

**AGENCY FOR ACCREDITATION OF EDUCATIONAL  
ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMS “SAPATTUU BILIM”**

**GUIDELINE FOR  
THE EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND  
PROGRAMS OF PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND HIGHER PROFESSIONAL  
EDUCATION IN THE KR**

The methodological guideline has been developed in accordance with the REGULATION on accreditation of educational organizations and programs of primary, secondary and higher professional education of the Sapattuu Bilim Agency and provides the recommendations to the external expert commission on the external assessment procedure, the requirements to the final report and the structure of the EEC's report. In addition, the Ethics Code of an external accreditation expert and a sample application of an external expert on the readiness for the accreditation activities are also provided.

Second edition, supplemented.

It is approved by the General Meeting of the Founders of the Agency for Accreditation of Educational Organizations and Programs "Sapattuu Bilim".

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction.....	3
2. External assessment procedure.....	3
3. Requirements to the final report.....	5
4. The structure of a report.....	7
5. The Ethics Code of an external accreditation expert.....	9
6. A statement of readiness for the expert accreditation activities.....	11

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The external assessment is carried out by the expert commission for accreditation of programs and educational organizations of professional education in order to draw up a final report on the accreditation of the educational organization/program. In order to achieve comparability of the reports and take into account all areas of the educational organization's activities relevant for the quality assessment, uniform requirements are made to the structure and the content of the reports.

The final report of the expert commission is a general, coordinated report of the whole commission on the done work. If anybody of the experts does not agree with the expert commission's viewpoint, his differing viewpoint with arguments can be reflected in the final report.

## 2. EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE OF THE ACCREDITATION

The educational organization submits an application for program/institutional accreditation to the Director of the Agency for Accreditation of Educational Organizations and Programs "Sapattuu Bilim". A copy of the state license and the attachments to the license to carry out educational activities and a brief description of the educational organization's activities shall be enclosed in the application.

The Sapattuu Bilim Agency and the educational organization make a decision to initiate the program/institutional accreditation procedure. A contract is concluded between the Sapattuu Bilim Agency and the educational organization to carry out the program/institutional accreditation and to assign the status of a candidate for accreditation.

The educational organization carries out a self-assessment according to the requirements established by the Sapattuu Bilim Agency and sends a self-assessment report to the Sapattuu Bilim Agency.

The Director of the Sapattuu Bilim Agency creates an expert commission to carry out an assessment of the educational program or the educational organization in the case of institutional accreditation. The expert commission consists of at least three experts for one program, who are educational program assessment specialists, including employers and representatives of students and a foreign expert.

Based on the self-assessment report of the educational program, the Sapattuu Bilim Agency develops recommendations on the necessity to improve the self-assessment materials or decides to carry out an external expert assessment, or due to incompliance with the standards and the criteria on the impossibility of accreditation and decides to terminate the contract.

If the accreditation is continued, the Chairman of the Expert Commission and the Sapattuu Bilim Agency agree with the educational organization on the periods of the accreditation and the commission's work plan.

The duration of the commission's visit is two days. At the end of the visit, the external expert commission prepares a detailed report on the educational organization assessment, which serves as a basis for the Accreditation Council to make a decision on accreditation.

When a positive decision is made, the Sapattuu Bilim Agency issues an order to award a certificate of program/institutional accreditation signed by the Director of the Sapattuu Bilim Agency to the educational organization specifying the validity period. Then the decision on accreditation of the educational program or the educational organization is sent to the Kyrgyz Republic Ministry of Education and Science and posted on the website of the Sapattuu Bilim Agency.

If there are certain shortcomings, the accreditation is issued for one year or for three years. Upon expiry of this period, the expert commission of the Sapattuu Bilim Agency carries out an inspection in terms of eliminating certain shortcomings with a visit to the educational organization.

If a positive decision is made, the accreditation period is extended up to five years. If certain shortcomings have not been eliminated within the specified period, the accreditation is suspended and the applicant organization has no right to apply for accreditation to the Sapattuu Bilim Agency for one year after the decision to withdraw the accreditation of the educational program has been made.

