Yanovskaya O.A. presented a report on "International Accreditation as a Mechanism for Ensuring Education Quality in Schools," revealing key approaches and benefits of implementing international standards. IAAR Project Leader Auezkhanova Zh.A. addressed issues of institutional accreditation of schools as a tool for ensuring higher education standards, emphasising the role of systematic assessment in improving management effectiveness and educational outcomes.

The director of the "Kazakhstan School of Intellect", Kulbarakova G.M., shared practical experience of undergoing IAAR accreditation, analysing the impact of accreditation on improving quality assurance processes in teaching. In conclusion, IAAR Project Leader Beckenova D.K. familiarised participants in detail with the procedures for conducting accreditation in secondary education organisations, explaining the main stages, requirements, and expectations within the accreditation process.

The conduct of these seminars contributed to the expansion of the IAAR expert pool, strengthening interaction with the secondary education system, and attracting qualified specialists to participate in accreditation procedures. Overall, the seminars became an effective platform for developing professional competencies of potential experts and preparing them for conducting external assessments in accordance with international requirements.

***Participation of IAAR experts in events.*** To exchange professional experience and develop expertise, national and international experts actively participate in forums, congresses, conferences, round tables, workshops, and training sessions. In the reporting period, IAAR experts actively participated in the development of methodological guidelines for accreditation and ranking procedures, as well as in the publication of analytical and scientific materials. At the same time, in 2025, Akibaeva G.S., Zakirova D.I., Kushebina G.M., Koval A.P., and other IAAR experts were the lead authors of articles in the scientific and informational journal "Education. Quality Assurance". The professional activity of IAAR experts is carried out in accordance with a set of regulatory documents regulating requirements for competencies and

ethical behaviour of experts, including the “IAAR Expert Statement on Absence of Conflict of Interest” and the “Code of Ethics for Experts”, posted on the IAAR website in the “Experts” section.

Overall, in 2025, IAAR continued systematic work to expand and qualitatively develop the national and international expert corps through the implementation of the Expert Professional Training Programme, strengthening cooperation with other accreditation agencies, and improving the methodology of accreditation procedures, including through active involvement of foreign experts from recognised European and international education quality assurance agencies.

### ***1.3 Effective management of IAAR activities through human resource development, their professional competencies, and achieving the Agency's financial sustainability***

Mission and strategic development guidelines of IAAR determined the formation of the Agency's organisational structure and the introduction of a project-based management approach. IAAR includes structural units and project directions, such as “Medical Projects”, “International Projects”, “Project for Institutional and Specialised Accreditation of Universities”, “Project for Accreditation of TVET Organisations”, “Information-Analytical Project”, and others. Their activities are carried out in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan and regulated by IAAR internal regulatory documents.

The Agency's management system includes the Supervisory Board, Accreditation Council, Appeals and Complaints Review Commission, Advisory Council on Ranking Issues, as well as Expert Councils on the main areas of activity. Overall leadership of IAAR is carried out by the General Director.

***Staff composition.*** In 2025, 20 employees worked at IAAR on a permanent basis, of which 5 hold academic degrees (1 Doctor of Sciences, 1 PhD Doctor, 3 Candidates of Sciences), and 8 hold a Master's degree. Functional duties, areas of responsibility, and powers of employees are fixed in job descriptions and individual work plans.

Analysis of the staff composition and its compliance with the requirements of the set tasks and strategic development directions of IAAR shows that personnel selection for each position is carried out taking into account professional experience in education, participation in quality assurance processes, availability of specialised education, analytical and managerial competencies, as well as readiness to work in national and international contexts. This approach ensures that the Agency's human resource potential corresponds to current and prospective tasks, the sustainability of implemented processes, and the effective implementation of IAAR's development strategy.

Internal communications are ensured through daily work interactions, holding weekly meetings, and internal audit procedures. After each External Expert Panel visit, IAAR coordinators fill out evaluation questionnaires, which allows for analysing work results, identifying areas for improvement, and systematically refining accreditation procedures. Collegial management bodies and expert councils. One of the key tasks of IAAR is the organisation and coordination of the activities of the Agency's collegial management bodies, as well as permanently functioning bodies for expert and

information-consultative support. Analysis of activities shows that IAAR successfully implements this direction, ensuring the sustainable functioning of the Supervisory Board, Accreditation Council, IAAR Appeals and Complaints Review Commission, expert and consultative bodies, Expert Councils on medical education, higher education, and TVET.

Throughout 2025, the IAAR Accreditation Council held 8 meetings, during which materials on 21 educational organisations of the Republic of Kazakhstan and 7 foreign educational organisations were reviewed, as well as issues of international specialised accreditation of 461 educational programmes of various levels of study in Kazakhstan and 63 educational programmes of foreign educational organisations.

During the meetings, Accreditation Council members gave priority attention to issues of strategic development of educational organisations, human resource potential development, internal and external academic mobility of students and teaching staff, and other aspects of ensuring and improving education quality.

The Accreditation Council's activities were carried out in accordance with the approved meeting schedule. IAAR regularly informs the general public about the results of external quality assessment of educational organisations' activities. Information on Accreditation Council decisions is sent in the established manner to the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (for inclusion in Registers 2 and 3 of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan), as well as to the relevant educational organisations. Accreditation Council decisions are posted on the Agency's website.

In accordance with the Regulations on Expert Councils, the Agency forms Expert Councils by directions from certified experts included in the IAAR database. In addition, the Agency delegates individual experts to participate in national and international events in the field of education quality assessment and assurance.

Expert Councils are headed by experienced chairs from IAAR experts: for higher education – Akibaeva G.S., Candidate of Economic Sciences, Associate Professor; for medical education – Sydykova S.I., Candidate of Medical Sciences, Associate Professor; for technical and vocational education – Gasimov R.S., author-developer of standard curricula and programmes, as well as educational integrated programmes for technical and vocational education specialities.

Expert Councils effectively perform the functions assigned to them for expert assessment of the development of secondary, technical and vocational, medical, higher, and postgraduate education in accordance with the profile of each council's activities, including post-accreditation monitoring within subsequent assessment procedures.

In 2025, two meetings of the IAAR Expert Council on medical education were held, during which issues of preparation and approval of the annual IAAR report on the implementation of recommendations from experts of the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) were reviewed, and changes made to the Standards and Guidelines for International Accreditation were approved.

In March 2025, IAAR submitted the annual WFME report, which reflected information on significant external changes affecting the Agency's activities, as well as on planned and actually implemented changes within its remit. The report presented information on conducted accreditation and re-accreditation procedures for medical

educational organisations of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as on cross-border international institutional and programme accreditation of medical educational institutions. The report also covered key events in IAAR's activities, including information on signed agreements and memoranda.

In the reporting year, IAAR carried out a review of Standards and Guidelines for international accreditation of all levels of healthcare education, including basic medical and pharmaceutical education, master's, doctorate, and residency (ordinatura). The update of documents was carried out based on WFME, AMSE, and ESG standards in accordance with the Global Standards for Improving the Quality of Postgraduate Medical and Health Education Programmes (WFME, 2016) and harmonised with WFME basic medical education standards (2015, 2020).

At the same time, new Standards and Guidelines for international accreditation of joint educational programmes in basic medical and pharmaceutical education, master's, and doctorate were developed and approved. The said documents are based on WFME, AMSE, and ESG requirements and aligned with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015), taking into account the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes (Yerevan, 2015).

One of the effectively functioning collegial bodies of IAAR is the Advisory Council on Ranking Issues – a consultative-advisory body of the Agency, chaired by Shunkeev K.Sh. The main goal of the Council's activities is to develop proposals and recommendations for improving the ranking system, eliminating ambiguities, inaccuracies, and contradictions in evaluation criteria, as well as taking into account proposals from educational organisations for amendments and additions to the ranking programme.

The activities of the Advisory Council contribute to increasing the transparency and objectivity of ranking procedures, developing and methodologically refining evaluation tools, as well as strengthening the trust of the academic and professional community in IAAR ranking assessment results.

***Development of professional and personal competencies of employees.*** Development of professional and personal competencies of employees. In the reporting period, systematic work was established aimed at enhancing the professional level of Agency employees and strengthening human resource potential. The implemented measures contributed to the development and formation of competencies in accordance with the requirements of the “ENQA Quality Assurance Professional Competencies Framework”, which defines key professional guidelines for specialists of ENQA member agencies.

Special attention was paid to developing employees' ability to forecast potential risks and opportunities based on a deep understanding of the internal and external environment, as well as the national and international context of quality assurance systems. During activities, skills in initiating, managing, and coordinating complex projects involving various stakeholders were developed, and understanding of the national quality assurance system was expanded in a broader international dimension.

An important direction of work was the development of team interaction competencies and the application of effective collective work methods focused on

achieving the Agency's strategic and operational goals. The main emphasis was placed on forming employees' responsibility for decisions made, results of their own activities and those of subordinates, as well as deepening understanding of the application of quality assurance tools and methods in various forms and at different levels of higher education. Overall, the implemented measures contributed to increasing IAAR's managerial effectiveness and the sustainable development of the Agency's human resources.

Throughout 2025, IAAR systematically held weekly work meetings, during which issues of functioning and improving the internal quality assurance system were discussed. Parallely, internal seminars were organised, as well as formal and informal meetings of IAAR coordinators aimed at exchanging professional experience, ensuring consistency, coherence, and continuity of external assessment procedures for educational organisations and/or educational programmes.

During such meetings, problematic issues arising during External Expert Panel visits to educational organisations, preparation of External Expert Panel reports, and anonymous surveying were regularly analysed, and ways to resolve them, opportunities for improving procedures, and bringing them to a unified, agreed format were discussed. The consistent development of employees' professional competencies ensures the successful implementation of the IAAR Development Strategy tasks and planned activities.

