



«АККРЕДИТТЕУ ЖӘНЕ РЕЙТИНГТИҢ  
ТӘУЕЛСІЗ АГЕНТТІГІ» КЕМ

НУ «НЕЗАВИСИМОЕ АГЕНТСТВО  
АККРЕДИТАЦИИ И РЕЙТИНГА»

INDEPENDENT AGENCY FOR  
ACCREDITATION AND RATING

TO SUPERVISORY BOARD

# REPORT

on the activities of the Independent Agency for  
Accreditation and Rating  
in the year of 2019

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**Nur-Sultan, 2020**

In order to further improve the quality of the IAAR accreditation activity, its effectiveness, as well as the implementation of the IAAR strategic development plan for 2016-2020, the Agency has had a Supervisory Board since 2018. According to the Regulations on the Supervisory Board, the Agency's Director reports to the Supervisory Board once a year on the results of the IAAR activities.

The strategic guidelines of the IAAR are aimed at strengthening the status of a recognized, internationally competitive Agency for ensuring the quality of education. IAAR strives for high development results and sustainable growth of its potential in ensuring the quality of education. Activities of IAAR are also constructed based on the goals and tasks of the national system of education contained in the program documents: Strategic development plan of Republic Kazakhstan till 2020; State program of education and science development of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2016 -2019; State program "Digital Kazakhstan" for 2018-2022, approved by the Decree of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated December 12, 2017 No. 827.

In 2019, RoK MES and educational organization focused on the issues of employment of graduates, their demand in the regional and national labor markets, the introduction of distance learning technologies, expanding the opportunities of electronic educational resources and digitalization of Universities. An important priority was the managerial and academic independence of Higher education institutions (the law "On education" of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated July 4, 2018).

In 2019, the IAAR carried out its activities in accordance with the new IAAR Development Strategy for 2019-2023 and the Agency's work plan for 2019, which were developed taking into account the legislation in the field of education, the country's educational policy and the European higher education area. In 2019, the boundaries of the IAAR activities were significantly expanded: for the first time, Universities of the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, and the Republic of Tajikistan were accredited. Also, for the first time, the IAAR conducted primary (ex-ante) accreditation of medical education programs abroad (Kyrgyz Republic).

In 2019, the IAAR also conducted rating studies in the Republic of Kazakhstan since 2014 and in the Kyrgyz Republic since 2018.

IAAR is included in the European register of educational quality assurance agencies (EQAR) and is a full member of the European Association for quality assurance in higher education (ENQA), which gives the right to conduct international accreditation of educational organizations.

IAAR is the first organization from the CIS countries to be recognized by the World Federation of Medical Education (WFME), which allows the IAAR to conduct international accreditation of medical organizations and programs abroad.

IAAR is a full member of the European, Asian and American networks and agencies for quality assurance of education and accreditation:

- ✓ international observatory for academic ranking and excellence (IREG);
- ✓ international network of quality assurance agencies in higher education (INQAAHE);
- ✓ international quality group of the Council for higher education accreditation in the United States (CIQG);
- ✓ associations of educational quality assurance agencies of the Islamic world (AQAAIW);
- ✓ networks of quality assurance agencies in higher education in Central and Eastern Europe (CEENQA);
- ✓ Asia-Pacific quality assurance network (APQN).

Obtaining the status of a recognized Agency is a confirmation of compliance of the IAAR activities with international standards. Due to full membership in international European networks, IAAR accredited educational organizations and educational programs receive the status of international accreditation.

Within the framework of strategic development, the IAAR representative office, opened in 2018 in the European Union in Riga (Latvia), contributes to strengthening international activities, active work in the European educational space, and expanding the range of partners.

The main activity of IAAR is related to the implementation of procedures for

institutional and specialized accreditation of educational organizations in Kazakhstan and abroad. IAAR, demonstrating high competitiveness, consistently satisfies the need for an independent, objective, professional assessment of educational activities that has developed in the European and Central Asian region.

Responding to new challenges of the time, IAAR, through its accreditation activities, standards and procedures, orients educational organizations to meet the diverse interests and abilities of students, widely use international experience, modern educational and digital technologies, and increase responsibility for the quality of services provided.

Based on the study of international experience, analysis of the higher education system of the Republic of Kazakhstan, including the analysis of the results of the implementation of the IAAR Strategic Development Plan for 2016-2020, IAAR has developed a new IAAR Development Strategy for 2019-2023.

" IAAR Development Strategy for 2019-2023" defines the mission, vision, strategic directions, goals, objectives and key performance indicators for the medium and long term. The main strategic objectives are developed in accordance with national education policy and legislation and serve as the basis for the preparation of annual action plans and plans for the implementation of the IAAR strategy.

## **1. IAAR ACTIVITIES TO ENSURE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION USING INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE**

IAAR, demonstrating high competitiveness, has directed its activities to consistently meet the need for an independent, objective, professional assessment of educational activities that has developed in the Eurasian space. Accreditation of educational organizations was carried out in accordance with standards and guidelines harmonized with European and international standards for quality assurance in education. On May 13, 2019, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan signed an Agreement with IAAR on international accreditation in the territory of the Republic of Tajikistan. In 2019, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of the Republic of Moldova sent a letter of

recognition of the IAAR's activities on the territory of the Republic of Moldova (letter No. 04 / 1-09 / 1911 dated 12.04.2019, signed by the Minister of Education, Culture and Research of the Republic of Moldova, Monica Babuc).

In 2019, **37** educational organizations of the Republic of Kazakhstan, **5** foreign universities (Kyrgyz Republic, Russian Federation, Republic of Moldova, Republic of Tajikistan) passed international institutional accreditation, **801** educational programs of different levels of education in Kazakhstan and **17** educational programs of universities outside the Republic of Kazakhstan (Kyrgyz Republic, Russian Federation, Republic of Tajikistan).

IAAR, applying the best international practices of quality assurance, contributes to improving the efficiency and quality of educational and scientific activities of educational organizations. IAAR sees its purpose in supporting educational organizations in identifying key priorities, potential opportunities and prospects for their development; in promoting the qualitative renewal of educational programs, taking into account the professions of the future and in accordance with the most important trends of national and international development, the broad integration of Kazakhstan into the global educational space and the entry of educational activities of Kazakhstani educational organizations to the external market of educational services.

The Agency's quality policy is focused on continuous development and provision of quality services to consumers at all levels: the state, society, the education system, educational organizations, and students. Working with consumers of services is aimed at meeting their requirements and is based on the principles of feedback and mutually beneficial partnership based on maximum responsibility for the obligations assumed.

## **1.1 DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF ACCREDITATION STANDARDS**

The accreditation process is carried out in accordance with IAAR standards and regulations. IAAR standards take into account the principles of the Bologna process (objectivity, transparency, mobility, public awareness) and are used as a model for

self-assessment of Universities, harmonization of the national education quality system being formed with the international requirements of the European higher education area.

Standards are developed with the involvement of interested parties (Universities, academic experts, employers, representatives of students and professional organizations, government agencies, non-governmental organizations) in accordance with the "Instructions for the development and improvement of IAAR standards". To ensure quality and disseminate best European practices, IAAR standards are harmonized with the ESG and WFME standards.

To support IAAR activities in 2019, a lot of work was done to improve the Agency's regulatory and methodological documentation, make additions and changes in accordance with the update of the legislative framework and international practice.

In connection with the adoption of the new Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Education", the introduction of significant changes in regulatory legal acts and other regulatory documents of higher and postgraduate education, as well as IAAR Development Strategy for 2019-2023, in 2019, work was carried out to revise the Standards of institutional, specialized and primary specialized accreditation of EO / EP of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

In order to ensure a smooth transition to the implementation of the requirements of the state, the Ministry of education and science of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2019, IAAR developed:

- Regulations on the procedure for recognizing the accreditation of an educational program developed by a University and included in the register of educational programs based on a previously accredited IAAR program.
- Standards for institutional accreditation of higher education institutions that implement programs of higher and (or) postgraduate education (without students graduation). Put into effect by the order of the General Director of "Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating" No. 117-19-OD dated December 9, 2019.
- Guidelines for conducting institutional accreditation of higher education institutions that implement programs of higher and (or) postgraduate education.

Quality assessment of EO and EP in the Republic of Kazakhstan in accordance with the established criteria of the Standards of institutional, specialty and primary specialized accreditation is based on the following general principles of quality assurance:

- ✓ objectivity in conducting self-assessment and external evaluation, as well as developing reports on their results;
- ✓ responsibility for the accuracy of these reports and compliance with regulatory legal acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
- ✓ transparency in summing up the results of self-evaluation and external evaluation;
- ✓ availability of sources confirming facts in self-assessment and external evaluation reports.

In 2019, the following new IAAR standards were updated and developed, harmonized with WFME standards:

- "Standards and guidelines for international accreditation of master's degree programs in medical and pharmaceutical education of the IAAR abroad (based on WFME/ AMSE)»;
- "Standards and guidelines for international accreditation of doctoral programs - PhD of medical and pharmaceutical education of the IAAR abroad (based on WFME/ AMSE)";
- "Standards and guidelines for international accreditation of residency (clinical residency) programs for medical and pharmaceutical education in the IAAR abroad (based on WFME/ AMSE)";
- "Standards and guidelines for international primary accreditation of basic medical and pharmaceutical education in the IAAR abroad (based on WFME/ AMSE)";
- "Standards and guidelines for international primary accreditation of master's degree programs in medical and pharmaceutical education in the IAAR abroad (based on WFME/AMSE)";



- "Standards and guidelines for international primary accreditation of doctoral programs - PhD of medical and pharmaceutical education IAAR abroad (based on WFME/ AMSE)";
- "Standards and guidelines for international primary accreditation of residency (clinical residency) programs for medical and pharmaceutical education in the IAAR abroad (based on WFME/ AMSE)".

**Joint international accreditation with FIBAA.** In 2019, the following joint documents were developed for international accreditation of educational programs in cooperation with the German Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (hereinafter-FIBAA):

1) Assessment Guidelines for Joint Accreditation of Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programs in Management, Economics, Law and Social Sciences by the IAAR and FIBAA Agencies (approved and enacted in accordance with IAAR Order No. 6-19-1-OD dated January 24, 2019

2) Assessment Guidelines for Joint Accreditation of Doctoral Education Programs in Management, Economics, Law and Social Sciences by IAAR and FIBAA (approved and enacted in accordance with IAAR Order No. 6-19-1-OD dated January 24, 2019.

3) Guidelines for Joint International Accreditation by FIBAA and IAAR (for the Accreditation of Programs in Management Studies, Economics, Law and Social Science) (approved and put into effect in accordance with the IAAR order No. 6-19-1-OD dated 24 January 2019.

This guide describes in detail the procedure for conducting joint accreditation, including the process of accepting and forming a joint external expert committee.

## **1.2 INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN**

In the context of globalization and the integration of education systems, the role and importance of international accreditation has sharply increased as an important tool for ensuring the quality of education and increasing the competitiveness of

educational organizations, primarily Kazakhstani universities, on the national and international market of educational services.

**Institutional accreditation.** In accordance with the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Education", institutional accreditation is the process of assessing the quality of an educational organization by an accreditation body for compliance with the declared status and established standards of the accreditation body.