### **3. REQUIREMENTS TO THE FINAL REPORT**

The report starts with a title page, which is its cover. Its format shall be provided by the Accreditation Agency. The names and the surnames of the experts, a referent and the head of the expert commission shall be specified in the provided space. The signatures shall be opposite the names. The name of the educational organization and the accredited programs (in case of program accreditation), the type of accreditation (institutional or program) for which the final report is written shall be in the middle of the sheet, and the date of the report submission shall be at the

bottom of the sheet. The second sheet should have the contents of the report with pages of the sections. The next page should contain a list of acronyms. The font of the text in the report shall be 12 Times New Roman, the font of the sections' titles - 14 Times New Roman, they shall be in bold type. The line spacing in the text shall be single.

It is necessary to number all pages of the report. The limits of the text on the page: 2 centimeters on the left, right, top and bottom. All tables, graphs and illustrations of the report should be signed and numbered.

The final report should be provided by the expert commission within the periods agreed upon with the Accreditation Agency, but no later than two weeks after the end of the visit to the educational organization.

The structure of the report should strictly comply with the following structure.

## **THE STRUCTURE OF A REPORT**

The structure of the report shall look like this:

1. Introduction
2. Analysis of a self-assessment report
3. External assessment of a program or an educational organization
4. Results of an external assessment, recommendations and conclusions
5. Appendices

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

It is necessary to specify the name of an accredited educational organization/program, the dates and the goals of accreditation and the composition of an expert commission in the introduction.

### **2. ANALYSIS OF A SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT OF AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OR AN EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION**

This section shall analyze the observance of the accreditation standards by the educational organization/program based on the self-assessment report submitted by the educational organization.

The analysis should be critical, evidence-based and address all accreditation standards.

The evidence of compliance with the standards should be documented.

If additional materials have been requested for the self-assessment report, it is necessary to explain why they have been requested and whether it has improved the self-assessment report.

Attention should be paid to the strengths and the weaknesses of the *educational organization* or the program, and their validity. Any unclear issues should be recorded to be clarified on site. Special attention should be paid to weaknesses, as they are the initial material for formulating further recommendations to improve the quality of the accredited program or the work of the educational organization.

Further, it is necessary to assess the observance of the accreditation standards based on this self-assessment report: “observed”, “observed with comments” or “not observed”.

Special attention should be paid to the standards, for which the assessments of the experts and the educational organization differ. Provide your assessment of the weaknesses and the strengths of the program or the educational organization in the self-assessment report.

Based on the assessment of the standards observation, the specific objectives for the external assessment should be formulated during the visit to the educational organization (clarify, find out, etc.).

At the end of the section, it is necessary to assess the self-assessment report: “*good*”, “*satisfactory*” or “*unsatisfactory*”.

It is better to start writing the final report already at the stage (when the accredited organization submits the report) and record the results of the self-assessment report’s analysis in it. This will save much time, improve the external assessment’s quality and simplify the experts’ work.

### 3. EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT OF A PROGRAM OR AN EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION

This section should provide a detailed description of the expert commission’s visit to the educational organization in order to draw up the final report on accreditation.

The experts should specify:

- what was the object of the assessment;
- the methods of the assessment (observation, interviews, attending classes, etc.);
- when and what materials have been received, and it will be useful to specify the type of information and the source (for example, the interactive methodology of a lesson has been demonstrated to the experts during the observation of the lesson, etc.);
- the periods of the visit to the *educational organization*;
- strengths and weaknesses of the program or the educational organization;
- the evidence of the observation and the extent to which each standard is observed.

When writing the report, it is recommended to use a specific set of definitions and designations. In addition, it is necessary to specify only those facts and viewpoints that are relevant for making accreditation decisions. Each topic of the report should be in a separate paragraph (for example, the results of the students' interview separately from the interview of the educational organization's management, TS and ESS, as well as other stakeholders).

When carrying out accreditation and writing the final report, the expert commission shall strictly comply with the accreditation rules: to be as objective and unbiased as possible in assessing the programs or the educational organization and to remember that the independent external expert assessment is of great importance not only for the accreditation of the program or the educational organization but also for their further qualitative development.

