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**FUNCTIONING AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE SYSTEM OF
ENSURING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES
AND THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN HIGHER
EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS**

Introduction

The internal quality assurance system is a set of organizational structures, procedures, processes, resources, and distribution of responsibilities ensuring continuous improvement of the quality of educational programs, educational establishment activities, and obtaining the appropriate degree and qualifications of higher education. The quality assurance system of educational activities and higher education at Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University is based on the principles of the Constitution of Ukraine, the laws of Ukraine such as the Education Act [5], Higher Education Act [6], on Professional Education, on Scientific and Scientific-Technical Activities, the Decree of the President of Ukraine on the National Strategy for the Development of Education in Ukraine for the period up to 2021, Resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on Approval of Licensing Conditions for the Educational Establishments Activities Implementation, Issues of Academic and Teaching Staff Advanced Training, the University Charter, Development Strategies and Internationalization of the University.

Higher education establishments in Ukraine serve as the main training centers for specialists' practical activities in various areas of the economy and social sphere of society. Therefore, the normal functioning of all social institutions and the formation of a social state depends on the quality of staff training. To train highly qualified employees, it is necessary to carry out this training following standards, compliance with which allow achieving a high level of specialists' training, because these norms and standards are established in accordance with the socio-economic situation of the state [3, 4].

The issue of the quality of higher education is one of the most significant in higher education in Ukraine. Among the leading scientists who study various directions, means, and ways of developing the quality of education in the process of reforming Ukrainian higher education, we can highlight B. Chyzhevskiy, S.

Dombrovska, V. Horbatenko, S. Vavreniuk, E. Krasniakov, M. Oks, K. Oleksenko, V. Tsvietkov, and others [1]. It should be noted that only a comprehensive assessment of the education quality achievement problems, arising in the process of reforming higher education and studying international experience, can lead to consistency and logic of all processes in the educational space.

Purpose, scope and research method

The purpose of the investigation is to comprehensively study the functioning of the quality of educational activities and higher education at Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University and in the Ukrainian higher education system, as well as to determine possible ways of its improvement. Studying this issue, a set of theoretical methods is used to implement a certain research goal, in particular, analysis, synthesis, comparison, generalization in order to analyze the problem and outline ways to solve it.

Research results

One of the main regulatory documents at Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University is Regulation on the Quality Assurance System of Educational Activities and Higher Education at Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University [2], regulating the issues of quality assurance of educational activities and higher education, following the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (the ESG) (2015) and other documents of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the European University Association (EUA), European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), European Student International Bureau (ESIB), the Methodological recommendations on the institutional structure of the internal quality assurance system of educational activities and higher education in the context of the Erasmus+ project (QUAERE), National Educational Glossary: Higher Education, as well as on the University internal regulations, such as the Regulation on the Organization of the Educational Process at Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University, the Regulation on the Scientific and Methodological Council at Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University, the Regulation on Division of Monitoring the Quality of Education at Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University, the Regulation on the Student's Education with the Individual Studying Schedule at Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University, the Regulation on the Academic Council at Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University, the Regulation on the Procedure for the Competitive Admission of Academic and Teaching Staff at Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University and the entering into an employment agreements (contracts), Anti-Corruption Program at Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University, the Regulation on Student's Academic Achievements Assessment Criteria and Procedures at Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University, following the

European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, the Code of Academic Integrity, the Regulation on the Annual Evaluation Ranking of Academic and Teaching Staff Scientific Activities at Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University “Scientist of the Year”, Development Strategy for Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University, Internationalization Strategy for Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University, the Regulation on the Procedure and Conditions for Student’s Academic Disciplines Selection at Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University, the Regulation on Prevention and Counteraction to Bullying at Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University.

The key concepts forming the terminological context of the quality assurance of educational activities and higher education problem are such as the higher education establishment autonomy, quality assurance of higher education, quality assurance measures, students, indicator, qualification, project team leader (guarantor of the educational program), competence, criterion, licensing, educational (educational-professional, educational-scientific or educational-creative) program, quality assurance policy of educational activities and higher education at higher education establishments, quality assurance procedure, learning outcomes, the higher education standards, internal quality assurance system, higher education quality monitoring system, higher education quality system, student-centered learning, quality of higher education, quality of educational activities.

The quality system of higher education at the University is based on the following principles as the autonomy of the University, as responsible for the quality assurance of educational activities and higher education, university staff awareness of responsibilities for the quality of higher education and educational activities, recognition of the need to develop strategies, policies and procedures for ensuring the higher education and educational activities quality at the university; orientation to the current and future consumers’ needs, the desire to exceed their expectations, management decisions based on the current, complete and objective information analysis, rejection of authoritarian management style and transition to leadership; the staff involvement to achieve the University goals by delegating more responsibilities to lower levels of management, continuous staff training; management of the University’s educational activities and related resources as a system of interrelated processes, cooperation with all stakeholders; continuous quality improvement of education, educational activities and the education quality management system at the University.