Important area of IAAR activity in 2019 was the organization and conduct of international institutional accreditation (re-accreditation) of universities, TVE, medical education organizations, institutes for advanced training, etc. Assessment of the quality of educational organizations was carried out on the basis of standards and guidelines for institutional accreditation of vocational, higher and postgraduate medical education, medical colleges, organizations of additional education for adults, schools that implement international programs of primary, basic secondary and general secondary education.

In 2019, 37 educational organizations of the Republic of Kazakhstan passed institutional accreditation in the IAAR, including **16** Universities (including **2** medical Universities), **15** VET organizations (including medical colleges) and **6** organizations of additional education. **10** Kazakhstani Universities have passed the reaccreditation procedure in the IAAR.

Quantitative indicators for objects of international institutional accreditation of educational organizations of the Republic of Kazakhstan are presented in table 1.

**Table 1. Quantitative indicators of accredited educational organizations for 2019 (institutional accreditation)**

	<b>7 years (with re-accreditation)</b>	<b>5 years</b>	<b>3 years</b>	<b>1 year</b>	<b>Not accredited</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Universities</b>						<b>16</b>
National	1					1
State	3	2				5
Corporate	2	2				4
Private	1	3				4
Medical universities		2				2
<b>VET organizations</b>						<b>15</b>
VET medical		8				8
VET		5	2			7
<b>International schools</b>						-
<b>Organizations of additional education</b>		2	4			<b>6</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>6</b>			<b>37</b>

Table 1 shows that out of the total number of **37** IAAR accredited educational organizations, **7** organizations are accredited for 7 years (only Universities), **24** organizations - for 5 years, **6** – for 3 years. Thus, most of the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have fully demonstrated their compliance with the IAAR institutional accreditation standards.

As a recommendation, HEIs were asked to pay attention to the implementation of a student-centered approach in teaching, expanding the internal and external academic mobility of students and teachers, harmonizing the content of educational programs with educational programs of leading Kazakhstan and foreign universities, as well as professional certification of students, conducting external assessment and examination of educational programs, improving the system of academic counseling for students, meeting the educational, personal and career needs of students.

Institutionally accredited colleges were asked to pay attention to the improvement of mechanisms for continuous improvement of performance based on the results of the analysis of the degree of satisfaction of teachers, personnel, students and employers; improvement of educational programs together with stakeholders; the use of modern information technologies and innovative teaching methods based on monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of their application, strengthening the material and technical base and library stock in the state language.

**Specialized (program) accreditation.** In accordance with the law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On education", specialized accreditation is an assessment of the quality of individual educational programs implemented by an educational organization.

Independent specialized accreditation contributes to:

- receive funding by an educational organization by receiving state educational grants and state orders for accredited specialties;
- permission of an educational organization to issue state-issued diplomas for accredited educational programs;
- expand international cooperation in developing joint educational and double-degree programs, joint research projects with foreign partner universities;
- further implementation of academic mobility of students and teaching staff within the framework of accredited educational programs;
- implementation of international agreements on mutual recognition of academic degrees and educational documents;
- further study abroad and employment of graduates.

Evaluation of the quality of educational programs is based on the standards and guidelines of specialized (program) accreditation of higher, vocational, basic medical and postgraduate medical education, medical colleges, programs of additional education for adults, schools that implement international programs of primary, basic secondary and general secondary education.

As part of the specialized (program) accreditation in 2019, a total of **801** educational programs were accredited, including **685** EP of civil universities and **22** EP of medical universities, **94** EP of VET, including medical colleges **13** educational programs in the Republic of Kazakhstan were denied in accreditation.

Quantitative indicators for the objects of international specialized accreditation of educational programs of the Republic of Kazakhstan are presented in table 2.

**Table 2. Quantitative indicators of accredited educational programs for 2019 (specialized/program accreditation)**

	<b>7 years (with re-accreditation)</b>	<b>5 years</b>	<b>3 years</b>	<b>1 year</b>	<b>denied</b>	<b>Total accredited</b>
<b>HEI</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>685</b>
BA	76	241	25	11	9	
MA	39	188	11	10	4	
PhD	13	66	5			
<b>Medical universities</b>		<b>21</b>	<b>1</b>			<b>22</b>
BA		6	1			
MA		4				
PhD		1				
Residency		10				
<b>VET</b>		<b>44</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>62</b>
<b>VET medical</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>32</b>
<b>Total accredited</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>801</b>

In 2019, out of **28** universities that passed the IAAR specialized accreditation: **1** - international university, **3** - national, **11** - state, **4** - corporate and **9** -private universities. In 2019, compared to 2018, the number of accredited state and corporate universities increased.

IAAR annually monitors reports of external expert commissions (EEC) within the framework of specialized (program) accreditation, which allows obtaining information on the results of EEC activities, identifying the most important trends in the development of educational organizations, new approaches to ensuring the quality of education, and increasing the efficiency of IAAR in the whole. According to the results of the analysis in 2019, **52 %** were undergraduate programs, **36 %** were master's programs, and **12%** were doctoral programs. Out of **685** educational programs, **128** programs are accredited for 7 years, **495** educational programs are accredited for 5 years, **41** educational programs are accredited for 3 years, and 21 educational programs are accredited for 1 year. Out of the total number of accredited educational programs, **319** were re-accredited. Also, IAAR conducted primary (ex-ante) accreditation of **74** educational programs, including **60** EP for 5 years, **8** EP for 3 years, and **6** EP for 1 year. **13** EP were denied for accreditation.

In 2019, the largest number of accredited educational programs (**42%**) falls on state Universities, in corporate and private Universities the same ratio-**20%**, **15%** of accredited educational programs of national Universities and **3%** are educational programs of international university. The data in table 2 show that in 2019, the vast majority of Universities and VET EPs were accredited for 5 years.

In order to identify current problems in the development Of higher education institutions in Kazakhstan, IAAR annually analyzes reports of external expert commissions within the framework of specialized accreditation. The results of the analysis allow IAAR to obtain information on the results of the EEC activities, to determine the most important trends in the development of educational organizations, new approaches to ensuring the quality of education, and to increase the efficiency of the IAAR in general.

The results of accreditation showed that many universities have a positive practice of developing educational programs in accordance with national and international requirements. Universities have approved requirements for the content of educational programs, the algorithm for their development and implementation mechanism. At the same time, the specifics of educational programs are preserved, regional peculiarities and interests of stakeholders, primarily employers and students, are taken into account. A number of universities implement joint/ double-degree programs.

The attention of higher education institutions is drawn to the wider use of various digital technologies and innovative teaching methods that stimulate motivation and critical reflection of students, expand their academic freedom, and attract foreign specialists to introduce best practices in the educational and scientific process.

In 2019, **62** educational programs were accredited as part of the specialized VET accreditation. Most of them were accredited for 5 years. Colleges that have passed specialized accreditation, as recommendations, were asked to pay attention to improving the quality of education and their practical orientation, taking into account the requirements of employers, the competitiveness and demand for graduates in the national labor market.

### **1.3 INTERNATIONAL IAAR ACCREDITATION ABROAD**

In 2019, the geographical coverage of the IAAR's accreditation activities expanded significantly: for the first time, universities in Tajikistan, Romania, Russia and Moldova were accredited.

The external quality assessment of **5** foreign universities (Kyrgyz Republic, Russian Federation, Republic of Moldova, Republic of Tajikistan) was carried out within the framework of the international institutional accreditation of the IAAR EEC.

**17** educational programs of **6** foreign universities have been accredited by IAAR: Russian state hydrometeorological University (RF), Kyrgyz-Uzbek University

(KR), Ala-Too international University (KR), Tajik State University of Commerce (RT), Abuali ibni Sino Tajik State Medical University (RT), Tajik State University of law, business and politics (RT). Also, for the first time, the IAAR conducted primary (ex-ante) accreditation of medical education programs abroad (Kyrgyz Republic).

### **International accreditation of the IAAR in the Kyrgyz Republic.**

International accreditation of educational organizations and basic educational programs is carried out in accordance with the rules established by:

- first, the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic (including the procedure for recognition of accreditation bodies): Resolution of the government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 670 dated September 29, 2015; procedure for accreditation of educational organizations and programs. Approved by resolution of the government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 670 dated September 29, 2015;

- secondly, IAAR documents: standards and guidelines for the organization and conduct of external evaluation procedures in the process of accreditation of educational organizations and/or educational programs, including standards for program accreditation of basic educational programs of higher educational institutions (approved and put into effect by order of the Director of the Independent Agency for accreditation and rating dated October 17, 2016 No. 39-16-1-OD. Registration of Kyrgyzpatent, Certificate No. 3155 dated May 26, 2017) and guidelines for self-assessment for program accreditation of basic educational programs of higher educational institutions ( Astana, 2016 – 53 p.) and other documents of the Agency.

The quality of the educational organization is determined based on the results of the analysis of the self-assessment report and the results of the assessment of the EEC of the EO of the Kyrgyz Republic for compliance with the IAAR requirements defined in the Standards of institutional accreditation of higher educational institutions implementing programs of higher professional and postgraduate education and other documents.

IAAR in 2019, based on the established criteria for institutional accreditation, specially developed for universities in the Kyrgyz Republic in accordance with ESG (2015), determined the level of quality of educational services and provided



recommendations for further improvement of the activities of Universities and programs (table 3).



Table 3. Information about the accreditation of EO/EP in the Kyrgyz Republic.

<b>EO/EP</b>	<b>Term of accreditation</b>
<b>2019</b>	
Kyrgyz-Uzbek University (institutional accreditation)	<b>5 years</b> until 19.12.2024
International higher school of medicine (institutional accreditation )	<b>3 years</b> until 19.12.2022
550300 – "Philological education" KUU (BA), (program accreditation)	<b>5 years</b> until 19.12.2024
560001 – "Medical business", ALA-TOO International University (BA) (program accreditation)	<b>5 years</b> until 13.06.2024

The analysis of the EEC reports based on the results of the assessment of two educational organizations and two main educational programs showed the presence of a positive practice in the development, implementation of rules and procedures that ensure the consistent development of the academic career of students, their advancement along the educational trajectory, assessment and monitoring of EO activities and the implementation of educational programs.

EEC IAAR prepared conclusions on the levels of compliance of the EO with the criteria of standards, the rationale for which is set out in the reports on the results of the accreditation procedures performed. Quantitative indicators of compliance of the quality of educational organizations and basic educational programs with the criteria of the IAAR standards are shown in figure 1.

Позиции ОО/ООП по критериям оценки  
(для ОО - 119, для медицинских ОО – 103, ООП по 116/119 критериям оценки)



Figure 1. EO/EP quality compliance matrix for standards criteria of institutional accreditation.

When analyzing the final materials of the independent assessment in the conclusions of the expert commissions, coincidences in the EP of the compliance of some indicators with the criteria of the program accreditation standards were revealed. More than 10% of the following standards are equally rated by the EEC as "strong" by the EP positions.

Management of the main educational program

- The university should ensure the functioning of a system for collecting, analyzing and managing information based on the use of modern information and communication technologies and software.
- Reflection of the relationship between research, teaching and learning in the quality assurance policy.
- A clear definition by the University of those responsible for business processes within the framework of the EP, an unambiguous distribution of staff responsibilities, and differentiation of functions of collegial bodies.

Information management and reporting:

- The University determines the procedure and ensures the protection of information, including the identification of responsible persons for the accuracy and timeliness of information analysis and data provision.

Development and approval of basic educational programs:

- Documentation of the EP development procedure and the approval at the institutional level.

- Conducting external examinations of the EP.

- Participation of students, teaching staff and other stakeholders in the development of EP, ensuring the quality.