#### **4. RESULTS OF AN EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

In the section "Results of the external assessment, recommendations and conclusions", the experts provide their assessment of the self-assessment report, the strengths and the weaknesses, observance of the accreditation standards, recommendations and a draft accreditation decision. Specify all data on which the conclusions have been based or provide a link to where the data can be found. If the experts use formulas or data from other sources for comparison, it is also necessary to specify them or to provide a link on how to find them.

Examination of the educational organization's self-assessment report along with its visit is a major component of the expert commission's work and the basis for drawing up the final report. The expert commission pays great attention to the compliance of the data provided in the self-assessment report with the actual situation on site.

The conclusion on this issue should be made based on the aggregated results of the interview of all main participants in the training process (management, teaching staff and educational support staff of the educational organization, students, their parents and social partners) as well as the data on attendance, an analysis of a training and methodological base and material and technical facilities, human resource capacity of the educational organization.

In addition, the state of the quality management system of the educational organization should be taken into account. It is also necessary to pay special attention to the weaknesses and the strengths of the program or the educational organization.

In case of discrepancy between the actual situation and the data in the self-assessment report of the educational organization, the received result should be emphasized and special attention should be paid to it.

The experts provide an agreed reasonable assessment of the compliance of the educational organization's activities or the program with each accreditation standard. If the expert(s) disagree(s) with the overall assessment, it is necessary to provide his/her (their) differing viewpoint with arguments.

The conclusions should be made for each standard – “observed” (with insignificant comments) or “not observed” (there are significant comments). They should follow logically from the results of the external assessment.

A compulsory part of the section is a substantiated recommendation to the expert commission to make a particular decision on the accreditation of a program or an educational organization.

If the commission fails to reach a consensus on any issue, and one or more experts have a different viewpoint, it is important to express this viewpoint in this section of the report as a differing viewpoint with arguments.

The expert commission formulates the recommendations to improve the quality of the educational program and to develop the educational organization. The recommendations should be aimed at improving the identified weaknesses of the educational organization or the program, as well as a more complete and better observation of the accreditation standards.

At the end of the section:

- evaluate the self-assessment report;
- specify the strengths of each standard;
- point out the weaknesses of each standard;
- assess the implementation of each standard;
- recommend the proposals to improve the quality of the educational organization/program;
- make recommendations for making an accreditation decision:

		<b>Results of the compliance with the standards</b>		
		<b>Observed</b>	<b>Partially observed</b>	<b>Not observed</b>
<b>Examination of the self-</b>	<b>Confirmed</b>	Accreditation	Conditional accreditation	Refusal in accreditation

<b>assessment report</b>	<b>Partially confirmed</b>	Conditional accreditation	Conditional accreditation	Refusal in accreditation
	<b>Not confirmed</b>	Refusal in accreditation	Refusal in accreditation	Refusal in accreditation

## 5. APPENDICES

This section contains the primary data based on which the report has been drawn up. In the case of the questionnaires, it is sufficient to provide aggregated results. It is also recommended that the minutes of the interviews and the class observation sheets be included. If the statistical materials collected by government agencies or international organizations have been used, a printed version of these materials specifying the sources is also compulsory.

Each appendix should start with a new page, have a title and be numbered in ascending order (for example, Appendix No. 1, Appendix No. 2, etc.). It is recommended to minimize the number of the pages in the appendix for a better overview of the material.

### THE ETHICS CODE OF THE EXTERNAL ACCREDITATION EXPERT

This code establishes the basic rules of conduct for each external expert during the assessment of the educational programs.

The activity of an external expert is carried out in accordance with the Regulation on accreditation of educational organizations and programs of primary, secondary and higher professional education and in accordance with the standards and the criteria for the accreditation of an educational organization and educational programs, approved by the Accreditation Council of the Sapattuu Bilim Agency.

The expert must have the competence required to assess the educational organization and the program (programs) and undergo special training. The experts involved in the external assessment of the educational program (programs) are required to comply with high ethical standards: professionalism, honesty, impartiality and fairness.

