

Evaluation Report and Certification Recommendation

Certification at the

Center of Excellence, Astana, Kazakhstan

In-service training programmes “Effective Teaching and Learning”, “Teacher Leadership in School” and “Teacher Leadership in Pedagogical Community” for pedagogic staff and “In-service training programme for the head staff of the comprehensive secondary schools of the Republic of Kazakhstan”

Procedure

Date of Contract: 9th April 2018

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Standing Expert Committee: Humanities

ACQUIN Secretariat: Dr. Stefan Handke

Decisions of the Accreditation Commission: 10th December 2018

Members of the expert group:

- **Sandugash Bassanova**, German Teacher, Kazakh German University, Almaty
- **Alf Hammelrath**, Former Senior Inspector of schools in the district of Münster
- **Dr. Makhabbat Kenzhegaliyeva**, University of Leipzig, Faculty of Education, Institute of Educational Sciences
- **Professor Dr. Katharina Maag Merki**, University of Zurich, Theory and Empirical Research on Educational Processes in Schools
- **Professor Dr. Dirk Richter**, University of Potsdam, Educational Research in the Educational Sciences

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The **evaluation report** of the expert group is based on the self-evaluation documentation of the Center of Excellence and two online-discussions with the heads of the training programmes as well as administration and management of the Center of Excellence in Astana. In addition, a representative of the ACQUIN secretariat visited the facilities of the Center of Excellence.

Evaluation criteria are based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) in the official version valid at the time the contract is concluded. At the same time the national context, particularly the national rules regulating the establishment of training programmes, has been taken into account. Since the assessed training programmes are not full degree programmes (Bachelor, Master or PhD), the standards of the ESG are not fully applicable; deviations are highlighted in the report.

1. General information

1.1. Short portrait of the institution

The Center of Excellence is a state funded public institution in the field of education in the Republic of Kazakhstan. In accordance with the order of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2011, the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan approved the conceptual approaches to the development of the training system and professional development of Kazakhstani teachers. The AEO "Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools" (NIS) was authorized to establish a Center of Excellence and develop level programmes of in-service training for the pedagogic staff of the Republic of Kazakhstan based on the best local and global pedagogical experience together with foreign partners. The AEO "Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools" was assigned to develop the in-service training programme for the head staff of the comprehensive secondary schools of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Status and purpose of the Center of Excellence

According to the decision of the Board of Trustees of the AEO "Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools", the Private Entity "Center of Excellence" (CoE) was established on June 15, 2011. The aim of the Center is to implement continuous professional development and training of the pedagogic staff considering the best local and international experience. Therefore, the CoE contributes to the professional development of the pedagogic staff of the Republic of Kazakhstan by developing educational programmes of the in-service training, arranging and conducting training, monitoring and post course training, as well as methodical support of teachers. The Charter of the Center was approved by the decision of the AEO "Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools" on August 5, 2011 that was registered in the Department of Justice of Astana of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan on August 23, 2011.

Organization of the Center of Excellence

The organization structure of the CoE consists of the central office and 15 branches. Besides the headquarters in Astana, the CoE has branches in 15 cities in Kazakhstan, such as in Almaty, Shymkent or Karaganda. Like that, the organization is represented in all regions of the country. The central office in Astana includes executive staff (5 people) and 10 departments (65 people). These departments are responsible for Educational Programmes, Methodological Work, Information Technology, Organization of Educational Processes, Translating Advanced Pedagogical Experience, Organizational Issues, Economic Planning, Accounting, Coordination and Analytics, and NIS Teachers Professional Development.

The total staff size of the CoE is 163 people including 66 certified trainers. The CoE employs 22 people with degrees (18 Candidates of Sciences, 4 PhD), and 49 people with Master's degrees in science. Among the employees of the CoE, there are seven holders of so-called Bolashak International Scholarship established by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan who graduated from the leading foreign universities.

Services of the Center of Excellence

The CoE has independently and jointly with the University of Cambridge (Great Britain) developed more than 127 in-service training programmes for the pedagogic staff of the Republic of Kazakhstan. More than 7.433 trainers have been trained in order to implement the in-service training for the pedagogic staff including 1.249 trainers for Level Programmes and 55 trainers for Principal Programme. Since 2012 till now, the Center has trained over 120 thousand pedagogical staff countrywide including 29.447 teacher in Level Programmes, 4 211 in the Principal Programme.

1.2. General information on the assessed programmes

In order to provide solutions for weaknesses in teachers' education in Kazakhstan, the Center of Excellence has developed a great number of in-service training programmes since 2012. The in-service training system of teachers had not been upgraded for many decades in Kazakhstan and has been characterized by poor logistics, learning and teaching support, no feedback and advanced works for introducing innovations. This predetermined the necessity of bringing the in-service training system of teachers in line with requirements of time, making it adaptive and able to respond to the modern and future needs in education development.