At the same time, in 2025, IAAR employees systematically enhanced their professional training through participation in specialised conferences, seminars, forums, and other significant professional events dedicated to education and quality assurance issues.

As part of this activity, in March 2025, IAAR General Director's Advisor Yanovskaya O.A. participated in the seminar “Discussion of Barriers to Implementing Transnational Education (TNE) in Kazakhstan and Quality Assurance of International Programmes”, organised by the British Council. During the event, with participation of representatives from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Higher Education Development Centre, accreditation agencies, and universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan, current issues of transnational education development and approaches to external assessment of foreign branches and international educational programmes were reviewed.

In April 2025, IAAR General Director's Advisor Yanovskaya O.A. participated in the meeting of the Educational-Methodological Association “Modern Approaches to Developing Educational Programmes in Management and Public Administration”, held at Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. At the plenary session, Yanovskaya O.A. presented “International Accreditation of Educational Programmes in ‘Management’ and ‘State and Local Government’ Directions: IAAR Experience”. During the event, with participation of representatives from 66 higher education institutions, state bodies, employers, and professional communities, issues of updating educational programme content taking into account modern challenges and education system transformation were discussed.

In June 2025, IAAR General Director Zhumagulova A.B. and IAAR General Director's Advisor Yanovskaya O.A. participated in “AMANAT” party events held as

part of the “Таңшолпан” project for developing female political leadership, implemented by the Women's Wing of the Kostanay Regional Branch of the “AMANAT” party and the party's Academy of Political Management. A.B. Zhumagulova, as head of the “Äyel Amanaty” project, spoke at the plenary session with welcoming remarks and an introductory lecture on “Women's Potential in Politics and Education”, outlining priorities of the republican “AMANAT” party movement, including enhancing women's political, legal, and digital literacy, developing horizontal connections, and forming an active women's community. The event was attended by over 100 women leaders from Kostanay city and Kostanay region. Following the work of three practice-oriented sections, further directions for implementing the “Tansholpan” project were defined.

In June of the reporting year, the project leader for institutional and specialised accreditation of medical educational organisations, Jakenova A.S., participated in the International Online Forum on Artificial Intelligence in Medicine “ANaMed Forum - New Generation 2025”. In October 2025, she also participated in the scientific-practical online conference “Current Problems in Diagnosis and Treatment of Respiratory Pathology”.

In July 2025, IAAR General Director's Advisor Yanovskaya O.A. and the project leader for accreditation of technical and vocational education organisations Auezkhanova Zh.A. underwent training at the Mentoring School of the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs of the Republic of Kazakhstan “Atameken” on the topic “Workplace Training Pedagogy. Certification of Mentor Specialists”. The training was aimed at developing competencies of mentors from production representatives and was carried out as part of implementing the Roadmap for Dual Training Introduction, which allowed deepening the practice-oriented approach to assessing personnel training quality.

In September 2025, the project leader for accreditation of technical and vocational education organisations, Auezkhanova Zh.A., participated in the seminar “Accreditation in the Secondary Education Quality Assurance System: Mechanisms, Procedures, and Prospects”, organised by AOO “Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools”. Participation in the seminar enabled mastering competencies in organising and conducting accreditation procedures in secondary education, methods for assessing educational programme quality, and modern approaches to internal quality assurance systems, which contribute to increasing IAAR's effectiveness in school institutional accreditation.

In October 2025, IAAR General Director Zhumagulova A.B. participated in the International Forum of Strategic Partners “Kazakhstan – Territory of Academic Knowledge”, organised by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Astana. At the plenary session, the Head of State Kassym-Jomart Kemelevich Tokayev spoke, noting the importance of developing digital competencies and introducing artificial intelligence into the education and science system. The Minister of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan presented key directions for higher education development and international cooperation. The forum brought together leaders of Kazakh and foreign universities,

representatives of accreditation bodies and experts, and became a platform for discussing strategic priorities for higher education and science development.

In October of the reporting year, IAAR jointly with the National Centre for Higher Education Development of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan held a methodological seminar “Atlas of Future Professions: Development and Implementation of Educational Programmes”, dedicated to updating and quality assurance of educational programmes taking into account labour market transformation, digitalisation, and artificial intelligence implementation. Seminar speakers were O.B. Sakenov, head of the “Mamandyğym – Bolaşağym” project, and M.A. Skiba, expert in educational programme development. The event was attended by IAAR experts and university representatives, IAAR General Director Zhumagulova A.B., IAAR General Director's Advisor Yanovskaya O.A., as well as Agency employees: Auezkhanova Zh.A., Beckenova D.K., Berkimbaeva Zh.Kh., Dzakenova A.S., Konusova P., Medetov B.E., Nazyrova G.R., Tursynbayev T.B.

In November 2025, IAAR General Director's Advisor Yanovskaya O.A. and head of the analytical project Konusova P. participated in the international conference “Kazakhstan International Research Conference 2025”, organised by the Elsevier publishing house in Astana. During the conference, issues of applying artificial intelligence and digital transformation in scientific research and publishing activities were reviewed, and approaches to developing and promoting Kazakh scientific journals in the international scientific-educational space were discussed. Participation in the event contributed to strengthening professional connections and developing IAAR's journal “Education. Quality Assurance”.

In the reporting year, the project leader for institutional and specialised accreditation of additional education organisations Berkimbaeva Zh.Kh. participated in the seminar “Setting Up Internal Quality Assurance Systems of Higher Education Institutions in the Context of the New ‘Clean Slate’ Regulatory Policy”. Participation in the seminar enabled expanding professional competencies in internal quality assurance systems, familiarising with modern approaches to organising monitoring and control of educational processes. She also completed a course on Quality Management System at the university base, which strengthened skills in practical application of quality assurance standards and tools in professional activities.

In November 2025, IAAR General Director's Advisor Yanovskaya O.A. participated in the international conference “Science and Education – Future of Humanity”, dedicated to the 10th anniversary of the National Scientific Centre for Education Development “Sanat”. During the conference, issues of developing the Republic of Kazakhstan's healthcare system, introducing innovations, ensuring education quality, international accreditation and certification of medical specialists, as well as training and professional development of medical personnel were discussed, with participation of state body representatives, educational organisations, and the scientific and professional community of Kazakhstan and foreign countries. Also in November of the reporting year, IAAR General Director's Advisor Yanovskaya participated in the meeting of the Higher Collegial Council of the ROO “National Centre for Independent Examination” and took part in discussing performance results. During the meeting, issues of ensuring quality of medical personnel training,

independent assessment of professional competencies, and introducing international practices into the Republic of Kazakhstan's healthcare system were reviewed.

From September to November 2025, IAAR system administrator Muslim A.B. completed SHIFT online professional development courses in the direction of “Java Test Automation”. During the training, skills in developing and maintaining Java autotests, analysing software quality and system integrations, studying the software lifecycle, understanding client-server application architecture, using automated testing tools and frameworks, as well as designing test scenarios and test cases taking into account software quality requirements were mastered.

In the reporting year, several Agency employees, Nazyrova G.R., Medetov B.E., Bekenova D.K., Zhuzbayev Zh., Tasmagambetov Zh. underwent certification at the Professional Qualifications Recognition Centre. Following certification, professional skills and competencies were confirmed for the following professions: Nazyrova G.R. – database administration specialist; Medetov B.E. – IT business analysis specialist; Zhuzbayev Zh. – software engineer-programmer; Tasmagambetov Zh. – software designer; Bekenova D.K. – information security engineer. The obtained certification contributed to improving employees' professional competence, strengthening the Agency's human resource potential, expanding opportunities for implementing digital solutions, and ensuring the quality of information and analytical processes in IAAR's activities.

In 2025, chief accountant Keshkilov Ye.B. completed training under the programme “Educational Process and AI: Generative Models and Prompt Engineering Art”. The training enabled enhancing professional competencies in applying artificial intelligence for analysing and optimising educational processes, which contributes to increasing the effectiveness of internal control and supporting managerial decision-making within IAAR's activities.

In December 2025, IAAR participated in an international conference dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the Civil Aviation Academy. The Agency was represented at the event by IAAR General Director's Advisor Yanovskaya. The conference was aimed at discussing prospects for the Academy's development and was accompanied by presentations of anniversary and innovative projects.

Thus, participation of IAAR employees in various events contributed to expanding their professional competencies, introducing modern approaches into accreditation activities, and strengthening the Agency's interaction with the professional and academic community.

Professional development of IAAR employees is carried out on a planned and managed basis under the Agency management's control. It is considered within the internal quality assurance system and implemented through work meetings, Expert Council meetings, as well as forums and seminars organised by IAAR jointly with national and international partners.

In accordance with modern requirements, employees consistently develop personal and professional competencies ensuring effective implementation of the Agency's strategic goals and key tasks.

Achieving the Agency's financial sustainability for implementing strategic tasks is ensured through effective management by IAAR's financial service, including a

competent approach to budget planning, expense optimisation, and forming financial decisions in the medium term.

#### ***1.4 Increasing IAAR Effectiveness through Feedback Development and Internal Quality Assurance System Improvement***

In the framework of implementing set tasks, the Agency forms an internal environment focused on actively involving employees and key stakeholders in achieving strategic goals, as well as systematic assessment of service consumer satisfaction. The IAAR Development Strategy for 2022–2026 defines the mission, vision, and strategic goals, which serve as the basis for developing and implementing the Agency's annual activity plans.

To fulfil the tasks of the Plan for Improving the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) in IAAR, ongoing self-assessment and critical analysis of activities are carried out with the involvement of employees and stakeholders. These processes are implemented through the functioning of a stakeholder feedback system, internal audits, employee reporting analysis, and other performance evaluation tools.