The University cooperates with all interested parties, including:

–bodies that manage in higher education (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance, Scientific and Methodological Council of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, etc);

– student's suppliers (establishments of secondary, vocational (vocational-technical), professional pre-higher and higher education, other education establishments);

– graduates, employers (industry and territorial employers' organizations, scientific and educational establishments; enterprises, organizations, institutions, etc.), external partners of the University;

– university staff (academic and teaching, support, administrative, etc.);

– students and their parents;

– student self-government and other public organizations.

According to the University development and internationalization strategies, the main goals of the functioning of the internal quality assurance system of educational activities and the higher education are:

– approval of the University as a leading educational and research center, formation of stable confidence in the University's higher education degrees in all educational programs in Ukraine and abroad;

– creating conditions for students' professional and personal growth, forming competencies that determine the graduates competitiveness in Ukraine and the world, capable of effective professional activity and ready for constant self-improvement, social and professional mobility;

– creating conditions for the harmonious personal development, patriot of Ukraine, active citizen, formation of a quality culture at the University as the basis for the University's and its graduates' competitiveness;

– creating a modern infrastructure and management system that will ensure and improve the quality of educational activities and higher education, compliance with national licensing conditions for the provision of educational services, state, European and international educational standards;

– formation of an intellectual exchange environment, communication, creation of conditions for the comprehensive development of academic and teaching staff, and students; providing understanding, consideration and coordination of the needs (goals, requirements and expectations) of students, stakeholders, and society.

The main objectives of the internal quality assurance system of education at the University are:

– implementation of the University's policy on the quality assurance of education and educational activities;

– organization and implementation of the quality monitoring of higher education and educational activities;

– expertise and current monitoring of educational programs;

– organization and conduct of monitoring and socio-psychological studies of target groups of applicants, parents, students, teachers, graduates, employers to determine external and internal requirements for the quality of education, ways to improve educational activities;

- ensuring the functioning and continuous improvement of the University’s information system for an effective education quality management;
- analysis and generalization of the University quality state of education and educational activities;
- implementation of educational and methodological advisory activities on quality assurance of higher education;
- ensuring correlation of the tasks of the University internal quality assurance system with the procedures of external quality assurance of higher education in Ukraine.

The institutional structure of the internal quality assurance system of educational activities and higher education is a set of the University structural divisions (actors) ensuring the quality of educational activities and higher education through the execution of the assigned functions.

The purpose of functioning of the institutional structure of the University quality assurance system of educational activities and the higher education is to create and implement conditions for high-quality training of highly-qualified specialists of the appropriate level and program subject area, competitive in the labor market, competent, responsible, fluent in the profession, oriented in related fields of activity, capable of effective professional activity at the level of world standards, ready for constant professional growth, social and professional mobility.

The functioning of the institutional structure of the University internal quality assurance system of educational activities and higher education is based on the following principles:

- recognition of the need to develop the educational programs quality assurance strategies, policies and procedures implemented at the University;
- making scientifically based management decisions to develop the quality of educational activities and higher education based on the analysis of complete and objective information;
- extreme consideration of the quality requirements of higher education by all stakeholders.

Proper functioning of the quality assurance system of educational activities and the higher education at the University is implemented by distributing decision-making and evaluation powers between the guarantors of educational programs, heads of departments, faculties or educational and research institutes, the University structural divisions and ensuring the students’ participation and their self-government bodies, employers and alumni associations in the work of the quality assurance system of educational activities and higher education.

The working body of the Academic Council of the University is the Scientific and Methodological Council of the University responsible for organizing, ensuring and controlling the internal quality assurance system.

The institutional structure of the University internal quality assurance system of educational activities and higher education is built up of five levels, among which powers and responsibilities are distributed to perform certain functions of relevant procedures and tasks, namely:

The fifth level is the level of strategic management (rector, Academic Council of the University, vice-rectors according to the distribution of responsibilities). Functions and powers comprise in making management decisions to ensure and improve the quality assurance of educational activities and higher education, developing strategies, policies and procedures to the quality assurance of educational programs that are implemented at the University.

The fourth level is the level of operational management (advisory and working bodies, Division of Monitoring the Quality of Education, Education Division, Educational and Methodological Division, Postgraduate and Doctoral Studies Division, International and Regional Affairs Division, Informational Education and Production Center, University Press Center, Library, Legal Service, General Division, Personnel Office, Financial and Economic Divisions, etc.). Functions and powers consist in the development, examination, testing, monitoring of academic policy, university-wide decisions, documents, procedures, projects on the quality of education.