Student-centered learning, teaching, and performance assessment:

- Ensuring that the EP Leadership respects and pays attention to different groups of students and their needs, and provides them with flexible learning paths.

- There is a procedure for responding to students ' complaints.

- Ensuring consistency, transparency, and objectivity of the learning outcomes assessment mechanism for each EP, including appeal.

Students:

- Transparency of procedures that regulate the life cycle of students (from admission to completion).

- Providing graduates with documents confirming the qualifications received, including the learning outcomes achieved, as well as the context, content and status of the education received and evidence of its completion.

Teaching staff:

- The responsibility of the management for its employees and the provision of favorable working conditions for them.

- The involvement of the TS to society life (the role of TS in education, in science, in the region, creating cultural environment, participation in exhibitions, creative competitions, charity programs, etc.).

- Opportunities for career growth and professional development of EO teaching staff.

In May 2019, IAAR conducted the first international primary program accreditation (ex-ante) in assessing the quality of EP 560001 - "General Medicine" of the International University "ALA-TOO".

**International accreditation of the IAAR in the Republic of Tajikistan.** The quality of universities and educational programs of bachelor's, master's and PhD levels of the Republic of Tajikistan within the framework of international institutional and specialized accreditation is determined in accordance with the standards and guidelines for accreditation of foreign educational organizations and educational programs (based on ESG), developed and implemented by IAAR in 2018.

On May 13, 2019, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan signed an Agreement with IAAR on international accreditation in the territory of the Republic of Tajikistan. In accordance with the signed international Agreement with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan, IAAR activities are recognized on the territory of the Republic of Tajikistan.

IAAR carried out international accreditation of universities of the Republic of Tajikistan on the basis of developed standards, taking into account the legislation in the field of higher education of the Republic of Tajikistan:

1) for institutional accreditation of medical organizations - "Standards and guidelines for international accreditation of medical educational institutions of the IAAR abroad (based on WFME / AMSE)" (approved and put into effect according to the order of the IAAR No. 68-18 / 1-od dated 25.05. 2018).

2) for carrying out specialized (program) accreditation of medical organizations - "Standards and guidelines for international accreditation of basic medical and pharmaceutical education of the IAAR abroad (based on WFME / AMSE)" (approved and put into effect according to the order of the IAAR No. 68 / 1- 18-od dated 25.05.2018).

3) for institutional and specialized (program) accreditation of non – medical educational organizations-"Standards and guidelines for international accreditation of foreign educational organizations and educational programs (based on ESG)"

(approved and put into effect in accordance with the NAAR order No. 68/1-18-od dated 25.05.2018).

The stages and main principles of international accreditation are presented in the above-mentioned standards, which take into account the experience of international accreditation and the Bologna process, and are also correlated with the ESG and WFME standards.

The accreditation procedure is similar to the procedure in Kazakhstan and is regulated by the above-mentioned documents.

Standards for institutional and program accreditation abroad are published on the IAAR website at the following link: <http://iaar.kz/en/accreditation/standards>

Avicenna Tajik State Medical University is the only medical university in the Republic of Tajikistan, has passed institutional and program accreditation (programs of basic medical education in the specialties "1- 790101 General Medicine", "1- 790107 Dentistry", "1- 790103 Epidemiology, hygiene and public health "). International program accreditation of educational programs of the Abuali Ibni Sino Tajik State Medical University was carried out in accordance with the "Standards and guidelines for international accreditation of basic medical and pharmaceutical education of the IAAR abroad (based on WFME / AMSE)", which is published on the IAAR / IAAR website at the following link: <http://iaar.kz/en/accreditation/standards/kazakhstan#medical-education-organizations>.

Quantitative indicators of international institutional and program accreditation of higher and postgraduate education programs in the Republic of Tajikistan are presented in table 4.

**Table 4. Information about the results of evaluation of educational organizations and educational programs of the Republic of Tajikistan**

Name of the evaluation object	Accreditation		
	Date of certification	Term	Date of completion
Educational organization			

<b>Institutional accreditation</b>			
Abuali ibni Sino Tajik State Medical University	22.11.2019	<b>5 years</b>	21.11.2024
<b>Program accreditation</b>			
"1-240102 - Law" (bachelor's level), Tajik State University of law, business and politics	14.06.2019	<b>5 years</b>	13.06.2024
"1-25 01 04 Finance and credit" (bachelor's level), Tajik state University of law, business and politics	14.06.2019	<b>3 years</b>	13.06.2022
"1-230101 - International relations (diplomacy)» (bachelor's level), Tajik state university of law, business and politics	14.06.2019	<b>3 years</b>	13.06.2022
"1-790101 - Medical business", Abuali ibni Sino Tajik State Medical University	22.11.2019	<b>5 years</b>	21.11.2024
"1-790107 – Dentistry", Tajik State Medical University after Abuali ibni Sino	22.11.2019	<b>5 years</b>	21.11.2024
"1-790103 - Epidemiology, hygiene and public health", Tajik State Medical University after Abuali ibni Sino	22.11.2019	<b>3 years</b>	21.11.2022
"1-250103 - World economy"	20.12.2019	<b>5 years</b>	

(bachelor's degree), Tajik State University of Commerce			19.12.2024
"1-250103 - World economy" (master's degree), Tajik State University of Commerce	20.12.2019	<b>5 years</b>	19.12.2024
"1-25 01 04 Finance and credit" (master's degree), Tajik State University of Commerce	20.12.2019	<b>5 years</b>	19.12.2024
"1-24 01 03 Economic law" (bachelor's degree), Tajik State University of Commerce	20.12.2019	<b>3 years</b>	19.12.2022
"1-25 01 04 Finance and credit" (bachelor's degree), Tajik State University of Commerce	20.12.2019	<b>3 years</b>	19.12.2022
"1-25010705 - Economics and management at trade enterprises" (bachelor's degree), Tajik State University of Commerce	20.12.2019	<b>3 years</b>	19.12.2022

As can be seen from table 4, **3** Higher education institutions of the Republic of Tajikistan were accredited by IAAR in 2019: Tajik State Medical University named after Abuali ibni Sino passed institutional accreditation for a period of 5 years and program accreditation of **3** educational programs; Tajik State University of law, business and politics passed program accreditation of **3** EP; Tajik State University of Commerce passed program accreditation of **6** EP.

**International accreditation in the Republic of Moldova.** In 2017, IAAR signed a Memorandum of cooperation with the National State Agency for quality assurance in professional education (ANACIP) of the Republic of Moldova to work together on the exchange of international experts and conduct joint events: international projects, forums, seminars, etc.



In 2019, ANACIP partner applied to IAAR for international accreditation of the Nicolae Testemitanu State Medical and Pharmaceutical University, as IAAR is the only recognized Agency of the World Federation of Medical Education (WFME) in the region. In April 2019, the Ministry of education, culture and research of the Republic of Moldova sent a letter of recognition of the activities of the IAAR on the territory of the Republic of Moldova

International accreditation of medical organizations in the Republic of Moldova is regulated by the "Standard and guidelines for international accreditation of medical educational organizations of the IAAR abroad (based on WFME/ AMSE)", which is published on the IAAR website at the following link <http://iaar.kz/en/about/iaar-documents/regulations>.

The accreditation procedure and its stages are described in detail in the "Standard and guidelines for international accreditation of medical educational organizations of the NAAR abroad (based on WFME/ AMSE)", based on the principles of international accreditation and the Bologna process, ESG and WFME standards.

In 2019, the IAAR conducted institutional accreditation of the Nicolae Testemitanu State Medical Pharmaceutical University in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova. The report and decision of the Accreditation Council are published on IAAR website (<http://iaar.kz/en/accreditation/external-review-reports/higher-educational-institutions>).

**International accreditation in the Russian Federation.** As a result of the "Agreement on cooperation and interaction in order to assess the quality of higher education and accreditation of educational programs" signed on May 6, 2019 with the Federal State Budgetary Institution "National Accreditation Agency for Education" (FSBI "Rosakkredagenstvo"), which is a subordinate institution of the Federal Service for supervision in the field of education and science (Rosobrnadzor) of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, the parties agreed to participate in the implementation of procedures for the accreditation of educational activities in accordance with international law, as well as the development of joint

standards and criteria necessary for international accreditation of educational organizations. According to the signed Agreement, the Federal State Budgetary Institution "Rosakkredagentstvo" of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation recognizes the IAAR international accreditation.

IAAR conducted international accreditation in the Russian Federation in accordance with the following developed standards that take into account the legislation in the field of higher education in the Russian Federation:

1) for institutional accreditation of medical organizations - "Standards and guidelines for international accreditation of medical educational institutions of the IAAR abroad (based on WFME / AMSE)" (approved and put into effect according to the order of the IAAR No. 68-18 / 1-od dated 25.05. 2018).

2) for carrying out specialized (program) accreditation of medical organizations - "Standards and guidelines for international accreditation of basic medical and pharmaceutical education of the IAAR abroad (based on WFME / AMSE)" (approved and put into effect according to the order of the IAAR No. 68 / 1- 18-od dated 25.05.2018).

3) for institutional and specialized (program) accreditation of non – medical educational organizations-"Standards and guidelines for international accreditation of foreign educational organizations and educational programs (based on ESG)" (approved and put into effect in accordance with the NAAR order No. 68/1-18-od dated 25.05.2018).

The stages and main principles of international accreditation are presented in the above-mentioned standards, which take into account the experience of international accreditation and the Bologna process, and are also correlated with the ESG and WFME standards. The accreditation procedure is similar to the procedure in Kazakhstan and is regulated by the above-mentioned documents.

Standards for institutional and program accreditation abroad are published on the IAAR website at the following link: <http://iaar.kz/en/accreditation/standards>

In 2019, the IAAR for the first time held international institutional accreditation of the leading Russian universities - Kazan State Medical University and St.

Petersburg State Irrigation and Reclamation University (the results of accreditation are published on the IAAR website at the following link: [http://iaar.kz/en/accreditation / standards / kazakhstan # medical-education-organizations](http://iaar.kz/en/accreditation/standards/kazakhstan#medical-education-organizations))

**Joint international accreditation of the IAAR with FIBAA.** In 2019, the IAAR jointly with the German Foundation for accreditation of international business administration programs (hereinafter-FIBAA) conducted a joint international accreditation of educational programs of L. N. Gumilyov Eurasian national University. The purpose of the joint international accreditation procedure is to evaluate and recognize the high quality of educational programs offered in accordance with the European standards of accreditation according to ESG (ENQA) based on the principles of professionalism and accessibility, voluntary and independent, objectivity and professionalism, transparency and reliability, collegiality and awareness of results.

Joint documents have been developed for joint international accreditation of the EP (see Development and approval of accreditation standards), approved and put into effect in accordance with the IAAR order No. 6-19-1-OD dated January 24, 2019.

In 2019, 17 educational programs of L. N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University (Republic of Kazakhstan) were jointly accredited by the IAAR and FIBAA. Reports and decisions on them are published on the IAAR website (<http://iaar.kz/en/accreditation/external-review-reports/higher-educational-institutions>).

Thus, in 2019, the IAAR, demonstrating high competitiveness, expanded the boundaries of its accreditation activities and received recognition from the academic community of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Moldova and Russia.