In accordance with the Quality Policy and Development Strategy, IAAR has developed, documented, implemented, and maintains in working order an IQAS, formalised in the IQAS Manual. The Policy and IQAS Manual are regularly updated taking into account changes in the internal and external environment and are focused on forming a sustainable quality culture and meeting the needs of key stakeholders, including state bodies, society, educational organisations, employers, students, and public associations.

Enhancing IAAR's effectiveness is ensured through systematic monitoring within the IQAS, including the work of working groups for continuous improvement, conducting internal audits with preparation of analytical reports, developing and implementing corrective actions, and risk management. IQAS improvement is carried out based on analysis of accumulated data, feedback mechanisms, and assessment of the effectiveness of managerial decisions.

IAAR continuously develops the IQAS with involvement of collegial management bodies and the expert community. The Agency has sustainable mechanisms for internal and external feedback aimed at improving activity quality, process transparency, and strengthening trust from the professional and academic community.

In 2025, IAAR conducted surveys of main stakeholders in accredited medical educational organisations, as well as among experts from Central Asian and European countries. As part of obtaining feedback after completing accreditation procedures, survey forms were sent to 17 medical educational organisations.

Also, after each External Expert Panel (EEP) visit to an educational organisation, questionnaires were distributed to panel members, including academic experts, employer experts, and students. All expert questionnaires were completed and processed. At the same time, surveying was conducted among experts and organisational coordinators who participated in accreditation procedures.

Systematic surveying on an ongoing basis ensures obtaining objective and multifaceted feedback on the quality of organising and conducting accreditation

procedures, allows identifying strengths and areas for improvement, enhances process transparency, and contributes to further refining the methodology and practices of external assessment. The obtained feedback results are actively used in the Agency's activities and serve as the basis for managerial decisions and initiatives for continuous improvement. To actively involve personnel in these processes, IAAR management supports the activities of working groups formed from proactive employees and experts. Agency employees and members of collegial management bodies participate in discussing and updating regulatory documents, including the Development Strategy, complaints and appeals review procedures, accreditation standards and criteria, and submitting proposals aimed at enhancing IAAR's effectiveness.

To develop these mechanisms and systematise interaction with key stakeholders, in 2025, IAAR developed a Communication Strategy aimed at enhancing interaction effectiveness with higher education institutions, students, and employers. The Strategy is focused on systematically informing target audiences, identifying relevant issues for them, and promoting a culture of quality and transparency in accreditation procedures. Its implementation contributes to refining accreditation processes, improving educational organisation activities, and strengthening trust from the professional and academic community, including state bodies, experts, employers, and students.

**Monitoring of IAAR Activities within IQAS.** Within the monitoring of the Agency's activities in the IQAS system in 2025, a working group for internal audit was formed, a programme for its conduct was developed, and an internal audit was carried out in accordance with the approved procedure in the IQAS Manual. Based on audit results, a corrective action plan was developed aimed at eliminating identified non-conformities and enhancing process effectiveness.

By Order of IAAR General Director Zhumagulova A.B. dated 9 January 2025, the composition of the internal audit working group was approved: leader – Iskakova G.K., members – Kydyrmina N., Nazyrova G., Beckenova D., Medetov B. In accordance with the approved programme, the internal audit was conducted from 3 to 17 February 2025. An analytical report with conclusions on the quality of procedures implemented by the Agency was prepared based on the results.

The internal audit covered key processes of international institutional and specialised (programme) accreditation and re-accreditation, as well as post-accreditation monitoring. The check was carried out in the following directions: selective analysis of self-assessment reports and external expert panel reports for 2024 for compliance with IAAR requirements; assessment of post-accreditation monitoring procedure compliance, including analysis of expert group final reports; control of project leaders' compliance with 2024 work plans.

Internal audit results showed that the Agency's main business processes are generally implemented in accordance with IAAR standards and requirements. Project leaders and Agency employees carried out systematic work on developing and improving the IQAS.

Analysis of EEP reports confirmed the full and timely implementation of all visit programme activities, which ensured external assessment in strict compliance with current standards. IAAR coordinators ensured adherence to regulated timelines and procedures at all accreditation process stages, including receiving self-assessment

reports, organising EEP visits, developing, agreeing, and implementing visit programmes in accordance with standards and EEP Manual requirements.

In the Agency's activities, results of internal audits, feedback mechanisms, and recommendations from international organisations ENQA, WFME, and EQAR are systematically taken into account. Internal audit is conducted annually and serves as a tool for continuous improvement of IAAR's activity quality.

To ensure quality of external expert panel (EEP) reports within the internal quality assurance system, all EEP reports undergo mandatory internal expert review at the Agency before consideration at IAAR Accreditation Council meetings. In 2025, 60 EEP reports underwent internal expert review. Based on assessment results, 5 reports (8.4%) received the maximum score – 10 points, 13 reports (21.6%) were scored in the 5–7 point range, while the overwhelming majority – 42 reports (70%) – received 8–9 point scores. Overall, EEP reports for 2025 are characterised by a more pronounced analytical focus and, in most cases, contain substantiated and measurable recommendations.

The high quality and analytical depth of EEP reports create the basis for further monitoring of IAAR's accreditation activities and comprehensive assessment of higher education organisations' status. Monitoring results within international institutional and specialised accreditation allow determining priority and prospective development directions for universities and their educational programmes. Implementation of recommendations formulated based on external assessment results contributes to enhancing the quality of individual educational organisation activities and the higher education system as a whole. Generalised results of analysing best practices and identified trends in education quality assurance are used by relevant stakeholders at national and international levels.

***Analysis of Self-Assessment Reports.*** The working group studied and analysed self-assessment reports of the following educational organisations: Kazakh-German University, S. Seifullin Kazakh Agrotechnical Research University, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, S. Asfendiyarov Kazakh National Medical University.

Accreditation procedures in the specified organisations were conducted under the leadership of: project leader for institutional and specialised accreditation of additional education organisations Saidullaeva M.A.; project leader for institutional and specialised accreditation of universities Nazyrova G.R.; project leader for institutional and specialised accreditation of medical educational organisations Dzakenova A.S., respectively.

Analysis of self-assessment reports showed that most coordinators ensured compliance of materials with Standards and Guidelines requirements, and strove to avoid discrepancies between assessments presented in the “Self-Assessment Panel Conclusion” table and the content of corresponding report sections. At the same time, the working group emphasises the need to strengthen both substantive and technical monitoring of self-assessment reports.

During the internal audit, shortcomings were identified at the stage of primary expert review of self-assessment reports, related to non-compliance with regulated requirements for document volume, structure, and content, as well as incomplete completion of mandatory sections of the educational organisation profile. Technical

and structural non-conformities with the Memorandum and Self-Assessment Guidelines were recorded, including exceeding permissible volume, absence of mandatory components and attributes, formally or incorrectly completed sections, as well as inconsistency of the declared accreditation type.

Some reports are characterised by a formal approach to self-assessment, manifested in the absence of critical analysis, failure to highlight criteria requiring improvement, lack of summary conclusions and quantitative indicators, as well as violation of requirements for the structure of analytical sections, including presentation of SWOT analysis.

Based on the analysis results, the working group concluded that the identified remarks are systemic in nature and indicate the need to strengthen input control and more thorough technical and substantive verification of self-assessment reports at the primary expert review stage, with timely referral of materials for revision upon detection of deviations from established requirements.

***Analysis of EEP Reports.*** For internal audit of EEP reports for 2024 for compliance with the Guidelines for Organising and Conducting External Assessment Procedures in the Accreditation of an Educational Organisation and/or Educational Programme, a selective analysis of external expert panel reports of higher education institutions was carried out, whose coordinators were Bekenova D.K., Dzakenova A.S., Saidullaeva M.A., Nazyrova G.R. The internal audit working group analysed the following EEP reports: EP 6B01408 “Initial Military Training and Physical Culture and Sport” Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University (EEP visit: 4–6 November 2024, AC decision dated 24 December 2024); EP 6B04105 “Accounting and Economic Analysis” and 6B04106 “Banking and Financial Management” Sh. Ualikhanov Kokshetau University (EEP visit: 27–29 May 2024, decision dated 26 June 2024); EP 6B10105 “Public Health” Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (EEP visit: 4–6 June 2024, AC decision dated 21 June 2024); EP 7M10101 “Healthcare Management” (scientific-pedagogical direction) S.D. Asfendiyarov Kazakh National Medical University (EEP visit: 16–18 April 2024, AC decision dated 31 May 2024); EP 560001 “General Medicine” (higher professional education) Educational-Scientific-Production Complex International University of Kyrgyzstan (EEP visit: 16–18 April 2024, AC decision dated 27 May 2024); EP 6B01408 “Vocational Training” and 6B01407 “Training of Initial Military Training and Physical Culture Teachers” M.Kh. Dulati Taraz Regional University (EEP visit: 29–31 January 2024); in-service training programmes “Clinical and Laboratory Diagnostics”, “Operative and Diagnostic Endosurgery”, “Modern Diagnosis and Treatment of the Most Common Diseases of Internal Organs in Family Medicine” Tashkent Medical Academy (Uzbekistan) (EEP visit: 1–3 May 2024, AC decision dated 31 May 2024).

Based on the conducted analysis, it was established that EEP reports generally comply with IAAR requirements for structure and content. The evidential and analytical parts of the reports are, in most cases, interconnected and logically consistent, and the presented recommendations are substantiated and focused on improving educational organisation activities. The analysis also showed that EEP experts take into account remarks formulated following internal expert review, and submit reports of higher quality level to the Accreditation Council.