The third level is the level of implementation and administration of educational programs (structural divisions that carry out educational activities including faculties, educational and research institutes, Academic Council of the faculty or educational and research institute, Scientific and Methodological Council of the faculty or educational and research institute, student self-government bodies, industry councils of employers). Functions and powers involve in the application of the educational process according to the relevant educational programs, annual quality monitoring of education, educational activities and educational programs and the needs of the sectoral labor market.

The second level is the level of direct implementation of educational programs (departments, program guarantors, working groups and support groups, teachers who provide educational components and students' initiative groups in the educational program, employers). Functions and powers consist in educational and methodological support of the educational process, current quality monitoring of education, educational activities and educational programs.

The first level is the level of students' expectations (university students and their initiative groups, regardless of their affiliation to programs). Functions and powers consist in direct participation in the University educational process and assessment of the educational environment from the point of view of comprehensive personal development possibility and acquisition of program learning results.

The university carries out educational activities based on student-centered learning, teaching and assessment. Student-centered learning and teaching is a

process focused on the formation of such a model of learning at the University, in which the key competencies the student should master are aimed at meeting his own needs and ensuring his demand in the labor market, high ability to find employment.

Student-centered learning is an approach to organizing the educational process that involves:

- students encouraging to play the role of autonomous and responsible subjects of the educational process;
- creating an educational environment focused on meeting the students’ needs and interests, in particular providing opportunities for forming an individual educational trajectory;
- forming the educational process on the principles of mutual respect and partnership between participants in the educational process.

The University guarantees that the procedure for considering students complaints is fully implemented.

Student-centered training at the University is realised through the students participation in the development and updating of educational programs, the students participation in the administrative bodies of the faculty or educational and research institute and the University, ensuring the procedure for forming students individual learning trajectory, ensuring the choice of academic disciplines within the limits provided for by the relevant educational program and curriculum, in an amount that is not less than 25% of the total number of ECTS credits provided for the corresponding level of higher education, the ability to study according to an individual studying schedule, the ability to participate in students academic mobility programs, the ability to simultaneously study according to different educational programs, the availability of objective and transparent criteria for evaluating the students’ learning outcomes, the availability of regulated procedures for considering students appeals, the possibility of self-assessment and self-control of learning results, students’ assessment of the educational process organization and the quality of academic and teaching staff teaching activities, etc., opportunities for educational services by students with special needs, access to educational information resources, students social infrastructure for organizing and supporting the life and recreation.

The quality of higher education at the University is ensured within the competence and through the interaction of such internal and external stakeholders:

Internal sides	External sides
Academic Council of the University Scientific and Methodological Council Rector's Office Division of Monitoring the Quality of Education Academic and Teaching staff Trade Union Organization	The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine State Administration Employers' Association Partners of the Educational Establishment Local Community and Local Self-Government Bodies

Student Self-Government	Alumni Association
<i>Internal parties develop and implement the policy of the University's higher education quality assurance system through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external parties.</i>	

The University quality assurance system of educational activities and higher education provides for the following procedures fulfillment:

- shaping strategies, policies, procedures and practices for academic quality assurance;
- implementation of strategic developments related to quality within the framework of its assurance procedures, as well as their improvement in accordance with the University's development strategy;
- formation of an academic quality culture at the University;
- define policies and procedures related to the development, monitoring, and periodic review of educational programs, as well as documents accompanying these processes (templates, guidelines, etc.).
- preparation of recommendations on management decisions to improve the quality of educational activities and higher education;
- study of international experience in the functioning of internal quality assurance systems and make suggestions for improving the current quality assurance system of educational activities and higher education at the University;
- participation in strategic planning for continuous improvement of the quality assurance of educational activities and higher education at the University;
- processes development and maintenance for evaluating the students learning outcomes at the University, the quality of the academic and teaching staff work, and the development of documents accompanying these processes (templates, methodological recommendations, etc);
- initiating the organization and analysis of selective quality control of both the current students learning outcomes (during the semester in which the academic discipline is studied) and the level of retained knowledge (rector's control);
- constant updating of funds tools for assessing the students retained knowledge in all educational programs;
- improving the forms and technologies of university graduates certification, analyzing the results of students' final control and developing recommendations for improving the quality of higher education;
- initiation, organization and conduct of the University internal quality monitoring of educational activities, reports analysis on self-assessment of educational programs, preparation of reports and recommendations;
- surveys organization (questionnaires, assessments, etc.) of internal and external stakeholders on the quality of educational process organization;

–formation of a unified database on the quality monitoring results of educational activities and higher education at the University.