#### **1.4 CONDUCTING POST-ACCREDITATION MONITORING OF EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND/OR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

Post – accreditation monitoring is the stage of accreditation from the date of obtaining accreditation status to the next independent external assessment, the purpose of which is to maintain compliance with accreditation standards. Post-

accreditation monitoring is carried out in order to monitor the implementation of recommendations of external expert commission of accredited educational organization and/or EP in accordance with the criteria of the corresponding type of accreditation.

Accredited educational organizations send an interim report to the IAAR, which contains information about their activities to implement the recommendations of the external expert commission for the entire period from the date of receipt of the accreditation certificate and includes information about all changes in the educational organization in accordance with the standards and criteria for accreditation of the IAAR.

According to the work plan of the Accreditation Council, the report of the Chairman of the Expert Council for Higher Education on the results of post-accreditation monitoring of educational organizations and / or educational programs is heard.

In 2019, the IAAR conducted post-accreditation monitoring on institutional accreditation in **30** educational organizations and **400** educational programs on specialized accreditation. Quantitative indicators for the objects of post-accreditation monitoring of educational organizations and/or educational programs are presented in table 5.

**Table 5. Post-accreditation monitoring of educational organizations and/or educational programs for 2019**

<b>Organizations</b>		<b>Institutional accreditation</b>	<b>Specialized/program accreditation</b>
<b>Universities</b>	Civil	5	271
	medical	0	6
<b>Colleges</b>	Civil	21	108
	medical	4	15
<b>Total</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>400</b>

Table 5 shows that in 2019, **277** educational programs of higher educational institutions and **123** educational programs of VET passed post-accreditation monitoring.

### **1.5 CONDUCTING RATED RESEARCH IN THE SPHERE OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

IAAR has been conducting rating research in the Republic of Kazakhstan since 2014, in the Kyrgyz Republic since 2018. The IAAR rating system, as a result of an external audit by the **IREG Observatory** in 2019 (<https://ireg-observatory.org/en/initiatives/ranking-seal-of-approval/>), confirmed the compliance of the methodology with the Berlin principles and received high recognition.

Rating research is conducted in the following areas:

- Rating of higher education institutions of the Republic of Kazakhstan by educational programs in accordance with the levels and areas of training of specialists;
- Rating of universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the areas of training of specialists at the levels: BA – MA – PhD;
- General rating of higher education institutions of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the areas of specialists training;

- General rating of teaching staff of higher education institutions of the Republic of Kazakhstan (TOP-50).

According to the IAAR Charter, rating studies are conducted independently of the accreditation process and do not impact its results.

The main goals of rating research are to evaluate the educational process in educational institutions, identify those who can be looked up to and orient the population when choosing an educational institution. The independent IAAR rating takes into account all the variety of universities and their features, contributes to the growth of their competitiveness and provides public awareness of the degree to which the quality of educational services meets market requirements.

As part of the rating study, a technology for ranking universities was developed and implemented, taking into account world experience and national characteristics. This technology is universal and allows you to set the rating of universities as a whole and differentially for educational programs in the areas of training specialists simultaneously in the format of a three-level structure bachelor's-master's-doctor of philosophy (PhD). The technology excludes expert judgments and presents an objective picture, which is what causes the trust of educational organizations. The objectivity of the methodology is determined by summing up the indicators according to five criteria that are identical for all three levels, taking into account the information provided by the higher education institution itself.

As the comparative material shows, **87** universities of the country took part in the "National ranking of demand for higher education institutions - 2019". At the same time, obtaining and processing up-to-date and, most importantly, reliable data required for research caused a particular difficulty in ranking universities. Therefore, due to the submission of incorrect information, **28** universities were rejected. Qualification requirements were applied to select universities that became participants in the rating. Thus, the rating includes **59** universities that met all the requirements for participation in the ranking: national universities - **8**, state - **21**, corporate - **10** and private - **20**.

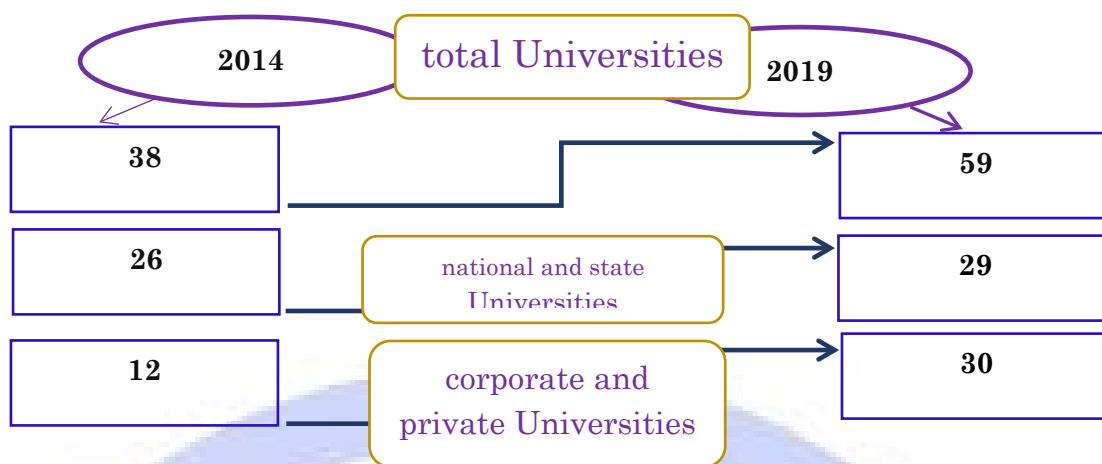


Figure 2. Statistics on objects of IAAR rating.

The IAAR rating is held annually and the results of the rating are published in May before the announcement of the state order for personnel training, as well as the beginning of the period for passing the Unified National Testing of School Graduates of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Republican testing of schoolchildren of the Kyrgyz Republic.

The results of the IAAR rating research are presented in the published reference book "Independent Rating-2019" and posted on the IAAR website (<http://www.iaar.kz/ru/rejting>), IREG observatory (<http://ireg-observatory.org/en/1004-kazakhstan-top-20-ranking>).

"Independent Ranking of Universities of the Kyrgyz Republic - 2019" presents quantitative and qualitative indicators of **19** educational organizations for **179** undergraduate (specialty) and graduate programs in **19** areas, while the first ranking in 2018 presented the results of ranking a total of **51** specialist training programs.

The peculiarity of the independent ranking of universities of the Kyrgyz Republic in 2019 is that it contains the result of ranking of previously unavailable training programs for specialists in medical and agricultural areas of the economy, and presents all programs identified by universities as the most competitive.

The results of the rating of universities in the Kyrgyz Republic are published in the newspaper "Kutbilim" on May 25, 2019 (<http://kutbilim.kg/2019/06/25/nezavisimyj-rejting-vuzov-kyrgyzstana-2019/>).

Ranking of programs, along with positive trends in the field of higher and postgraduate education, allows us to see those areas of the national system of training specialists that require the definition, and perhaps revision of strategic tasks aimed at meeting the needs of society, state and international labor markets.

The independent IAAR rating for higher education organizations focused on improving the quality of education is an effective tool for measuring their own success and positioning in the national and international educational spaces, since from 2020 the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating plans to conduct the IAAR Eurasian University Ranking (IAAR EUR) ". IAAR EUR will be conducted on the basis of a specially developed methodology using digital technologies with elements of Webometrics, which will improve the quality of evaluation of the ranking of EO.

Higher education institutions are evaluated by **20** parameters in four areas: academic reputation, quality composition, concentration of scientific potential and internationalization of the University.

Thus, IAAR rating – assessment of the quality of educational programs and directions of training of specialists is carried out with the aim of improving the quality and competitiveness of educational services, ensuring the General public and stakeholders of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan information about the extent of conformity of quality of educational services provided by Universities, modern requirements of the labour market, recognition of teachers and the impact of the research activities of the University. IAAR rating, as a measure of the level of quality assurance of education, also allows Universities to develop in accordance with the requirements of the OECD and contributes to their entry into the international educational space.

## **1.6 INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS**

**IAAR collaboration with international quality assurance networks.** IAAR, being a full member of a number of influential international and European networks and associations (EQAR, ENQA, WFME, INQAAHE, CEENQA, APQN and others),



successfully builds constructive interaction and cooperation with them in the field of quality assurance of higher education:

- Participation of IAAR representatives in the international conference of the Council for higher education accreditation (CHEA) and the annual meeting of the international quality group CHEA (CIQG), January 28-31, 2019 in Washington (USA).

- Participation of IAAR representatives in the international APQN conference, from 28 to 31 March 2019 in Colombo (Sri Lanka).

- Participation of IAAR representatives in the work of the INQAHEE international conference, from March 25 to March 28, 2019 in Colombo (Sri Lanka).

- Participation of IAAR representatives in the work of the international conference WFME, from 7 to 10 April 2019 in Seoul (Korea).

- Participation of IAAR representatives in the work of the International IREG Conference, from May 8-10, 2019 in Bologna (Italy).

- Participation of IAAR representatives in the ENQA Members' Forum, April 25-26, 2019 in Tallinn (Estonia).

- Participation of IAAR representatives in the ENQA General Assembly on October 17-18, 2019 in Yerevan (Armenia).

- Participation of IAAR representatives in the CEENQA General Assembly in May 2019 in Cyprus.

- Organization and holding of the **III Central Asian International Forum on Quality Assurance in Education** with the participation of European networks, on October 4-5, 2019 in the city of Turkestan, Republic of Kazakhstan.

**European Education Quality Assurance Register (EQAR).** In 2019, IAAR prepared the **second significant change report to the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies EQAR.** IAAR report was sent to EQAR on August 29, 2019. The decision to confirm all changes was made on January 7, 2020. The text of the report and the decision are published on the EQAR website at the following link [https://backend.deqar.eu/reports/EQAR/2020\\_01\\_C48\\_ChangeReport\\_IAAR.pdf](https://backend.deqar.eu/reports/EQAR/2020_01_C48_ChangeReport_IAAR.pdf)

In order to ensure the quality of education, IAAR actively collaborated with the European Association for quality assurance in higher education (**ENQA**). April 25-26, 2019 General Director of the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating A. Zhumagulova took part in the forum of ENQA members in Tallinn, Estonia. **ENQA 2019 forum** is dedicated to the development of higher education systems in the member states. During two days, ENQA members discussed a number of issues related to the vision, mission and goals of the European Association for quality assurance.

On October 17-18, 2019, **X ENQA General Assembly** was held in Yerevan, where such important topics as regional prospects for European cooperation, new trends and the future of quality assurance in the European higher education area were discussed. IAAR General Director A. Zhumagulova noted the main additional values of European cooperation in Kazakhstan, which influenced or influence the development of the national quality assurance system in general, emphasized that the focus on European quality standards (ESG) has been a state policy since the second State Development Program education of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011-2020 and full membership in ENQA contributes to the implementation and promotion of ESG principles in Kazakhstani universities. Currently, many accredited universities in Kazakhstan comply with the ESG principles, as the IAAR standards are harmonized with the ESG standards.

On January 28-31, 2019, the IAAR delegation took part in the **meeting of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation CHEA**, in Washington (USA). General Director of IAAR - A.B. Zhumagulova and staff of the agency O.A.Yanovskaya, T.Kanapyanov took part in the international conference "Accreditation: values and expectations". IAAR, as a full member of CIQG - CHEA's international quality group, has been invited to the annual international conference. The forum was attended by over 300 people from all over the world. The plenary session was opened by President of CHEA (USA) Judith S. Eaton. During 4 days, at the panel sessions, new modern approaches to quality assessment, problems and

innovative directions for improving the methods and processes of accreditation were considered.