At the same time, during the internal audit, the working group identified the following typical shortcomings and remarks:

- In some EEP reports, there is insufficient substantiation of individual recommendations in the analytical part;

- In a number of cases, internal expert review remarks are not fully taken into account: individual recommendations are completely removed either due to revision of the expert position or to simplify report correction after internal expert review;

- Formal formulations of strengths are encountered, as well as non-measurable, insufficiently elaborated recommendations, which complicates their tracking within post-accreditation monitoring;

- In some EEP reports, the number of recommendations for educational organisations and/or educational programmes is limited (3–6), which reduces the potential of external assessment as a tool for identifying development opportunities and prospects;

- In some EEP reports, an unapproved visit programme is placed;

- The difference between quantitative EEP assessments presented in the “EEP Conclusion” evaluation table and textual conclusions for corresponding report sections was recorded;

- The “Description of Previous Accreditation Procedure” section is not always formatted in accordance with Standards requirements; individual EEP reports revealed technical formatting shortcomings, as well as grammatical and stylistic errors.

Internal audit results indicate that the system of preparing and expert reviewing EEP reports in IAAR generally functions effectively and complies with established standards. At the same time, the identified typical shortcomings are mainly methodological and technical in nature and do not critically affect the substantiation of final accreditation decisions. Nevertheless, their presence indicates the need for further refinement of internal expert review mechanisms, enhancing the quality of the analytical part of reports, and standardising approaches to formulating recommendations.

***Analysis of Post-Accreditation Monitoring Procedures.*** To ensure compliance of educational organisations (EO) and/or educational programmes (EP) activities with IAAR standards, as well as for their continuous improvement, IAAR conducts post-accreditation monitoring (PAM), the procedure of which is regulated by the Post-Accreditation Monitoring Regulations.

Within the internal audit, compliance of PAM procedures with IAAR requirements was assessed based on the content of EO action plans, university reports on implementation of EEP recommendations, and final reports of expert groups. The working group reviewed materials on post-accreditation monitoring of Kostanay Engineering-Economic University named after M. Dulatov, Karaganda Technical University named after A. Saginov, Korkyt Ata Kyzylorda University, and Karaganda Medical University.

The check was carried out selectively and included analysis of compliance with IAAR requirements:

- 1) adherence to deadlines according to the EEP Guidelines and Post-Accreditation Monitoring Regulations;

- 2) university PAM plans;
- 3) expert group PAM reports;
- 4) university PAM reports.

PAM deadlines for EO fully complied with established requirements. Within 7 working days after the Accreditation Council meeting, IAAR sent an official letter with the accreditation decision result. In cases of positive decisions, EO submitted Action Plans for improving and enhancing quality within EEP recommendations no later than 60 calendar days after receiving the letters and final EEP reports. IAAR reviewed the submitted Plans within the established 30 calendar days. All PAM procedure stages were completed in accordance with the approved schedule.

The reviewed Action Plans took into account all EEP recommendations and were signed by EO management. For each recommendation, activities and implementation deadlines were specified. At the same time, in some cases, activity formulations were formal in nature, without a clear implementation mechanism, which complicates verifying their practical execution within PAM. Also, a number of plans showed shortcomings in specifying activities for implementing recommendations.

Overall, intermediate higher education organisation reports on PAM comply with IAAR requirements. All reports presented recommendations in accordance with the EEP Recommendations Implementation Plan. At the same time, individual non-conformities were identified regarding the structure and formatting of reporting materials, particularly content and conclusions. Results of the internal audit conducted by the working group revealed the following typical shortcomings in PAM plans and reports, as well as expert group reports:

- absence in some reports of expert group conclusions on acceptance or rejection of the submitted report;
- absence of introduction and/or conclusion in several PAM reports despite substantive coverage of all EEP recommendations;
- presence of minor technical and formatting errors.

Analysis of materials submitted for audit indicates the need to strengthen substantive control of plans and reports by responsible coordinators and the PAM project leader. Special attention should be paid to verifying the completeness of including all EEP recommendations in university plans, the validity and feasibility of planned activities, as well as compliance with established deadlines for document submission in accordance with Agency requirements.

In 2025, the working group conducted an analysis of the implementation of the Corrective Action Plan based on the 2024 internal audit results. The Plan included 16 activities, most of which were fully completed during 2024.

In accordance with the Corrective Action Plan, during training seminars and EEP visits, coordinators emphasised to EEP chairs and members the content of self-assessment reports, particularly the need for critical analysis of EO activities, as well as consistency between the textual part of the report and evaluation tables.

Coordinators monitored the formulation by EEP chairs and members of targeted and specified recommendations for each EP individually. Control was also strengthened over compliance of self-assessment report structures with IAAR Standards and Guidelines requirements, including correct reflection of information on

assigned qualifications, NQF and EQF levels, IAAR standards outputs, as well as presence of conclusions on quantitative criterion indicators after each standard.

During external assessment of EO and EP, coordinators tracked correct reflection in EEP reports of anonymous student and teaching staff survey analysis results, as well as compliance with formatting requirements. Special attention was given to monitoring EEP reports in terms of eliminating remarks identified following the IAAR internal expert review.

Conducting IQAS monitoring for 2025 is scheduled for the first quarter of 2026. Within the monitoring, a comprehensive analysis of the implementation of the Corrective Action Plan based on the internal audit conducted from 3 to 17 February 2025 will be carried out, assessment of current processes compliance with Quality Policy and IQAS Manual requirements, as well as identification of opportunities for further improvement of internal control procedures, accreditation processes, and PAM.

Monitoring results will serve as the basis for developing recommendations to enhance the Agency's work effectiveness and strengthen the quality culture.

Practice shows that conducting IAAR internal audits has a consistently positive impact on the quality of the Agency's activities and the effectiveness of implementing all its projects.

## ***2. Monitoring of Education Quality Assurance and Incorporation of Best Global Practices into National Systems and Educational Organisations***

### **2.1 Enhancing the Quality of Post-Accreditation Monitoring Procedures**

PAM is conducted by IAAR to systematically monitor the implementation of external expert panel recommendations by accredited EO and/or EP for compliance with the relevant accreditation type criteria. This work aims to ensure sustainable improvement of education quality and confirmation of accreditation standards compliance throughout the certificate validity period.

IAAR, as part of enhancing PAM effectiveness and quality, organises the collection and analysis of interim reports from accredited EO, which reflect activities on implementing EEP recommendations for the entire period after receiving the accreditation certificate, as well as information on all changes that occurred in the EO broken down by accreditation standards.

In 2025, 27 EOs underwent PAM procedure within IA, including 18 universities (of which 10 were medical profiles), 2 medical colleges, 5 additional education organisations, 1 research institute, and 1 school.

Within specialised (programme) accreditation in 2025, PAM was conducted for 94 universities and 867 higher education EPs, including 132 medical direction programmes (Table 11).

**Table 11. Post-accreditation monitoring of EO and/or EP in 2025**

Types of organisations		Institutional accreditation	Programme accreditation	
		<i>EO quantity</i>	<i>EO quantity</i>	<i>EP quantity</i>
<b>HEIs</b>	Civil	8	72	735
	Medical	10	22	132
<b>TVET</b>	Medical	2		

<b>Continuing Education</b>		5		
<b>Research institutes</b>		1		
<b>Schools</b>		1		
<b>Total</b>		<b>27</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>867</b>

High degree of recommendation implementation within institutional accreditation was demonstrated by Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory, SDU University, as well as EO Karaganda Technical University named after A. Saginov, M. Kozybayev North Kazakhstan University, Alikhan Bokeikhan University, National Scientific Centre for Traumatology and Orthopaedics named after N. Batpenov, Gomel State Medical University, and S. Asfendiyarov Kazakh National Medical University.

All specified EO successfully completed PAM procedure in 2025 in accordance with the approved schedule. Internal audit results note a consistently positive trend in the quality of submitted materials. EP and AC decisions are posted on the website: [iaar.agency](http://iaar.agency).

## ***2.2 Enhancing IAAR's Analytical Potential in Improving National Education Quality Assurance Systems***

As part of implementing the 2022–2026 Development Strategy, improving the quality of accreditation procedures, and obtaining feedback from main stakeholders, IAAR conducts analytical activities and presents developed documents and materials to the general public.

Annual IAAR activity reports cover all key directions of the Agency's work and are submitted for Supervisory Board consideration. In accordance with the IAAR Strategy Implementation Plan for 2025, a report on Agency activities was prepared and sent to the authorised body in education and science.

To ensure education quality, IAAR develops and publishes annual activity reports on the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic and Republic of Tajikistan.

In 2025, project leader Nazyrova G.R. participated in National Accreditation Council meetings under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic, during which she presented information on IAAR activities in the Kyrgyz Republic. Following participation, proposals for adjusting accreditation procedures implemented in KR were submitted for consideration. In the reporting period, Nazyrova G.R. prepared and submitted materials for monitoring agency activities for 2022–2024, conducted by the Ministry of Education of the Kyrgyz Republic. Based on monitoring results, IAAR successfully confirmed compliance with established requirements and obtained the right to continue activities on the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic. Due to reorganisation of the Ministry of Education and Science of KR and its division into the Ministry of Enlightenment of KR and Ministry of Science, Higher Education and Innovation of KR, necessary materials for reissuing certificates were prepared; certificates were reissued in the established manner.

At the same time, throughout the year on a regular basis (quarterly), reports and lists of accredited EO and EP in the format of “Register of Accredited Organisations

and Programmes” reporting were sent to authorised bodies of the Kyrgyz Republic in accordance with national legislation requirements, in Kyrgyz and Russian languages.