#### The requirements for the expert:

##### 1. Professionalism

The expert must be a specialist in the relevant subject area. The members of the external expert commission assume responsibility for ensuring the high-quality assessment of the

educational program (programs) according to the standards and the criteria of the Sapattuu Bilim Agency.

The expert must build his relations with other external experts and the employees of the accredited educational organization based on mutual respect, not use statements and expressions disparaging honor and dignity of another expert and the representatives of the educational organization, where the assessment is carried out.

## **2. Resolving the conflict of interests**

Prior to the inclusion in the external expert commission, the expert must inform the Sapattuu Bilim Agency about the existence of circumstances preventing his participation in the commission's work.

The circumstances preventing the expert's participation in the assessment of the educational program (a cluster of programs) and the organization may be: current or former employment in this educational organization, providing advisory services on the accreditation process of the assessed program, former or current negotiations on possible employment, training in this educational organization and financial interests.

During the external examination of the educational organization or the program (a cluster of programs), the members of the external expert commission should voluntarily detach from meetings and decisions that can create a conflict of interests, and report on all contradictions of their personal interests with the interests of accreditation of the educational organization/program (a cluster of programs) that can affect the objectivity of the external examination procedure.

The members of the external expert commission should not accept monetary remuneration or other gifts from the educational organization, which can affect the result of the examination.

During the external examination of the educational organization/program (a cluster of programs), the expert should not perform actions exceeding his authority.

Prior to the start of the external examination procedure, the commission members sign a statement confirming the absence of a conflict of interests and send it to Sapattuu Bilim Agency.

## **3. Confidentiality**

An important principle of work is confidentiality. All information and documentation received by the expert is confidential and must be used only for the accreditation of the educational program (a cluster of programs).

The members of the external expert commission assume the obligation not to disclose confidential information. The received information cannot be transferred to third parties and must not be disclosed without the consent of the educational organization and the Sapattuu Bilim Agency.

The working documents of the experts are internal working documents and are not subject to dissemination. The content of the documents is the intellectual property of Sapattuu Bilim Agency.

The assessments contained in the working documents are not communicated to the representatives of the educational organization.

### **A STATEMENT OF READINESS FOR THE EXPERT ACCREDITATION ACTIVITIES**

I \_\_\_\_\_ declare my readiness to participate as an expert in the accreditation work carried out by the Agency for Accreditation of Educational Organizations and Programs “Sapattuu Bilim” and I am ready to perform the following tasks:

- review the self-assessment report of educational organizations and programs and make a preliminary conclusion (assessment) based on the results of the review (within 2 pages);
- participate in:
  - the visits to the educational organization;
  - the discussions held by the expert group;
  - the preparation of the final report of the expert group (within 2 weeks after the visit to the educational organization);
  - the re-examination of the data in case of the comments from the Sapattuu Bilim Accreditation Agency or the educational organization’s disagreement with the conclusion;
  - the training and the briefing conducted by the Sapattuu Bilim Accreditation Agency;
  - the observance of the requirements made by the Sapattuu Bilim Accreditation Agency to the members of the expert group.

I undertake to be responsible and objective in the accreditation process.

Bias in the accreditation process can be if:

- the expert has worked as a teacher/master (or another position) in an accredited educational organization for the last 2 years;

- the expert is currently employed by the accredited educational organization as a consultant, an expert or another position;
- the expert is in a conflict situation (legal proceedings) with the accredited educational organization;
- the expert has kinship or other close personal ties with any of the staff of the accredited educational organization.

I have read the Ethics Code approved by the Sapattuu Bilim Accreditation Agency and I undertake to adhere to the high ethical standards adopted by the agency: professionalism, honesty, impartiality and fairness.

I guarantee that I will handle the documents provided as part of the accreditation process confidentially.

I agree that my name will be published in connection with the final assessment.

I understand that the credibility and the prestige of the educational programs and organizations' accreditation in the Kyrgyz Republic are strengthened and destroyed depending on how the experts behave during the accreditation and outside the accreditation.

Full name\_\_\_\_\_

Signature, date