**Asia-Pacific quality assurance network (APQN).** IAAR representatives participated in the annual scientific conference and APQN general meeting on March 28-30, 2019.

APQN 2019 conference is dedicated to ensuring the quality of education in the Asia-Pacific region. During 3 days, participants discussed a number of regional challenges and problems, looked for solutions and exchanged experience in the field of quality and sustainable development of education, innovative approaches to the development of internal quality assurance, issues of cultural diversity for the quality of cross-border education.

The independent agency for accreditation and rating IAAR in 2019 was independently evaluated for inclusion in the Asia-Pacific Register for Quality Assurance in Education APQR. The results of the independent evaluation are expected in 2020.

More information about APQR is available at the following link <https://iaar.agency/iaar/vneshnyaya-ocenka-kachestva>

IAAR is the first organization from the CIS countries to be recognized by the **World Federation of Medical Education (WFME)**. The recognition of the IAAR by the World Federation of Medical Education allows not only national, but also foreign Universities to pass the IAAR quality assessment according to international standards.

7 - On April 10, 2019, the International Forum of the World Federation of Medical Education WFME "Quality Assurance in Medical Education in the 21st Century" was held in Seoul, Korea, in which representatives of the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR) took part. Professor David Gordon, President of the World Federation of Medical Education (WFME), addressed the conference participants with a welcoming speech. Forum was attended by representatives from **56** countries. The focus of the International Forum was the discussion of the development of medical education, presentation of the best

accreditation practice and further improvement of the quality of educational programs of medical universities.

In accordance with the requirements of the WFME, IAAR prepared and sent an annual IAAR report on the implementation of the recommendations of the WFME experts (December 2019).

IAAR has been a full member of INQAAHE since 2015. On March 25-27, 2019, **the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE)** held the XV Conference on the topic: “Quality Assurance, Qualifications and Recognition: Fostering Trust in a Globalized World”. More than **250** delegates from **50** countries, including representatives of the IAAR, arrived in Colombo, the largest city in the Republic of Sri Lanka. Higher education institutions, quality assurance agencies, government authorities and stakeholders discussed the issues of maintaining and building trust in the field of quality assurance in higher education in the context of increasing globalization.

An important mechanism for ensuring high quality of educational services in the world, including in Kazakhstan, is the Rating Institute. IAAR as a member of the **International Observatory for Academic Ranking and Excellence IREG** takes an active part in the activities of this international organization. In 2019, representatives of the IAAR participated in the X IREG conference "Ranking and Accreditation - two roads to the same goals", which was held at the University of Bologna (Italy). The conference brought together representatives of quality assurance organizations, scientists and experts in the field of accreditation and ranking of higher education from more than a hundred countries. The content of the Conference is focused on discussing key issues of improving the quality of higher education at the national, regional and international levels, as well as the role of the rating and accreditation system in achieving the planned results of education and determining further areas for improvement.

In line with the growing importance of the higher education ranking worldwide, the international ranking expert group IREG has published a document describing the best ranking practices. "Berlin principles for ranking higher education institutions"

quickly became the accepted standard for conclusions about the quality of ratings and rating organizations.

Interest in rankings continues to grow, it is clear that ratings in most countries of the world are becoming important tools for quality assessment, and in some cases, a means of determining the level of state funding. According to these facts, there is a growing need for an independent group, such as IREG Observatory, to develop a certification process that the activities of a certain rating Agency meet not only the Berlin principles, but also additional quality criteria.

The independent agency for accreditation and rating IAAR in order to obtain recognition and the right to use the "IREG Approved" mark in 2019 passed an international audit by the IREG Observatory. IREG Observatory's IREG Approved process includes independent scrutiny of rating organizations according to the IREG Observatory's rigorous criteria. Only rating organizations that meet the IREG Observatory criteria are worthy of the "IREG Approved" quality mark. Receiving the IREG Approved mark confirms compliance with the IAAR Ranking methodology and demonstrates that the IAAR ranking research procedures and presentation of results meet high quality standards.

**Development of international cooperation between the IAAR and foreign partners.** Independent agency for accreditation and rating with most foreign accreditation agencies on the basis of signed memorandums of cooperation, carried out joint activities for the exchange and training of experts, implementation of joint educational projects and exchange of experience.

**Signed Memorandums with foreign partners in 2019:**

- 1) On April 16, 2019, the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating signed an Agreement on Cooperation with the National Center for Improving the Quality of Education (NCEQE) of the Republic of Georgia (city of Tbilisi) on the exchange of experts during international accreditation, further cooperation in organizing joint events of forums, conferences, round tables in order to exchange experience in the field of procedures and mechanisms for assessing independent accreditation of

- educational organizations to improve the quality of educational services (<https://iaar.agency/news/memorandum-o-vzaimodejstvii-naar-i-nceqe>).
- 2) On September 11, 2019, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR) and the All-Russian public organization "Medical League of Russia" <https://iaar.agency/partner/obsherosijskaya-obshestvennaya-organizaciya-%c2%abmedicinskaya-liga-rossii%c2%bb>
  - 3) On October 4, 2019, a memorandum of cooperation was signed between "Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating" and the Union of Heads of Institutions and Subdivisions of Continuing Professional Education and Employers - the Union of DPO (Russian Federation).
  - 4) On October 8, 2019, in Moscow, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR) and the Institute for Quality Control and Accreditation of Educational Programs in the Field of Culture and Arts (RF). (for more details visit <https://iaar.agency/partner/institut-kontrolya-kachestva-i-akkreditacii-obrazovatelnyh-programm-v-sfere-kultury-i-iskusstva>)
  - 5) On October 8, 2019 in Moscow IAAR signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the All-Russian public organization "Russian Union of Youth" RSM. Cooperation between IAAR and RSM is aimed at interaction in the field of quality assurance in education, implementation of joint projects, training and exchange of experts - representatives of the student movement. <https://iaar.agency/partner/obsherosijskaya-obshestvennaya-organizaciya-%c2%abrossijskij-soyuz-molodezhi%c2%bb>
  - 6) On October 25, 2019, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR) and RAEX-Analytics LLC <https://iaar.agency/partner/ooo-%c2%abraeks-analitika%c2%bb>
  - 7) On November 14-15, 2019, IAAR signed a Cooperation Agreement with the Association of Non-State Universities of Russia (ANSUR) and the Agency

for Russian and International Competitiveness Research RAEX - Analytics as a result of business meetings in Moscow on rating research.

- 8) On December 6, 2019, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR) and the Association of Medical Schools in Europe (AMSE) <https://iaar.agency/partner/associaciya-medicinskih-shkol-v-evrope-amse->.

IAAR conducts joint international accreditation with leading foreign agencies included in the National and European Registries. IAAR in May-June 2019 at the L.N. Gumilyov, a joint international accreditation was held with FIBAA (Foundation for International Accreditation of Business Administration Programs), a longtime partner of IAAR. IAAR's international accreditation of foreign universities and joint accreditation procedures with leading international agencies is a great success of the Agency, high authority of the IAAR and recognition of the IAAR activities in the international educational space.

**Partnership with foreign government agencies.** Expanding the boundaries of international partnership, IAAR built constructive cooperation with state authorities and educational organizations of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation. Thus, at the invitation of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of the Republic of Moldova, IAAR General Director A. Zhumagulova was included in the Competition Commission for the procedure of open elections to the Governing Council of the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research (ANACEC, Republic of Moldova). According to the legislation of the Republic of Moldova, the Governing Council of ANACEC is elected by the Competition Commission, which consists of 5 reputable international representatives of quality assurance agencies.

On October 14-15, 2019, a meeting of the Competition Commission was held in Chisinau, where the members of the Commission conducted interviews with candidates for the Governing Council of the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research (ANACEC, Republic of Moldova). Based on the interviews, 15 members of the ANACEC Governing Council were elected for a

period of 3 years. The elections were absolutely transparent, and each candidate had equal opportunities. The members of the Competition Commission paid special attention not only to the professional and scientific achievements of candidates, but also to the knowledge of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), the principles of the Bologna Process, the system of internal and external quality assurance in education. The inclusion of an IAAR representative in the Competition Commission for the election procedure to the Governing Council of the National Agency for Quality Assurance means not only trust and recognition of high international status, but also the transboundary nature of IAAR's activities.

IAAR is an active participant of various levels of quality assurance in education activities carried out by the Ministries of Education of the Central Asian states (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan). On December 13, 2019, IAAR representatives took part in the regional international meeting "Prospects for the development of medical education in the Central Asian region in the city of Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic. The meeting discussed the quality of medical education in the Central Asian region. In his speech, the President of WFME - David Gordon noted the great role and significant contribution of IAAR in ensuring the quality of medical education in the region, as the only recognized Agency among the CIS countries. Director General of IAAR A.B. Zhumagulova in her report presented recommendations for further improving the quality of medical education in the countries of the Central Asian region on the basis of international accreditation procedures and the rating of educational programs of universities in this region. As a result of the international meeting, a Resolution was adopted and proposals were prepared for the further development of higher medical education.

On May 27, 2019 in Bishkek (Kyrgyz Republic), together with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR) held a training seminar: "The role of international accreditation in ensuring the quality of higher education" on the basis of the Kyrgyz State Technical University named after I. Razzakov. IAAR General Director A.B.



Zhumagulova spoke at the seminar on the topic: "International accreditation - opportunities and prospects." The second part of the training seminar was held in an active format and was aimed at educating and training experts from Kyrgyzstan for international accreditation.

In June 2019 IAAR participated in the Republican meeting organized by the Ministry of education of Tajikistan on quality assurance of higher education, where the adviser on strategic development Iskakova G. K. spoke.

On December 12, 2019, representatives of the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating took part in the International Scientific Forum ELSEVIER "Scopus Award -2019". At the "Scopus Award Kazakhstan - 2019" ceremony, IAAR General Director - Zhumagulova A.B. presented awards to the winning scientists. The event was attended by the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Deputies, rectors of universities of the republic and the academic community.

**Participation in international research projects.** The Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR) is actively involved in Erasmus + projects with the aim of expanding the availability and development of the internationalization of higher education. In 2019, IAAR took part as an associate partner in the EDUQAS project - "Implementation of Education Quality Assurance System via Cooperation of University-Business-Government in HEIs". Within the framework of the project, IAAR representatives took part in the VI International Scientific and Practical Conference on the topic: "Promoting effective practices of quality culture in higher education: benchmarking and search for reserves", which was held on November 12-13 at Kazakh University of International Relations and World Languages named after Abylai Khan in Almaty. The main goal of the conference is to discuss topical issues in the field of quality assurance in education, the role of independent accreditation in the quality assurance system of higher education in Kazakhstan. This event contributed to the dissemination of the experience and results of the EDUQAS project.

On November 28, 2019, Nur-Sultan hosted the second monitoring of the EDUQAS project, conducted by the national office of Erasmus+ in Kazakhstan (NEO). During the meeting, the progress of the project was discussed and the results were presented.

Since 2018, IAAR has been part of the consortium as a partner in the KUTEL project - "Kazakh Universities to Foster Quality Assurance Processes in Technology Enhanced Learning". In 2019, work on the project actively continued. KUTEL project consortium consists of **4** European universities and **10** organizations in Kazakhstan. Partners were selected based on their experience and expertise. All European partner universities operate in the field of e-learning, introduce innovative teaching methods and integrate advanced digital technologies into education. On the Kazakh side, in addition to IAAR, **7** universities, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan and "Youth Front of the Leader of the Nation" participate in the project.