In accordance with WFME requirements, in 2025 IAAR prepared and sent an annual report on WFME recommendations implementation based on 2024 accreditation results, and also provided information to the WFME President on medical EO accreditation outcomes for 2024.

***Analysis of EEP Recommendations.*** In 2025, monitoring of EEP reports was conducted, and key development directions for university activities were identified based on IAAR international specialised accreditation results for 2024. The monitoring covered 257 EPs. Recommendations presented in EEP reports of 17 Kazakh universities enabled summarising the assessment of university activities by each standard and formulating specific proposals for further EP development. IAAR assessed programme quality based on Specialised Accreditation Standards and Guidelines harmonised with European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG) requirements. Accreditation results: 2 EPs received 7-year accreditation; 241 EPs – 5-year accreditation; 14 EPs – 3-year accreditation. Thus, the conducted monitoring confirms systematic compliance with IAAR and ESG standards, while EEP recommendations create the basis for targeted EP improvement, enhancing their quality and university competitiveness at national and international levels.

***Stakeholder Surveys, Feedback, and Thematic Analysis.*** In the reporting year, surveying was conducted, and analytical briefs were prepared based on IAAR expert survey results and the accredited EO survey for 2024. The briefs were based on data from surveying 168 experts participating in international accreditation and 45 EOs that underwent IAAR institutional and/or specialised (programme) accreditation procedures in 2024. Analysis showed that IAAR external assessment procedures are organised at a high level. According to monitoring:

- 92% of experts noted cohesive work of EEP members, comfortable working environment, and constant support from Chairs and IAAR coordinators;

- 96% of experts positively evaluated coordinators' work and their organisational effectiveness;

- experts value the opportunity to participate in activities of a leading international accreditation agency, exchange experience with colleagues from various universities, and seek professional skills and competencies development. The obtained data confirm the effectiveness of IAAR's external assessment system and create the basis for further accreditation procedure improvement and expert professional development.

In the reporting year, feedback analysis was conducted based on 2024 EEP visit results. The analytical brief presents assessments from accredited EO, EEP members, and IAAR coordinators on visit quality and international accreditation process satisfaction level. Analysis results showed that, in the opinion of educational organisations, EEP work was conducted objectively, independently, and transparently. Respondents noted high professionalism of EEP members, adherence to ethical norms, effective communication, as well as competence in report preparation and knowledge of international quality standards and ESG. In questionnaires, respondents emphasised that interaction of EEP members with all external assessment participants was conducted correctly and in a friendly atmosphere. EO also positively evaluated IAAR

coordinators' work, noting their professionalism and clear process organisation. Overall, respondents expressed full satisfaction with EEP activities and confirmed that IAAR international accreditation process is organised at a high level.

The obtained feedback enabled the Agency to identify priority directions for further development and plan subsequent steps for improving IAAR activities and enhancing accreditation service quality, including:

- continuing the practice of conducting training seminars for IAAR expert professional development with differentiation by participant categories (EEP Chairs, students, employers, foreign experts);

- expanding the practice of involving senior-year students in accreditation procedures as the most informed educational process participants within relevant EPs;

- increasing employer involvement in accreditation procedures, including focus group interviews, discussions of educational programme quality, and development of practice-oriented recommendations for their improvement.

In 2025, IAAR conducted a thematic analytical review “Digitalisation of Knowledge and Implementation of IT Technologies in Education”, dedicated to analysing digital technology development in higher education system amid modern educational trends and active introduction of innovations into the learning process. The study reviewed the current state of digitalisation in the Republic of Kazakhstan and its positioning in international rankings, analysed approaches to education system digital transformation, presented practical cases of digital solution implementation in country's higher education institutions, and identified factors hindering digitalisation effectiveness and affecting education result quality and assessment.

All IAAR analytical materials, including accredited EO and IAAR expert survey results and EEP visit feedback data, are posted on the Agency's official website to ensure openness, transparency, and access for key stakeholders and the general public to analysis results. Results of all types of analytical research and surveys are considered at Expert Council meetings and presented to IAAR General Director in the form of recommendations for managerial decisions and further Agency activity improvement.

On a systematic basis, IAAR publishes information and analytical materials on its official website, including thematic reviews, materials on IQAS development in EO, as well as EEP reports based on accreditation procedure results. All analytical materials and reports are posted on the IAAR website: <http://iaar.kz/en/about/iaar-reports/analytical-reports> to ensure Agency activity transparency and inform the general public.

Thus, systematic analysis of Agency business processes, maintaining constant feedback with key stakeholders, improving interaction mechanisms, and ensuring information openness enable IAAR to maintain a high level of activity quality as an international accreditation agency.

### ***3. Conducting Ranking Research in Higher and Postgraduate Education to Enhance Educational Organisations' Competitiveness and Recognition in the International Educational Space***

#### ***3.1. Ensuring Quality Improvement and Expansion of Ranking Research Boundaries in Higher and Postgraduate Education***

One of the key directions of IAAR activities is organising and conducting ranking research in education. IAAR rankings, implemented annually, are developed taking into account international standards and aimed at supporting higher and postgraduate education system development. The Agency has conducted ranking research in the Republic of Kazakhstan since 2014, in the Kyrgyz Republic since 2018, and since 2020 conducts the international IAAR Eurasian University Ranking (IAAR EUR). In 2020, the IAAR ranking system received international recognition – the methodology was confirmed for compliance with Berlin Principles and awarded IREG Approved status (<https://ireg-observatory.org/en/initiatives/ranking-seal-of-approval/>).

In accordance with the IAAR Charter, ranking research is conducted independently of accreditation procedures and does not affect their results; implementation is carried out in strict compliance with the approved Methodology for Ranking EO and EP (<https://iaar.agency/rating/1/0/2020>).

To assess education quality level, IAAR implements the following ranking projects: “Independent Ranking of University Demand in the Republic of Kazakhstan”, “Independent Ranking of Universities of the Kyrgyz Republic”, as well as the international IAAR Eurasian University Ranking (IAAR EUR). The ranking methodology is based on key modern education trends and includes indicators such as presence of accreditation as a recognised education quality indicator (10%), human resource development level (20%), internationalisation and integration into international educational space (15% each), research activity development (20%), as well as graduate employment and labour market demand (20%). These indicators reflect state education policy priorities and form the basis of IAAR rankings' multifactor and consistent methodology.

The unique digital technology applied by the Agency, which has received European recognition, enables forming both EP rankings and the General Ranking of Universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan. This approach enhances evaluation procedure transparency and objectivity and strengthens academic community and EO trust in IAAR ranking research results.

A country's education system competitiveness is determined by the presence of higher education institutions with high rankings. Today, universities are interested in improving their positions in rankings, which underscores the importance and significance of higher education institution reputation. The concept of university reputation is somewhat subjective but holds special importance: it helps attract the best and talented students to universities with high authority, expanding internationalisation, attracting investments, and ensuring high image in the global educational space.

In this regard, university ranking systems become increasingly significant tools for strengthening competitive advantages and enhancing prestige of Kazakh

universities on the international arena. Ranking not only measures indicators but actively influences educational reality formation, increasing university recognition among the academic community and stakeholders. Ranking processes and applied evaluation criteria become effective methods for analysing university activities, forming development strategies, and building productive partnerships with leading educational institutions.

A special place among rankings is occupied by the evaluation system developed by IAAR – Independent Ranking of University Demand in RK. The IAAR ranking, conducted for over 10 years, has earned a reputation as a reliable, time-tested, and objective university evaluation mechanism in Kazakhstan.

IAAR has developed an original university ranking methodology, which successfully passed international audit in October 2024, once again receiving high evaluation and approval from the international organisation IREG (Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence), as well as the prestigious “IREG Approved” Quality Seal.

IAAR ranking research monitoring from 2014 to 2025 notes steady growth in university quality indicators: EP quality improvement, teaching staff potential development, internationalisation expansion, as well as university responsibility not only for personnel training but also graduate labour market demand.

The digital platform used for ranking is based on four fundamental criteria for monitoring each EP:

1. Teaching staff quality and the effectiveness of the talented student attraction system. This criterion assesses the educational institution's ability to attract and support gifted students, create conditions for realising their potential, and measures teaching staff professional level, qualifications, pedagogical skills, and competencies.
2. Scientific and research potential. University scientific activity, number and quality of scientific publications, presence of research projects, as well as student involvement in scientific work, conference and olympiad participation are assessed.
3. Academic exchange programmes for students and teaching staff. This indicator characterises opportunities for experience and knowledge exchange between representatives of various universities, both domestically and abroad. Graduate employment and demand indicators.
4. Graduate employment effectiveness, salary levels, and further career growth prospects are measured.

The Independent Ranking of University Demand in the Republic of Kazakhstan 2025 became a significant event for the educational community. It involved higher education institutions of various directions: multidisciplinary, technical, humanities-economic, medical, pedagogical, as well as art universities, testifying to a comprehensive and multifaceted approach to EO assessment.

In 2025, the number of evaluated educational programmes reached 1650. Leading positions by number of prize places were taken by Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, topping the “Top-20 RK Universities” ranking with 614,142 points. The top five best universities in the country also included: L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian

National University (500,419 points); S. Seifullin Kazakh Agrotechnical University (241,541 points); Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University (153,170 points); Almaty Technological University (128,769 points). University ranking results are presented in Table 12.