The main directions of the quality of educational activities and the higher education at the University are: developing strategies, policies, procedures, and training for academic quality assurance (rector, Academic Council, Scientific and Methodological Council), analysis of the students' annual assessment results: the current, modular, final, qualifying, deferred (rector module test), the educational programs periodic review for training specialists in a program subject area, the organization of the educational process of the structural division, including students independent work, monitoring the publication regularity of the students and academic and teaching staff evaluation results on the University website, information stands, and in any other way (deans of faculties or directorate of educational and research institutes, Academic Councils of faculties or educational and research institutes, Scientific and Methodological Councils of faculties or educational and research institutes); the monitoring of types and results of academic and teaching staff professional activity at the University, organizational support for the development and implementation of educational programs, and educational and methodological support of the educational process of students' training for the first and the second level of higher education, the academic staff quality control by periodic monitoring plans for teaching staff advanced training, the introduction of new forms and methods of teachers professional activity and competence development evaluation (Educational and Methodological Division); organizational support for the development and implementation of educational programs, and educational and methodological support of the educational process of students' training for the third level of higher education, control over the implementation of educational and research components of the students preparation for the third level of higher education, planning and improvement of the participants' scientific activities in the educational process, the planning, organization and execution of scientific events (Postgraduate and Doctoral Studies Division); organization and coordination of the structural divisions' educational work at the University for the educational programs at all levels of education, control over the educational process organization in the departments, and faculties or educational and research institutes, organization of and participation in the implementation of systematic educational process monitoring, the analyses of specific students control measures, module control, course paper writing, examination sessions and certification, control over the organization of all types of students trainings, networking with the training bases and control procedures for the appointment of students scholarships (Education Division); the collection and analysis of information about the prevention and detection of academic plagiarism system effectiveness in teaching staff and students' scientific works at the University (Academic Integrity Committee); satisfaction results monitoring with internal and external stakeholders of the educational activities and higher

education quality, the educational programs periodic review for training specialists in a program subject area (external stakeholders, students, the guarantors of the educational programs, heads of departments, Scientific and Methodological Councils of faculties or educational and research institutes, Scientific and Methodological Council of the University); organization and participation in conducting internal quality monitoring of educational activities and higher education (Scientific and Methodological Councils of faculties or educational and research institutes, Scientific and Methodological Council of the University); monitoring of the functioning and improvement of the information system components of the University for the effective educational process management (Informational Education and Production Center, Press Center).

Conclusions

The quality assurance policy defines the ways and practical means used to achieve high efficiency of the internal quality assurance system and contribute to public recognition of the University's autonomy right. The quality policy is implemented in conjunction with the general University policy and is aimed at ensuring and maintaining a consistently high University reputation as a reliable provider of educational services in the students training who meet national and international quality standards.

The organization of the quality assurance of educational activities and higher education at the University is based on the main principles of multipurposeness, student-centricity, objectivity, transparency and information openness, consistency and systematicity, avoiding conflicts of interest, tolerance and discrimination prevention, ensuring the principles of academic integrity and freedom, and monitoring the manifestations of academic dishonesty, involving all interested parties, subsidiarity (coordination of delegated authority and responsibility). The organization of the University internal quality assurance of higher education is focused on the goals of higher education defined for the European Area, namely the education of an active civic position, preparation for the future profession, personal and ideological development, new knowledge development. Monitoring and evaluation of the functioning of the University internal quality assurance system of educational activities and higher education involves periodic monitoring of relevant indicators and conducting an assessment of the indicators based effectiveness on monitoring data by comparing the results obtained with their target values.

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Abstract

The article considers quality assurance system of higher education (internal quality assurance system) and educational activities at the higher education establishments as one of the components of the quality assurance system of higher education in Ukraine. The assurance of higher education system integrated into the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area is one of the higher education system's reforming goals in Ukraine. For the full functioning of the higher education internal quality assurance system at a higher education establishment, the paper defines the structures of the quality assurance system of educational activities and higher education, specifies the content of quality control procedures, and distributes areas of responsibility for the internal higher education quality assurance system functioning. Division of Monitoring the Quality of Education plays an essential role concentrating the functions of the quality assurance of higher education at the university level, in particular defining the subject areas of its activities and are aimed at solving specific and diverse tasks and issues of interaction between individual divisions of the higher education establishment, which require specific actions, planning and organizing quality audits, compliance audits and the effectiveness of structural divisions, analyzing monitoring studies results, preparing audit reports, conclusions, recommendations, etc. This function implementation is possible only in cooperation with all structural divisions of the higher education establishment, which are full-fledged elements of the internal quality assurance system of educational activities and higher education at the higher education establishment.

Keywords: educational activities quality, education quality monitoring, higher education establishment, higher education quality, institutional structure.