KUTEL project aims to modernize management and administration in the field of education, maximizing the potential of e-learning. The results of the project will present alternative forms of education using advanced technologies (TEL-Technology-Enhanced Learning) with the aim of transforming Kazakhstani universities into a new generation of educational organizations.

The key to the project will be an analysis of Kazakhstan's education system in comparison with the indicators of the most successful European systems. Based on this, KUTEL will contribute to the modernization of the higher education system in Kazakhstan through e-learning methodology, trainings, clear guidelines and transparent quality assurance procedures in accordance with the experience and best practices of European higher education.

In 2019, **2** face-to-face meetings of project partners and **2** virtual meetings on project monitoring were held. The first face-to-face meeting of the partners took place at the University of Guglielmo Marconi ( Rome, Italy) in February 2019. The meeting was attended by foreign partners, representatives of **6** universities from Kazakhstan and non-academic partners of the project: MES RK, IAAR and the public

Fund "Youth Fund of the Leader of the Nation". The project partners discussed organizational issues related to planning further activities and compliance with the project implementation time frame.

The second face-to-face meeting was held in September 2019 in Patras, Greece. During the working meeting, the main attention was focused on discussing the tasks of working package 2, which provides for the development of a multimedia course, summarizing the interim results of the project and a report for 9 months of work.

On April 9, 2019, the first monitoring of the KUTEL project was conducted by the national office of Erasmus+ in Kazakhstan (NEO). All project partners participated in the monitoring. Reports of project partners on the work done were presented. At the end of the meeting, the coordinator of the national office of Erasmus+ in Kazakhstan (NEO) summed up the preliminary results of monitoring and presented recommendations for further implementation of the project.

As part of working package 4 "Dissemination and Exploitation", on October 4, 2019, a presentation of the KUTEL project was presented at the "III Central Asian International Forum on quality assurance of education", held by the IAAR in Turkestan. At the panel session "Improving the quality of education and the commercialization of science: trends in digital transformation", IAAR representatives presented to the Forum participants the goals and objectives of the project, as well as the importance of the project to improve the quality of education in Kazakhstani universities.

In September 2019, according to the results of the ERASMUS + 2019 competition of projects, another project was selected, in which IAAR, SAGRIS will take part - "Enhancement of Postgraduate Studies on Sustainable Agriculture and Future Farming Systems ". Work on the project will begin on January 15, 2020.

**IAAR collaboration with national partners.** An important area of IAAR's activity is constructive cooperation with national partners - government and non-government organizations, political parties and public associations.

On February 15, 2019, IAAR representatives took part in an expanded meeting of the Board of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

On August 15-16, 2019, within the framework of the August conference of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, representatives of the IAAR took part in the Plenary session of the August conference "Bilim jáne Gylym!" at the Palace of Independence of the thematic platform of scientific and pedagogical workers of higher education "Integration of higher education and science" in the city of Nur-Sultan. President of the country Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and Minister of education and science of the Republic of Kazakhstan Aimagambetov A. K. made speeches at the August conference. Issues of further modernization of all levels of the education system and new approaches to education management were discussed in the center of attention of the pedagogical community.

As national partners, IAAR cooperated with various educational organizations within the framework of the signed memorandums. On July 9, 2019, within the walls of IAAR, General Director A. Zhumagulova signed a memorandum of cooperation between the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating and the International Educational Holding "Gaudeamus" represented by Director G. Antipov. Gaudeamus company represents a network of educational centers in the field of training, retraining and advanced training of employees in Kazakhstan and abroad. The main areas of cooperation between IAAR and the partner company include:

- establishment of partnership relations between the parties and enterprises in order to further ensure high-quality training, retraining and advanced training of specialists and employers;
- development of cooperation through exchange and training of experts on education quality assessment from among employers to participate in independent accreditation procedures;
- conducting seminars, conferences, round tables to improve the national quality assurance system.

IAAR seeks to widely interact and cooperate with educational organizations, their collegial governing bodies to discuss the most important issues of educational, methodological and scientific activities of universities, colleges, etc. On June 19, 2019, the head of IAAR medical projects A. Aimurzieva took part in the discussion

of activities in the field of quality assessment of medical education at a meeting of the Educational and Methodological Council of the NJSC "Medical University of Karaganda" in the direction of healthcare. The meeting discussed such topical issues in the field of medical education as the strategic indicators of medical universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the introduction of SCES-2019, issues of applied and academic bachelor's degree in nursing, etc.

In order to effectively interact in improving the quality of Kazakhstani organizations, IAAR and NJSC "Holding" Kasipkor "hold joint events to discuss the development of the Turin process, increasing the competitiveness of vocational education in the country. IAAR representatives took part on April 12, 2019 in a round table on the discussion of the thematic blocks of the National Reporting Framework of the Torino Process, organized by the NJSC "Holding" Kasipkor" together with the European Education Fund, and on June 12, 2019 in the work of a seminar on the discussion of the national reporting framework of the Turin Process. In the course of these events, an analysis of the TVE system policy was presented by blocks of the National Reporting Framework, including the "Country and National TVE System Overview", "Economic Situation and Labor Market State", "Social Environment and Individual Demand for TVE", "Internal Efficiency and TVE system operation" and "TVE management and financing".

**IAAR collaboration with youth and student organizations.** In 2019, IAAR actively cooperated with youth and student organizations in Kazakhstan, including the largest student public organization - the Alliance of Students of Kazakhstan. In 2019, the IAAR, in accordance with the signed Memorandum of Cooperation with the Republican Student Movement "Alliance of Students of Kazakhstan" dated April 19, 2019, widely attracted students from universities and colleges to the IAAR collegial bodies and the composition of expert commissions. Thus, the IAAR Accreditation Council includes **2** students from the Alliance of Students of Kazakhstan (<http://iaar.kz/en/about/accreditation-council>), 1 student - as part of the Expert Council on Higher Education (<http://iaar.kz/en/about/expert-councils/expert-council-for-higher-education>), **1** student - as part of the Expert Council on

Technical and Vocational Education (<http://iaar.kz/en/about/expert-councils/expert-council-for-technical-and-vocational-education>). On the recommendation of the National Medical Association, 1 student is a member of the Expert Council for Medical Education (<http://iaar.kz/en/about/expert-councils/expert-council-for-medical-education>). By participating in the work of the IAAR collegial bodies, students took an active part in various areas of IAAR activities: from the development and revision of the IAAR documentation and methodology for ensuring the internal quality of the agency to the accreditation procedures and decision-making. Students acquired skills in analyzing and evaluating educational programs. This work contributes to further raising students awareness and involvement in quality assurance processes and improving the system of national higher education.

In May, August and November 2019, a meeting of IAAR representatives with student youth took place at the meeting sites of the Youth Affairs Council "STUDUNION-2019" (within the framework of the project "Development of the system of youth self-government bodies"), Republican summer student camp (Pavlodar) and the I Republican meeting of committees for youth affairs. During the meetings, students were introduced to the procedure for conducting international accreditation by IAAR and, in particular, the role of students in the quality assurance process, in the work of independent external expert commissions. The main goal of the events is to develop the potential of youth associations, student self-government and social responsibility.

IAAR is interested not only in attracting Kazakhstani youth to the accreditation processes, but also seeks to involve students from foreign universities and colleges. On March 28-29, 2019 in Moscow, General Director of the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating A.B. Zhumagulova took part in the round table "Attracting students to quality assurance procedures in higher education", organized by "Rosakkredagentstvo" together with the Russian Youth Union, Russian universities and partners. During the discussion, A.B. Zhumagulova shared the IAAR experience in attracting students to the examination of educational organizations, FIBAA

General Director Dr. Kerstin Fink spoke about the work of students in the accreditation of educational programs in Germany.

### **1.7 INFORMING THE PUBLIC ABOUT IAAR ACTIVITIES**

The priority area of the IAAR's activity in 2019 was to provide the general public with comprehensive, reliable and relevant information about its activities in the field of ensuring the quality of education, promoting the formation of public opinion in the direction of increasing the social significance of the institution of accreditation, covering and popularizing the best experience of educational organizations. The results of IAAR's activities are reflected in annual analytical reports, which include all the processes and procedures for accreditation, their compliance with the stated mission and objectives of the IAAR.

In 2019, we actively worked to attract public attention to the results and significance of the Agency's activities to ensure the quality of education by organizing and participating in webinars, seminars, workshops, conferences and forums.

Public information was provided through such channels as the website [www.iaar.kz](http://www.iaar.kz) and social media pages <https://www.facebook.com/iaar.accreditation>, IAAR magazine "Education. Quality Assurance". In the interests of public information, IAAR posts on the website information on all the main directions of the Agency's activities, changes in regulatory documents, internal quality assurance system, etc. (<http://iaar.kz>).

As part of expanding information interaction, IAAR actively works with the media and plays an important role to information cooperation: foreign and national media, Internet publications are involved in the processes of informing the public about the importance of the quality assurance agency's activities, as well as the results of accreditation of universities and educational programs ([http : //iaar.kz/en/publications/newspaper](http://iaar.kz/en/publications/newspaper)).

Important areas of cooperation with regional, national and foreign media are the publication of materials prepared by employees and experts of the IAAR. Articles of

IAAR employees were published in the Journal of the International Academy of Education, the republican newspaper Kazakhstanskaya Pravda, the republican educational socio-political newspaper Bilimdi El: Educated Country, the public educational and popular science newspaper Kutbilim of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Higher Education Discovery (HED) journal and others.

Ranking studies of the demand for universities, conducted annually by the IAAR, are aimed at providing information support to applicants in order to choose a university and educational programs. In 2019, IAAR published the results of the National Rating of the Demand for Higher Education Institutions of the Republic of Kazakhstan - 2019 in the national newspaper "Kazakhstanskaya Pravda" dated May 15, 2019 and on its website (<http://www.iaar.kz/.../rejting-vuzov-20.../respublika - kazakhstan>).

IAAR rating is widely known to the academic and scientific community of Kazakhstan and is of great interest to government bodies. The press service of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan has once again published the results of the "National rating of the demand for universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan - 2019" dated May 23, 2019 on its official website: <https://primeminister.kz/.../opublikovan-natsionalnii-reiting>.

The ranking of IAAR educational programs is recognized by the IREG Observatory (Brussels, Belgium) is an international non-profit association of rating organizations, universities and other organizations, of which the IAAR is a member. The purpose of the IREG Observatory is to inform the general public and clarify a number of issues related to university rankings and academic performance. IREG Academic Ranking Observatory has published the results of the IAAR National Ranking for Higher Education Institutions of the Republic of Kazakhstan - 2019 on its website (<http://ireg-observatory.org/.../1004-kazakhstan-top-20-ranking>). IAAR rating is actively published and discussed in social networks.

The publication of the results of the IAAR National Rating of the Demand for Higher Education Institutions of the Republic of Kazakhstan - 2019 on the official resources of public authorities, universities and international organizations, testifies



to their confidence in the activities of the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating, its high reputation and recognition both in Kazakhstan and abroad.

In order to further develop the information and analytical activities of the Agency for Quality Assurance and Awareness of Educational and Scientific Organizations, IAAR publishes the scientific and information magazine "Education. Quality Assurance". The magazine is registered by the Committee for State Control in the Field of Communications, Information and Mass Media of the Ministry of Information and Communications of the Republic of Kazakhstan. It is available in three languages: state, Russian and English. Magazine "Education. Quality Assurance" has its own website <http://iaar-education.kz/>.