**Table 12. Results of Top-20 RK Universities General Ranking**

<b>Place</b>	<b>University Name</b>	<b>Final Score</b>
<b>1</b>	Al-Farabi Kazakh National University	614142
<b>2</b>	L. Gumilyov Eurasian National University	500419
<b>3</b>	S. Seifullin Kazakh Agrotechnical Research University	241541
<b>4</b>	Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University	153170
<b>5</b>	Almaty Technological University	128769
<b>6</b>	Kazakh National Agrarian Research University	99381
	Karaganda Technical University named after A. Saginov	91496
	Turan University	91370
<b>7</b>	S. Amanzholov East Kazakhstan University	63805
	Korkyt Ata Kyzylorda University	63700
	Kazakh National Women's Pedagogical University	60766
<b>8</b>	South Kazakhstan State Pedagogical University	58285
<b>9</b>	International Information Technology University	46082
	West Kazakhstan Agrarian-Technical University	43094
<b>10</b>	M.Kh. Dulati Taraz University	34710
	T. Zhurgenev Kazakh National Academy of Arts	33100
	Abylai Khan Kazakh University of International Relations and World Languages	30147
<b>11</b>	Zhetysu University	24814
	International Engineering and Technology University	23897
<b>12</b>	Civil Aviation Academy	23126
	Karaganda Industrial University	22566
<b>13</b>	Esil University	21970
<b>14</b>	Asfendiyarov Kazakh National Medical University	21187
	South Kazakhstan Medical Academy	21083
<b>15</b>	West Kazakhstan Innovative-Technological University	17239
	Kazakhstan University of Innovative and Telecommunication Systems	11006
<b>16</b>	M. Dulatov Kostanay Engineering-Economic University	9601
<b>17</b>	Almaty Humanitarian-Economic University	9553

<b>18</b>	Nur-Mubarak Egyptian University of Islamic Culture	9546
<b>19</b>	“Turan-Astana” University	7766
<b>20</b>	University of Peoples' Friendship	7396

Leaders in respective directions were the following universities:

In pedagogical sciences – Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Kazakh National Women's Pedagogical University, and U. Zhanibekov South Kazakhstan Pedagogical University.

In information-communication technologies, the top three were led by: L. Gumilyov Eurasian National University, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, and International Information Technology University.

In art and humanities, first place was taken by T. Zhurgenev Kazakh National Academy of Arts.

In medical education, leading positions were maintained by S.D. Asfendiyarov Kazakh National Medical University, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, and South Kazakhstan Medical Academy.

In agriculture and bioresources and veterinary science directions, primacy was again held by S. Seifullin Kazakh Agrotechnical Research University, Kazakh National Agrarian University, and Zhangir Khan West Kazakhstan Agrarian-Technical University.

2025 Ranking results analysis showed positive trends in Kazakhstan's higher education development, namely growth in the following indicators:

- Number of international student olympiad winners increased by 11% compared to last year.
- Attraction of teaching staff from far abroad grew by 19%.
- Teaching staff publication activity rose by 23%.

Most active participation in academic mobility programmes is demonstrated by Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, L. Gumilyov Eurasian National University, and Turan University.

High indexing indicators for scientific works of Kazakh scientists were shown by Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, L. Gumilyov Eurasian National University, and Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University.

In 2025, the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating presented to the public the results of the following rankings:

1. General “TOP-20” Universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan Ranking 2025.
2. Institutional Ranking of RK Universities by Bachelor's Educational Programmes 2025.
3. Institutional Ranking of RK Universities by Master's Educational Programmes 2025.
4. Institutional Ranking of RK Universities by Doctoral Educational Programmes 2025.
5. RK Universities Ranking by Bachelor's EP Groups.
6. RK Universities Ranking by Master's EP Groups.

7. RK Universities Ranking by Doctoral EP Groups.

8. General “TOP-50” RK Teaching Staff Ranking.

Thus, the Independent Ranking of University Demand in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2025 serves as a significant tool not only for education quality assessment but also for professional orientation. Ranking results enable entrants and their families to objectively assess universities' competitive advantages and make informed decisions when choosing educational trajectories in line with interests and professional goals.

It is important to note that IAAR Ranking stimulates healthy competition among universities, motivating them to continuously improve EPs and enhance graduate training quality, which ultimately contributes to supplying the labour market with highly qualified personnel necessary for sustainable economic growth and Kazakhstan society development.

Full information on the Independent Ranking of University Demand in RK 2025 results is available on official resources: [www.iaar.agency](http://www.iaar.agency) and [www.facebook.com/iaar.accreditation](https://www.facebook.com/iaar.accreditation)

Due to the Ministry of Education of the Kyrgyz Republic implementing its own ranking research system with mandatory participation of all universities, the IAAR Ranking for Kyrgyz Republic universities did not receive sufficient response from EO. Given the limited number of participants, summarising results and publishing them were deemed inadvisable.

A similar situation was recorded for the International IAAR Ranking: the number of submitted applications was low. Therefore, ranking research results were not published, and participation certificates were sent to all EOs.

#### ***4. Timely Public Information on Educational Organisations' Quality Assessment Results and Feedback Development Based on Transparency and Reliability Principles***

##### ***4.1 Increasing Public Information Level on Educational Programmes Quality Assessment Results and Educational and Scientific Organisations' Activities***

**Public information** on EO and EP external assessment results is provided by IAAR on a systematic basis across several key directions. Main tools include publication of EEP reports and AC decisions, maintaining the register of accredited EO and EP, as well as regular website updates [www.iaar.agency](http://www.iaar.agency).

To ensure openness and transparency of IAAR activities, the website features current information on all main Agency work directions, including regulatory document changes, institutional and programme accreditation procedures, IQAS development, accreditation procedure results, and implemented project details. In 2025, regular placement of domestic and foreign EO international accreditation results was ensured, including EEP reports, accreditation decisions, EEP member lists, and other materials forming the IAAR Register. Following 2025 accreditation procedures, all reports and related materials were uploaded to the European DEQAR database.

A significant place in public information system is occupied by IAAR representatives' participation in national and international conferences, forums, and EO

dialogue platforms, as well as organising and conducting seminars, seminar-trainings, online conferences, round tables, and the annual Central Asian Forum on Education Quality Assurance. External assessment results and analytical materials are published in the scientific-informational journal “Education. Quality Assurance”, and presented in reports, interviews, and publications in national and international mass media.

Throughout 2025, IAAR conducted systematic monitoring of information mailings and announcements from international networks and partner organisations. Prepared analytical and informational materials were published in international network bulletins, including INQAAHE Bulletin, CEENQA Newsletter, and APQN Newsletter, contributing to expanding the Agency's international presence.

Simultaneously, planned work was carried out on supporting, updating, and functionally developing the official IAAR website [www.iaar.agency](http://www.iaar.agency), as well as integrating it with the European DEQAR database and Asia-Pacific DAQAR database. Implementation of these measures enhanced accessibility of education quality assessment result information, strengthened accreditation procedure transparency, and built trust from professional and academic communities and the general public at national and international levels.

Scientific-Informational Journal “Education. Quality Assurance”. To highlight best domestic and global practices in education quality assurance, IAAR publishes the scientific-informational journal “Education. Quality Assurance”, included in the Russian Scientific Citation Index (RSCI) database since 2021. The journal is also listed in the List of Publications recommended by the Committee for Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan for publishing main scientific activity results.

The journal serves as a professional platform for discussing modern approaches and global trends in education quality assurance, publishing analytical and scientific articles, as well as conducting interviews with international accreditation agencies and networks representatives. Special attention is paid to national education system development issues and disseminating the best foreign experience.

Publication frequency is four issues per year. Publications are made in three languages - Kazakh, Russian, and English, ensuring a wide readership audience. The journal is distributed both in the Republic of Kazakhstan and abroad. To expand informational coverage, a separate journal website “Education. Quality Assurance” (<http://iaar-education.kz>) operates, where all issues are posted in electronic open access format.

In 2025, IAAR released four issues of the “Education. Quality Assurance” journal, publishing 57 articles. Of these, 41 articles were prepared by Kazakh authors, and 16 were joint publications with foreign researchers. Joint articles were co-authored with representatives from India (2), China (8), the Czech Republic (1), Bulgaria (2), Latvia (1), Uzbekistan (1), and others.

Total number of researchers participating in preparing these publications was 143. Throughout the year, systematic work was carried out on updating and populating the “Education. Quality Assurance” journal website. The journal has an international standard serial number ISSN for the electronic version. To ensure distribution,

contracts were concluded with JSC “Kazpost”, LLP “Express Press Astana”, and LLP “Evrika-Press”. Also, informational letters were sent to EO throughout the year, offering a journal subscription.

In accordance with the contract with the Scientific Electronic Library (SEL), all journal issues for the reporting period are annually posted on [www.elibrary.ru](http://www.elibrary.ru) in the specialised RSCI system. Additionally, the contract with Plagiat.pl LLC is regularly extended for checking journal materials for plagiarism, ensuring adherence to academic integrity and ethics principles. IAAR cooperates on a contractual basis with JSC “Institute of Metallurgy and Ore Beneficiation”, the official representative of the international bibliographic references system “Crossref” in the Republic of Kazakhstan, for registering and servicing the DOI (Digital Object Identifier) assigned to each journal article.

An important IAAR activity direction is informational interaction with mass media and the public. Agency employees regularly publish materials in foreign and republican editions, give interviews in Kazakhstan and abroad, and appear on national TV channels, ensuring reliable coverage of agency activities and forming positive public opinion on accreditation significance.

In 2025, IAAR actively drew public attention to its work results through organising webinars, seminars, workshops, conferences, and forums, contributing to enhancing transparency and understanding of the agency's role in the education quality assurance system. IAAR is actively represented in the Instagram social network ([https://www.instagram.com/a\\_zhumagulova\\_b](https://www.instagram.com/a_zhumagulova_b)), where it regularly publishes current news on its activities, information on conducted accreditation procedures, events, and training seminars, as well as other useful and analytical materials aimed at informing the wide audience and promoting quality culture in education.