In 2019, 4 issues of the magazine "Education. Quality Assurance", published by IAAR. During the year, **62** articles and **4** interviews were published. The main publications are devoted to various issues of ensuring the quality of education and international accreditation, including the integration and internationalization of education, the use of innovative teaching methods and technologies, and the training of competitive specialists.

Various aspects of student-centered learning are given attention in **11** articles, which is about **20%** of the total number of published materials. Much attention in the magazine's publications is paid to the issues of improving the quality and development of higher education, modernization of technical and vocational education. Of the **62** articles, **21** were published by foreign authors or in collaboration with them. Of these, **5** articles are authors from abroad, **11** articles are from the Russian Federation, and **3** articles are authors from the Republic of Tajikistan, as well as one article written by an author from China and one by representatives of the Kyrgyz Republic.

## **2. DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE FOR SUCCESSFUL IAAR ACTIVITIES**

Determining the level of customer satisfaction with IAAR services is a priority task of the Agency. The Agency's management brings to the attention of employees

and experts the requirements of consumers (stakeholders) and the importance of their satisfaction, constantly shapes the internal environment, involving the Agency's employees to achieve the set strategic goals, and assists in ensuring competence, awareness and training of personnel.

Based on the analysis of trends in the field of higher education in the world community and the Republic of Kazakhstan, the results of the implementation of the IAAR Strategic Development Plan for 2016-2020 and international experience, a new IAAR Development Strategy for 2019-2023 has been developed. " IAAR Development Strategy for 2019-2023" defines the mission, vision, strategic directions, goals, objectives and key performance indicators for the medium and long term. The main strategic goals serve as the basis for the preparation of annual activity plans and plans for the implementation of the Agency's strategy.

The IAAR development strategy is designed in accordance with national education policy and legislation. In order to achieve the strategic goals, the priority is to comply with the Agency's accreditation procedures with the ESG requirements, as well as with the policies of European quality assurance networks. IAAR creates an internal environment for the full involvement of both employees and stakeholders in achieving the set strategic goals.

When developing a new IAAR Development Strategy, the opinions and proposals of the EC members, who are not only IAAR experts, but also representatives of the university and the academic community, were taken into account. The draft IAAR Development Strategy for 2019-2023 was discussed at the AC in December 2018, where most of the AC members are represented by non-governmental organizations, associations and employers' associations. The development strategy was approved by the Agency's Director at the end of 2018 and posted on IAAR website.

## **2.1 DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM**

IAAR quality policy is focused on continuous development and provision of quality services to consumers at all levels: state, society, education system and other

stakeholders. Working with consumers of services is aimed at meeting their requirements and is based on the principles of feedback and mutually beneficial partnership based on maximum responsibility for the obligations assumed.

IAAR pays attention to the formation of a quality culture, continuous improvement of the internal quality assurance system that meets the requirements of international organizations for recognition; ensuring the unity of the Policy and Development Strategy.

The internal quality assurance system manual serves as a tool for the implementation of the Quality Policy through the achievement of the established IAAR quality objectives. The general management of the internal quality assurance system is carried out by IAAR General Director, who coordinates the work on the content of the internal quality assurance system (IQAS).

The structure of IAAR includes subdivisions: "Medical Projects", "International Projects", "Project for Institutional and Specialized Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions", "Project for Accreditation of TVE Organizations", "Project for Rating" and "Information and Analytical Project", each of which carries responsibility for their field of activity. Management is provided by the IAAR General Director. The Agency has Expert Councils, the chairs of which are elected from among the experienced IAAR experts.

To make an objective and independent decision on the accreditation of educational organizations and / or educational programs, the Agency has an Accreditation Council, which makes decisions based on the self-assessment of educational organizations and / or educational programs and the EEC report. The composition of the Accreditation Council (changes in the composition) is formed on the basis of recommendations of public or professional associations, government bodies (for example, the National Medical Association, the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs of the Republic of Kazakhstan "Atameken", the Center for the Bologna Process and Academic Mobility, etc.). To ensure objective decision-making, each member of the Accreditation Council signs the AC Member Code. The Regulation on the Accreditation Council and other regulatory documents that are publicly available

have been developed.

In order to improve the efficiency of IAAR's work, the Internal Quality Assurance System Manual has been developed, which describes the internal quality assurance system developed to implement the Quality Assurance Policy.

For further comprehensive improvement of the independent accreditation system, its transparency and efficiency, as well as the implementation of the Strategic Development Plan for 2019-2023, the Agency has a Supervisory Board. This Council oversees and develops recommendations to the IAAR leadership in the area of strategic management and development of the agency. The general director of the agency reports once a year to the Supervisory Board on the results of IAAR's activities <http://iaar.kz/en/about/supervisory-board>.

To ensure that the activities of educational organizations and / or educational programs comply with standards and for continuous improvement, post-accreditation monitoring is carried out, the regulations of which are developed by the IAAR in the Regulations on post-accreditation monitoring.

IAAR strives to continuously improve its performance through: annual plans for the implementation of the Development Strategy, the involvement of employees and experts in working groups for the continuous improvement of the IQAS, internal IQAS reviews, the IQAS management review, corrective and preventive actions.

In 2019 IAAR conducted an internal review and prepared a performance analysis report. The materials of periodic surveys of experts and educational organizations are analyzed in order to improve the quality and efficiency of their own activities. Feedback has been introduced to evaluate and analyze each accreditation procedure. IAAR's work on thematic analysis is carried out in order to use the information contained in the EEC accreditation reports to inform educational organizations and the public about the development of the national quality assurance system and trends in higher education in general.

The IAAR Expert Councils play a significant role in ensuring the quality of accreditation activities, which are also involved in the work on the analysis of accreditation activities and development of recommendations for their improvement.

In April 2019, a regular meeting of the Expert Council on Higher Education of the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating took place. At the meeting of the Expert Council, the results of the activities of the External Expert Commissions (EEC) on the assessment of the quality of educational services of universities within the framework of institutional and specialized accreditation for 2018, the results of the examination of reports and recommendations of the EEC based on the results of visits to organizations implementing higher and postgraduate education programs were considered. The Expert Council emphasized the effectiveness of the external quality assessment of educational institutions and training programs and noted the positive impact of accreditation procedures on the internal quality assurance systems of universities. The members of the Expert Council made proposals for improving the qualifications of experts and their potential.

IAAR operates a Commission for the Review of Appeals and Complaints in accordance with the "Regulation on the Commission for the Review of Appeals and Complaints". The Commission includes representatives of educational organizations, professional associations of employers and students as qualified specialists in the field of activity of educational organizations for a comprehensive and objective consideration of appeals and complaints. The "Regulations on the Appeals and Complaints Commission" and the permanent composition of the Commission are posted on the agency's website <http://iaar.kz/en/about/appeals-and-complaints-commission>.

In 2019, an annual IAAR report on the results of accreditation activities was developed, which includes:

- analysis of quality improvement proposals formulated by expert commissions for higher education institutions;
- review of best practices in accredited higher education institutions;
- suggestions for improving the internal quality of IAAR, including consideration of standards and criteria;
- international activities and cooperation of IAAR;
- information about quality assurance activities organized by IAAR.

The report is sent annually to the Ministry of education and science of the Republic of Kazakhstan and published on IAAR website <http://iaar.kz/en/about/iaar-reports/annual-reports>.

In order to determine the degree of satisfaction of educational organizations with the procedure of institutional and specialized accreditation of IAAR and the degree of influence of accreditation on the further development and improvement of the internal quality assurance system of educational organizations, IAAR annually prepares an analytical report based on the results of a survey of universities accredited by the IAAR. The survey results are used to improve the IAAR internal quality assurance system. The results of the survey of universities for 2018 were summed up and the wishes of the surveyed universities in the relevant areas of thematic analysis were taken into account. An analytical report on the results of a survey of Universities is published annually on the Agency's website (<http://iaar.kz/en/about/iaar-reports/analytical-reports>).

IAAR annually prepares an analytical report based on the results of a survey of IAAR experts in order to improve the quality of accreditation procedures and receive feedback from IAAR experts. An analytical report based on the results of a survey of experts is annually posted on the agency's website (<http://iaar.kz/en/about/iaar-reports/analytical-reports>).

According to the Plan for a thematic analysis of the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating for 2018-2023, in 2019 an analysis of Commercialization of Research Project Results for 2015-2018 was carried out and the corresponding analytical report is posted on the IAAR website.

In order to identify development trends in the field of the best practices of universities, as well as to establish ways to improve the quality of education in the framework of EEC recommendations, an annual analysis of the EEC reports is carried out. Monitoring is used to analyze and improve education quality policies at the national level. Analysis of reports of external expert commissions is published annually on the Agency's website (<http://iaar.kz/en/about/iaar-reports/analytical-reports>).

IAAR, taking into account the recommendations of ENQA, based on the revised and amended "Guidelines on the internal quality assurance system" for a more complete implementation of internal quality assurance procedures, is constantly working to update internal reporting, mechanisms for the wider use of periodic feedback polls to improve the efficiency of internal quality assurance procedures of quality assurance system (QAS).

To date, the Agency has two types of surveys of accredited universities and experts: 1) after each visit; 2) once a year. When developing a survey form for an accredited University for feedback after each accreditation procedure, "ENQA feedback questionnaire for agencies" was used as a questionnaire model. The results of this survey are summarized and analyzed at least once a year by the staff of the Information and Analytical Project, submitted to the Expert Councils for consideration and presented to the IAAR General Director in the form of recommendations for making decisions. This process is also regulated by the IQAS Guidelines (paragraph 5.6.1). The results of internal reviews and stakeholder surveys are taken into account in the preparation of annual activity plans and plans for the implementation of the IAAR strategy.

The IAAR website contains documents and versatile information of the IAAR, which in a more accurate and accessible form makes it possible to inform the public about the main provisions of the quality assurance policy and activities of the IAAR (<http://iaar.kz/en/about/internal-quality-system> ).

Thus, IAAR systematically improves the internal quality assurance system in accordance with the requirements of international recognition organizations.

## **2.2 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF EXPERTS IN THE FIELD OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND EFFICIENCY OF EXPERT ACTIVITIES**

The independent assessment of educational organizations is carried out by IAAR with the help of highly qualified experts. To ensure the quality and professional conduct of external experts, IAAR trains and certifies experts in accordance with the

Regulations for the training, retraining and advanced training of external experts. The database of domestic and foreign experts is constantly being expanded and updated. By the end of 2019, the IAAR's expert potential amounted to over 3000 representatives of the academic community from **35** countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Netherlands, USA, Hungary, Serbia, Turkey, Denmark, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Estonia and others).

Expansion of the database of experts and their further involvement in the accreditation procedures is carried out in accordance with the IAAR requirements, the professional and ethical behavior of an external expert is regulated by a set of regulatory documents, including:

- Regulation on the External Expert Commission of the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (Approved by the order of the director of "Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating" No. 09-12-OD dated June 27, 2012)
- Regulation on the regulation of expert activities of an external expert of the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (Approved by the order of the director of "Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating" No. 39-15-OD dated December 15, 2015).

IAAR actively cooperates with foreign accreditation agencies, carrying out mutual exchange of experts and improving the qualifications. Such cooperation between partner agencies demonstrates the high professionalism and demand for IAAR experts, allows us to increase the effectiveness of expert activities, generalize and disseminate the best experience of accreditation activities.