## ***5. IAAR is an Internationally Recognised Accreditation Agency***

### ***5.1 Strengthening and Expanding IAAR's International Recognition and Authority***

One of the key tasks in implementing IAAR's mission and vision enshrined in the 2022–2026 Development Strategy is strengthening the Agency's status as a reliable and authoritative partner in quality assurance at national, European, and international levels. Achieving this goal is ensured through active participation in international professional networks, compliance with European quality standards, and studying and implementing advanced foreign experience and best practices.

IAAR's high level of international recognition is confirmed by successfully passing the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) post-monitoring in 2024. In 2025, as part of preparing for the third ENQA audit and re-inclusion in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), the Agency continued refining quality assessment procedures, developing expert potential, and strengthening international community trust in its activities.

Special attention was paid to expanding international cooperation and Agency representation in professional networks, supporting IAAR's status as a reliable

international quality assurance body. The Agency is a full member of the following organisations:

- European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) since 2016;
- International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) since 2015;
- CHEA International Quality Group (CIQG) since 2015;
- Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies (CEENQA) since 2016;
- Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN) since 2017;
- Association of Quality Assurance Agencies of Islamic World Countries (AQAAIW) since 2012;
- International Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence (IREG) since 2015.

In 2025, IAAR submitted documents for inclusion in ICAISA (International Council Advancing Independent School Accreditation) – an international organisation ensuring the quality of independent and international school accreditation associations. ICAISA develops accreditation criteria and conducts external evaluation of accreditation agency programmes, enabling confirmation of their activities' compliance with international standards. IAAR inclusion in ICAISA creates opportunities for enhancing trust in school accreditation procedures, strengthening the Agency's international authority, and implementing advanced experience in EP quality assessment in independent and international schools.

In 2025, IAAR actively developed bilateral cooperation with 26 international partners based on signed memoranda. Interaction included exchanging information and current quality assurance materials, participation in network events, timely membership fee payments control, monitoring partner news mailings and publications (Bulletin YOKAK, INQAAHE Bulletin, CEENQA Newsletter, APQN Newsletter), as well as sending informational materials to universities of various countries.

To widely inform the global public about EPs and EO recognised at the European level, IAAR participates in the DEQAR (Database of External Quality Assurance Results) project. EP and EO inclusion in DEQAR confirms their ESG standards compliance and ensures recognition in the European Higher Education Area. IAAR has been a DEQAR CONNECT project participant since 2020. All EOs and EPs that underwent IAAR international accreditation are entered into the DEQAR database.

## ***5.2 Increasing International Activity Quality and Substantively Consolidating IAAR Achievements***

In 2025, IAAR continued developing cooperation with foreign partners in line with strategic goals and international activity priorities.

The Memorandum of Cooperation project with Mongolian National Council for Education Accreditation (MNCEA), sent in 2024, is at the discussion stage. Throughout the reporting year, negotiations were held with MNCEA on expanding interaction and implementing joint accreditation mechanisms. Joint EO Mongolia accreditation issue is currently being worked out and remains at the agreement stage.

Also in 2025, IAAR sent necessary documents and applications to World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) regarding obtaining WFME recognition status for Anguilla. As part of further developing this cooperation, in 2026 IAAR plans conducting medical university accreditation with WFME representatives' participation.

In 2025, IAAR leadership and employees actively participated in events organised by European and international networks and partners. Upon receiving event proposals, Agency staff were timely informed of planned activities, while systematic monitoring of all international activity-related correspondence was maintained.

IAAR continues developing partnerships with foreign state bodies, providing support to authorised bodies of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and other countries in organising higher education quality assurance events, offering consultations on building national quality systems in line with Bologna Process principles and ESG standards. The Agency actively participates in events held by Ministries of Education, universities, and public associations of Eastern Europe and Central Asia countries.

To consolidate international positions and develop cooperation, IAAR employees participated in international network quality assurance collegial bodies' work, as well as various international projects, forums, conferences, and seminars aimed at education and science development.

In October 2025, IAAR General Director A.B. Zhumagulova and international cooperation project leader T.B. Tursynbayev participated in the General Assembly of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), held in Brussels (Kingdom of Belgium). The event was organised by ENQA in collaboration with the Flemish Council for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (VLUHR QA) and the Higher Education Quality Assurance Agency AEQES, aimed at discussing current trends, key challenges, and prospects for higher education quality assurance system development in EHEA.

The ENQA General Assembly was attended by quality assurance experts and specialists from European Higher Education Area countries. The programme included plenary and sectional meetings reviewing the quality assurance role as a strategic higher education development factor in EHEA, revision and global impact of European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG), stakeholder involvement in external quality assessment procedures, as well as artificial intelligence technology application in accreditation agencies' activities.

In November 2025, IAAR General Director A.B. Zhumagulova participated in the General Assembly of Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN) and academic conference on “Expanding Cooperation in Higher Education Quality Assurance”, held in Hong Kong. The event was organised by APQN jointly with Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ). During the conference, the IAAR General Director presented a report, “Development of International Accreditation Cooperation”, sharing IAAR experience and highlighting modern approaches to international accreditation amid global educational space transformation.

The conference was attended by heads and leading experts of international and national quality assurance agencies, including APQN President G. Motova, HKCAAVQ Executive Director Albert Chow, EQAR President Stefan Lovik, former

ENQA President Douglas Blackstock, as well as university, national agency, and international organisation representatives from the Asia-Pacific region, Europe, and the Middle East.

The programme included APQN profile committee meetings discussing strategic initiatives and directions for expanding international cooperation in education quality assurance. IAAR's participation in the 2025 Academic Conference and APQN Annual General Meeting contributed to strengthening the Agency's international positions, expanding partnerships, and further developing quality assurance mechanisms in the international educational space. In November 2025, the IV International Congress of the Russian Society of Medical Education Specialists (ROSMEDOBR) was held in Moscow, attended by IAAR General Director's Advisor O.A. Yanovskaya. The Congress included the XVI International Forum "Innovative Teaching Technologies in Medicine – 2025", IV Congress of the Russian Society of Medical Education Specialists, as well as an exhibition of advanced technologies and solutions for medical education and organisations operating in the education sphere.

Congress participants included educational organisation leaders, teaching staff representatives, medical organisations, as well as regional and municipal authority representatives. During the events, current issues of medical education and clinical practice development, educational programme quality management, teaching staff professional development, higher education institution participation in rankings, educational programme development and adaptation, digital solutions and artificial intelligence technology implementation, international and interregional cooperation expansion, international project implementation, as well as regulatory changes in medical education were reviewed.

Thus, in 2025, the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating team strove to enhance international activity quality, including through broad cooperation with leading partners – international networks and foreign accreditation agencies, active participation in various international education quality assurance events, conducting international research and projects.

### *SWOT- Analysis of Activities*

SWOT analysis reflects strategic goal implementation and serves as the basis for IAAR annual activity planning (Table 13).

**Table 13. SWOT Analysis**

<b>S (Strenght)</b>	<b>W (Weakness)</b>
<p>1. <b>Independence and reputation:</b> Contributes to public and academic community trust.</p> <p>2. <b>ESG principles implementation:</b> Promotes education quality culture in Central Asian countries.</p> <p>3. <b>Competence, high quality, reliability, transparency, and openness:</b> Facilitates interaction with authorised bodies of other countries and recognition in international higher education system.</p> <p>4. <b>Professional team:</b> Enables significant contribution to overall education quality assurance.</p> <p>5. <b>Public mission:</b> Aimed at improving education quality, transparency, and fairness in academic environment.</p> <p>6. <b>Thematic analysis:</b> Enables determining further education system development guidelines.</p> <p>7. <b>Broad base of professional and competent experts:</b> Ensures continuous accreditation process.</p> <p>8. <b>Communication strategy:</b> Helps regularly inform stakeholders about thematic analysis improvements and results. – systematic, open, and timely public information on Agency activities and accreditation results.</p>	<p>1. <b>Low integration of new internal quality improvement processes:</b> IQAS digital work environment requirements are extensive.</p> <p>2. <b>Low English language proficiency among employees:</b> Communication difficulties with foreign partners.</p> <p>3. <b>Absence of cybersecurity system:</b> Need for clear, comprehensive, demand-oriented digitalisation strategy.</p>
<b>O (Opportunity)</b>	<b>T (Threat)</b>
<p>1. <b>Cross-border accreditation:</b> Expanding international cooperation and partnerships.</p> <p>2. <b>Participation in education reforms:</b> Opportunities to influence education policy and standards.</p> <p>3. <b>Risk management policy:</b> Reducing risk impact and anticipating threats (Risk Map).</p> <p>4. <b>Education system development:</b> Developing transparent and objective education quality assessment methodologies.</p> <p>5. <b>International cooperation:</b> Partnership with international networks and foreign agencies.</p> <p>6. <b>Digitalisation:</b> Using digital platforms and analytics for more accurate and transparent work.</p> <p>7. <b>“Education QA” journal publication:</b> Promotes quality culture popularisation and awareness of education trends across countries.</p> <p>8. <b>Internal quality assurance system:</b> Opportunities for quality assurance process improvement.</p>	<p>1. <b>Unfair competition among agencies:</b> Reduces education quality.</p> <p>2. <b>Legislative changes:</b> Affects stability and effectiveness.</p> <p>3. <b>Global political instability:</b> Impacts agency activities in partner countries.</p> <p>4. <b>Unstable economic situation in country and world:</b> Affects accreditation conduct possibilities.</p> <p>5. <b>Emergency situations</b> (epidemics, pandemic, military actions, man-made and natural disaster threats).</p>

The SWOT analysis identified the interrelationship between the Agency's strengths and weaknesses, assessed the impact of available opportunities and external

threats on its activities. The analysis also helped determine prospective and priority IAAR development directions aimed at strengthening competitive positions, enhancing accreditation procedure quality, and improving interaction effectiveness with key stakeholders. The obtained results serve as the basis for the Agency's strategic and operational activity planning for 2026.



## Conclusion

**Accreditation Activities.** In 2025, the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR), as a recognised international education quality assurance agency, achieved significant results in external quality assurance of higher and postgraduate, professional and technical, secondary (international schools), and additional education. Agency activities covered educational organisations in 15 Eastern European and Central Asian states. In the reporting year, IAAR substantially strengthened its positions in higher medical education.

IAAR systematically updates external assessment methodology for all accreditation types, conducts ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and analysis of EO activities using feedback mechanisms. The Agency identifies, generalises, and disseminates best practices in quality assurance and culture formation at national and international levels, as well as ensures regular and open public information on its activity results, contributing to institutional changes in EO and overall national education system development.

2025 Performance Indicator Analysis showed plan overachievement in the following positions:

- Number of accredited RK university EPs: 478 vs planned 360 (33% growth);
- Joint EPs: 8 vs planned 3 (2.7 times over plan);
- Number of schools undergoing IA: 6 vs planned 2 (3 times more);
- National experts fluent in foreign languages: 230 vs planned 125 (84% growth);
- Employees undergoing professional development: 12 vs planned 8;
- Contracts signed in new countries: 10 vs planned 6.

**Post-Accreditation Monitoring.** University PAM data showed plan fulfilment and substantial overachievement, as 867 EPs underwent the procedure vs planned 400, more than twice exceeding the established plan.

**Ranking Research.** In 2025, during ranking research, the Agency faced objective difficulties affecting participation indicators. A decrease in participant organisations was noted, related to the intensified competitive environment, the introduction of the national ranking by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as reduced participation of Russian and Ukrainian universities in IAAR International Ranking amid ongoing military-political instability and some universities' reorientation to recognised global rankings.

This direction recorded substantial failure to meet planned indicators. RK rankings involved 34 universities vs planned 56, Kyrgyz Republic 2 vs planned 35, IAAR EUR international ranking 4 vs planned 50, with participant countries numbering 1 vs planned 9. Publication of ranking research results in the mass media also decreased.

The emerging dynamics indicate the need for additional analysis of factors reducing EO interest in ranking procedures, as well as the expediency of reviewing approaches to promoting ranking research and strengthening their international attractiveness.

**Information Openness and Transparency** In 2025, positive dynamics were noted in key publicity and stakeholder interaction indicators. Official website visits reached

34,546 vs planned 29,000 (19% over plan). Journal subscribers increased to 52 vs planned 35. Plan overachievement was also ensured in the number of publications in RK and foreign mass media.

These results testify to strengthening the Agency's information policy and growing recognition in the national and international educational space.

Regular reporting to state bodies was provided in full volume and within deadlines. Additionally, feedback questionnaires increased to 213 vs planned 160 (33% over plan), confirming intensified stakeholder interaction.

***International Recognition.*** IAAR international activity development prospects for 2026 are determined by tasks enshrined in the 2022–2026 IAAR Development Strategy and focused on further expanding international accreditation geography, as well as activating Agency participation in international education quality assurance projects.

Reporting period activity analysis revealed additional opportunities for expanding cross-border accreditation and enhancing Agency effectiveness, including through developing cooperation with new countries and regions such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Mongolia, Hong Kong, China, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and others.

In the reporting year, IAAR confirmed membership in several international networks and increased total international partner organisations to 11 vs planned 10, testifying to strengthened international positions. The number of international events with IAAR participation was 14 vs the planned 11, demonstrating sustained high Agency activity on international arena despite a reduced number of implemented international projects.

Thus, in 2025 IAAR activities were characterised by:

- Significant growth in domestic programme accreditation volumes;
- Strengthening expert potential and staff competence;
- Active informational and analytical work;
- Decline in international accreditation and ranking research indicators.

Overall, planned indicators were partially met: overachievement observed in operational accreditation activities and expert base development, while international and ranking directions require strategic adjustment and additional managerial attention. Information on achieving key IAAR activity indicators is presented in Appendix 1.

**Таблица. Ключевые индикаторы деятельности IAAR за 2022-2026 гг.**

No	Goals	Key Indicators	Measurement Unit	2025	
				Plan	Fact
1.	<b>Continuous activities to develop education quality assurance system in national and international educational space</b>	Number of organisations in Republic of Kazakhstan undergoing international institutional accreditation procedure	Number of schools	2	6
			Number of universities	18	4
			Number of continuous professional education organisations	8	6
		Number of organisations in Republic of Kazakhstan (including medical education) undergoing IAAR international specialised (programme) accreditation procedure	Number of TVET	3	1
			Number of universities	31	34
		Number of foreign educational organisations, including medical education, undergoing IAAR international accreditation	Number of EO undergoing institutional accreditation	13	7
			Number of EO undergoing specialised (programme) accreditation	20	16
		Number of foreign educational organisations underwent international joint accreditation with IAAR participation	Number of universities	3	-
		Number of educational programmes accredited by IAAR	Number of RK university EPs	360	478
			Number of foreign university EPs	88	63
		Number of joint educational programmes underwent IAAR international accreditation	Number of EPs	3	8
		Number of foreign experts added to IAAR expert database	person	40	49

		Number of medical profile foreign experts involved in IAAR expert activities	person	20	14
		Number of national experts fluent in foreign languages	person	125	230
		Number of employees underwent courses, seminars, and other professional development types	person	8	12
		Number of permanent staff	person	20	20
		Number of employees participating in international educational and/or scientific projects	person	7	2
		Number of employee publications in scientific journals and mass media	Number of publications	8	5
2.	<b>Monitoring of education quality assurance and incorporating best global practices into national systems and educational organisations development</b>	Number of universities underwent post-accreditation monitoring procedure	Number of universities	18	18
		Number of TVET organisations undergoing post-accreditation monitoring procedure	Number of TVET organisations	3	2
		Number of university EPs underwent post-accreditation monitoring procedure	Number of EPs	400	867
		Number of TVET EPs undergoing post-accreditation monitoring procedure	Number of TVET EPs	10	-
		Annual analytical report to Ministry of Science and Higher Education RK	Report	+	+
		Annual analytical report to Ministry of Education and Science KR	Report	+	+
		Annual report on IAAR activity independent audit results to National Accreditation Council (p. 12. Procedure for Recognising Education Accreditation Agencies)	Report	+	+

		Annual report to Ministry of Education and Science RT	Report		
		Number of main stakeholder surveys conducted: educational organisations, employers, experts, students	Number of questionnaires	160	213
		Annual analytical report on IAAR experts and accredited educational organisations feedback results	Report	+	+
		Annual report on post-accreditation monitoring results of accredited educational organisations and/or educational programmes	Report	+	+
3.	<b>Conducting ranking research in higher, technical, and professional education to enhance educational organisations' competitiveness and international recognition</b>	Number of educational organisations participating in IAAR independent ranking by specialist training directions and levels in Republic of Kazakhstan	Number of universities	56	34
		Number of university EPs presented for IAAR Ranking participation	Number of EPs	2050	1650
		Number of Kyrgyz Republic universities participating in independent ranking	Number of universities	35	2
		Number of educational organisations participating in IAAR EUR international ranking	Number of universities	50	4
		Number of states whose educational organisations participated in IAAR EUR international ranking research	Number of states	9	1
		Number of publications of ranking research results in RK print and electronic mass media	Number of publications	8	1
		Number of publications of ranking research results in foreign states print and electronic mass media	Number of publications	7	-

4.	Timely public information on educational organisations quality assessment results and feedback development based on transparency and reliability principles	Number of participants in annual Central Asian International Forum on Quality Assurance	person	400	-
		“Education Quality Assurance” journal issues	Number of journals	4	4
		Number of “Education Quality Assurance” journal subscribers	Number of organisations	35	52
		Number of published analytical reports, scientific articles, and IAAR activity publications in RK mass media	Number of publications	17	21
		Number of IAAR publications in foreign mass media and social networks	Number of publications	17	20
		Number of IAAR website visitors	person	29000	34546
5.	IAAR is recognised as an international accreditation agency	IAAR re-inclusion in EQAR	Certificate (decision)		
		Re-inclusion into Kyrgyz Republic National Register	Certificate (decision)		1
		Obtaining IREG Approved quality label	Certificate (decision)		1
		IAAR re-inclusion in APQR	Certificate (decision)	+	+
		ENQA full membership confirmation (third time)	Certificate (decision)		
		Preparation of WFME follow-up activity reports (annually)	Interim report	+	+
		Passing ENQA post-monitoring	Report		
		Number of contracts signed for conducting international accreditation in new for IAAR educational organisation states	Number of units	6	10
		IAAR membership in international associations and networks for TVET quality assurance	Certificate		
		IAAR membership in international European engineering education	Application and decision	+	-

	quality assurance association			
	IAAR representation in international quality assurance network management collegial bodies (ENQA, INQAAHE, APQN, CEENQA, etc.)	Quantity	1	1
	Number of international organisations IAAR works with and is a member of (IREG, CIQG, AQAAIW, ENQA, INQAAHE, APQN, CEENQA)	Number of organisations	10	11
	Number of Memoranda and Cooperation Agreements with most authoritative quality assurance agencies	Number of Memoranda	6	4
	Number of international conferences and/or seminars with international quality assurance networks participation (e.g., ENQA, INQAAHE, APQN)	Number of events	2	1
	Number of international projects with IAAR employees and experts participation	Number of projects	6	1
	Number of international events with IAAR participation	Number of events	11	14