Increase and replenishment of the qualitative composition of experts of all categories: national, students and employers and the expansion of the base of experts of the first category, the formation of the base of experts of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, Moldova, Russia and other countries is carried out thanks to systematic work implemented by organizing the following types of work:

**Conducting training seminars to improve the skills of experts**, including with the involvement of specialists from international agencies and quality assurance



networks. In accordance with the Development Plan, IAAR, in order to form a high-quality expert staff from among teachers, representatives of employers and students of universities in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Moldova and Russia, conducted a series of training seminars and trainings. In 2019, more than 12 training seminars were held to train experts. For example, IAAR, on the basis of the National Academic Library of the Republic of Kazakhstan on March 14, 2019, held an international seminar on the professional development of experts in the field of quality assurance in education.

The main goal of the seminar is to develop the professional community and improve the skills and competence of IAAR experts. Representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, international accreditation bodies for quality assurance in education, Kazakhstani and international experts from the Czech Republic, Georgia, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia took part in the seminar. Based on the experience of ENQA, IAAR conducted an interactive seminar, teaching methods - business games and work with cases, allowed to model the accreditation process, understand the features of assessing the criteria for accreditation standards and the role of experts in the accreditation process. Data for some seminars are shown in table 6.

**Table 6. Information about training seminars on accreditation and rating research of IAAR for 2019**

<b>Date and venue</b>	<b>Organizer. Goal</b>	<b>Participants</b>
January 19, 2019, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Economic University named after M. Ryskulbekov.	Seminar with the participation of the Deputy Minister of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic K. Kozhobekov "Review of the results of the rating study "Rating of demand for higher education institutions of the Kyrgyz Republic – 2018" and discussion of updated functions of the ranking program used in the 2019 study". Bishkek.	Experts of Kyrgyz Economic University named after M. Ryskulbekov - representatives of Kyrgyzstan universities of IAAR
February 21, 2019 at the Russian-Tajik University, Dushanbe,	Seminar on international accreditation,	Representatives of universities in Tajikistan

Tajikistan.		
March 14, 2019, Astana, national scientific library	International seminar on professional development of experts with the invitation of international experts.	Representatives of universities in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Russia.
March 14, 2019, Dushanbe, Tajikistan	International seminar on professional development of experts with the invitation of international experts.	Representatives of universities in Tajikistan
May 28, 2019, Bishkek, Kyrgyz State Technical University named after I. Razzakov	Professional development of experts from the academic community of higher education institutions of the Kyrgyz Republic	Representatives of universities in Kyrgyzstan.
September 10, 2019, Osh, Osh State University	Seminar "Preparation of internal and external quality assessment experts to participate in accreditation procedures".	Seminar for IAAR experts - representatives of universities in Osh with the participation of the representative of the Ministry of Education and Science T.T. Abylkassymov

So, on February 21, 2019, in Tajikistan, on the basis of the Russian-Tajik University, a seminar on international accreditation was held, and on March 14, 2019, an international seminar on the professional development of experts was held with the invitation of international experts. Trained external experts are entered into the Agency's database, which is used when forming an External expert commission.

**Involvement of new experts in accreditation procedures in order to familiarize them with the mechanisms of expert activity.** The expansion of the base of experts is carried out by attracting national and international representatives, broader involvement of experts from among students and employers in the accreditation of educational organizations and educational programs. In 2019, teachers from universities in the Republic of Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Russia were involved in the accreditation procedures of Kazakhstan's universities as national and foreign experts. For example, by the end of 2019, 240 representatives of

the teaching staff of universities of Kyrgyzstan were trained through a series of IAAR training seminars, of which 91 were certified, 82 of which were teachers of national and state universities, 9 were non-state universities. The number of experts is shown in figure 3.



Figure 3. Activity of IAAR experts, representatives of EO of Kyrgyzstan

16 teachers from seven universities of the Kyrgyz Republic were involved in the accreditation procedures of Kazakhstani universities as national and foreign experts. In accordance with the IAAR Regulation, the EEC includes students and employers. In 2019, 5 employers and 7 students participated in the accreditation procedures of Kyrgyz Universities.

In order to exchange experience and improve the quality assurance system, national and foreign experts actively participate in forums, congresses, conferences, round tables, workshops and trainings. IAAR experts are actively involved in the development of methodological guidelines on accreditation and rating procedures, publish articles, analytical materials in IAAR scientific, methodological and informational magazine "Education QA".

The professional activities of IAAR external experts are regulated by a set of regulatory documents, which define the ethical behavior of an expert and his competence in external quality assessment procedures. IAAR Expert's Declaration of

No Conflicts of Interest and the Expert's Code of Ethics are published on the IAAR website in the Experts section. Important tools for ensuring internal quality are annual surveys of educational organizations that have been accredited by an Independent Accreditation and Rating Agency and certified experts, which contribute to the continuous improvement of the Agency's activities. During the year, a survey of IAAR experts and accredited educational organizations is performed.

According to the developed Regulations on expert councils, the Agency forms Expert Councils in the following areas from the database of certified experts. The Agency delegates individual experts to participate in Kazakhstan and international events in the field of quality assessment.

In 2019, IAAR developed a program to improve the skills of existing experts and train new ones. According to the plan, the first seminar will be held in Nur-Sultan in February 2020.

IAAR is the organizer of a number of important international events in the field of quality assurance. Thus, on October 4-5, 2019, Independent accreditation and rating agency (IAAR) held the "III Central Asian International Forum on quality assurance of education" in Turkestan. The Forum was attended by the deputies of the Senate and Majilis of Parliament of Kazakhstan, Vice-Minister of education and science of the Republic of Kazakhstan - Karinov S. T., Vice-Minister of education and science of the Republic of Tajikistan Davlatzoda S. Kh., representatives of the Ministries of education and science of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Russian Federation, heads of international European networks for quality assurance in higher education, foreign accreditation bodies, educational institutions from more than **20** countries (Belgium, Hungary, Germany, Netherlands, Russia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Turkey, Latvia, Moldova, Egypt, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, etc.), Association of Universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan and more than **30** rectors of Kazakhstani and foreign Universities, students and employers.

In total, more than **600** people took part in the Forum. The III Central Asian International Forum on Quality Assurance has become a platform for exchanging

experience and establishing contacts between members of the scientific and educational community, the result of which is the signing of a number of Memorandums and Agreements on cooperation between educational organizations, scientific and international companies. The result of the effective work of the Forum was multilateral meetings of rectors of universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Uzbekistan and a number of other countries, in order to establish contacts, expand international cooperation and conclude Agreements, which is a continuation of the dialogue and the development of transnational education.

The Forum's productive work results in recommendations that will become a vector of positive changes in the quality of education and increase the competitiveness of educational services in the future. The Forum allowed to identify problems and identify ways to improve the quality of education in Central Asia and Europe; to promote qualitative institutional changes in the higher education system; to increase the competitiveness of educational services; to raise the level of training, demand and employment of graduates; to activate academic mobility and internationalization of education; to form an effective system of interaction between Universities, employers, and stakeholders based on the principles of balancing the interests of all participants in the educational process; to expand integration into the world educational space.

### **SWOT analysis of activities**

SWOT analysis reflects the implementation of strategic goals and serves as the basis for annual planning of IAAR activities (table 7).

**Table 7. SWOT-analysis**

<b>S (Strenght) - strengths</b>	<b>W (Weakness) – weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- recognition of IAAR in Kazakhstan and abroad;</li> <li>- IAAR membership in international quality assurance networks;</li> <li>- conducting international accreditation abroad;</li> <li>- cooperation with foreign partner agencies;</li> <li>-harmonization of IAAR standards with revised ESG and WFME standards;</li> <li>- cooperation with education stakeholders, state and non-state organizations within the framework of the Bologna and Turin processes;</li> <li>- monitoring the implementation of the recommendations of the EEC of accredited EO and / or accredited EP;</li> <li>- support of WFME in activities for the development of a national accreditation system for medical and pharmaceutical education;</li> <li>- conducting rating research in the field of higher education in the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic;</li> <li>- timely informing the public (website, media, publications, magazine "Education, etc.).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- little experience of participation in international projects for the development of education and quality assurance systems;</li> <li>- insufficient knowledge of the English language by the Agency's employees.</li> </ul>

<b>O (Opportunity) – favorable opportunities</b>	<b>T (Threat) – threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- changes and additions to the legislation in the field of education (2018), which opened up new opportunities in the field of assessing the quality of education of higher education institutions in Kazakhstan;</li> <li>- support for IAAR by international quality assurance networks (ENQA, INQAAHE, IREG, APQN, WFME);</li> <li>- growing interest in the activities of the IAAR from foreign universities;</li> <li>- access to national, European and international educational and research resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- instability of the financial and economic situation in the country and the world;</li> <li>- growing competition (including unfair competition) in the field of accreditation;</li> <li>- there is still no broad involvement of employers in the educational activities of educational organizations, as well as in the quality assessment procedure.</li> </ul>

The SWOT analysis made it possible to formulate in the form of a logically coordinated scheme the interaction of strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats for 2020 IAAR seeks to overcome the weaknesses identified in the SWOT analysis and neutralize possible threats with the help of strengths, to identify development directions that allow strengthening the Agency's position.

Thus, the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating, as a recognized international agency for quality assurance in education for 2019, carried out a great deal of work on external quality assurance of higher and postgraduate, vocational and technical, secondary education (international schools) in the Republic of Kazakhstan. Expanding the geographical coverage of accreditation activities, IAAR for the first time in 2019 accredited universities in Tajikistan, Russia and Moldova.

The Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating disseminates good practice for the development of the national system for ensuring the quality of

education in Kazakhstan using international experience based on improving the mechanisms of institutional and specialized assessment of the quality of education and annual professional development of employees together with the partners of the Agency. As part of its activities, IAAR pursues an active policy of continuous improvement of the quality of education by identifying and disseminating internationally and nationally the best practice and culture of quality.

The Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating actively engages stakeholders, carries out reporting through various mechanisms of internal quality assurance. The Agency annually reports on the results of post-accreditation monitoring of accredited educational organizations and / or educational programs. Members of the Accreditation Councils regularly participate in the discussion of important IAAR regulatory documents, including the IAAR Development Strategy, the IAAR Development Strategy Implementation Plan, the Agency's annual Activity Plan, appeal procedures, standards and accreditation criteria, and propose recommendations and proposals for improving the agency's performance.

IAAR annually sends to the MES RK and MES of the Kyrgyz Republic reports with recommendations for improving the national quality assurance system, also regularly informs MES RK about accredited educational organizations and / or educational programs, participates in the discussion of the most important issues of development and improvement of the quality of education and offers recommendations to improve it.

Ranking studies of the demand for universities, annually carried out by the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating, are aimed at providing informational support to applicants in order to choose a university and educational programs.

The independent agency for accreditation and rating IAAR in order to obtain recognition and the right to use the "IREG Approved" mark in 2019 passed an international audit by the IREG Observatory. Receiving the IREG Approved mark confirms compliance with the IAAR Ranking methodology and demonstrates that the



IAAR ranking research procedures and presentation of results meet high quality standards.

IAAR, as a full member of European, Asian and American networks and agencies for quality assurance in education and accreditation, actively develops further international cooperation, builds a constructive partnership, constantly expanding the boundaries of interaction with international partners and strengthening its position in the international educational space.