The experience of Kazakhstan's participation in PISA-2009 and TIMSS-2008 has shown that Kazakhstani schoolchildren are good in performing reproductive tasks, which indicate the degree to which they have learnt the subject knowledge and skills. However, their knowledge is lower when performing practical tasks and in real-life situations. The results of a diagnostic study that AEO "Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools" together with the Faculty of Education of the University of Cambridge conducted at schools in Kazakhstan became a real basis for developing level programmes of in-service training for the teaching staff of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

From these programmes, the following four are part of this certification procedure: "Effective Teaching and Learning", "Teacher Leadership in School" and "Teacher Leadership in Pedagogical Community" for pedagogic staff and "In-service training programme for the head staff of the comprehensive secondary schools of the Republic of Kazakhstan". The programmes share some features, which are outlined in the following table:

Location	Republic of Kazakhstan
Date of introduction	Since 2012
Faculty/ Department	Department of educational programmes
number of terms prescribed for the completion of a course	296 to 640 academic hours (one academic hour = 45 minutes)
Number of ECTS-Credits	Not applicable
Number of study places	Approximately 1.000 to 3.000 teachers annually
Target group(s)	Teachers of comprehensive schools; principals of schools
Entry requirements	Higher pedagogical education, teaching experience of at least seven years or higher technical and vocational education, teaching experience of at least nine years
Study form	Full-time and distance learning (2 face to face stages and practice in school)
Tuition fee	At the expense of the government budget

2. Description of facts and evaluation (according to ESG)

The quality of the courses and the compliance with European standards („Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area“(ESG)) are assessed by the expert group. General statements express findings for all programmes. Specific issues for individual programmes are only mentioned in case of deviations from general findings.

2.1. Policy for quality assurance

ESG Standard 1.1: Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.

Findings

This Quality Assurance Policy of the Private Entity "Center of Excellence"(hereinafter referred to as the CoE) is developed in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Education", the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On the Status of Nazarbayev University", "Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools" and "Nazarbayev Foundation", normative legal acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan in education and science, the Development Strategy of the Autonomous Educational Organization "Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools", approved by the Higher Board of Trustees on April 18, 2013, CoE Charter and other normative documents regulating its activities.

Policy for Quality Assurance

The Quality Assurance Policy includes the CoE's mission and vision, strategic objective and tasks, principles and values underlying its activities, general vision for the development of skills of teachers and heads of educational organizations. The Quality Assurance Policy is aimed at implementing CoE strategic objective and tasks in the field of further education, improving the professional development of teachers and heads of educational institutions, ensuring high competitiveness of the CoE in the domestic and foreign educational services market. The Quality Assurance Policy is adopted by the meeting of the Methodological Council and approved by the order of the CoE Director.

Mission, Vision and Strategy

The CoE seeks to ensure the high quality of further education for systematic and continuous professional development of teachers and heads of educational organizations in Kazakhstan. With this mission, the CoE wants to become an internationally recognized organization of further education, which implements innovative and competitive educational programmes for in-service

training courses. Strategically, the management focuses on the development and formation of an efficiently functioning CoE model as the leading centre for generating knowledge and innovations in the field of education and science, accumulating and transmitting the best domestic and foreign pedagogical theories and best practices. As an organization, the CoE has a set of values, which influence the governance of the center. These cover the principles of tolerance, equality, transparency, academic freedom, autonomy and self-management, collegial decision-making or social responsibility.

The CoE values underpin its work, since team commitment and tolerance, legitimacy and social accountability, team spirit and distributed leadership, innovative practice, orientation to science and practice, transparency of all procedures, collaboration, cooperation and partnership are visible in the governance structure and the outputs of the CoE.

The administrative and management apparatus, employees and trainees are committed to the principles of the Quality Assurance Policy, promote the real integration of science, education and practice, and bear mutual responsibility for their implementation. The center has concepts on gender equality and the promotion of equal opportunities.

Finally, competences and decision-making processes of the programmes are clearly defined. Internal and external stakeholders participate in quality assurance processes and are responsible, within their competence, for the quality of the educational services provided.

Conclusion

The expert group considers standard 1.1 Policy for quality assurance as **fulfilled**.

2.2. Design and approval of programmes

ESG Standard 1.2: Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programmes. The programmes should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated, and refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

Findings

The in-service teacher training programmes provided by the CoE are developed and implemented in a very similar way. Therefore, the structural and organizational features of each programme show similarities, which are mainly found in the concepts and didactical approaches. Further, content and objectives are partly overlapping, since the target groups of the programmes are similar as well. The following description and evaluation of each programme highlights specific objectives and structural characteristics.

General objectives

The four evaluated training programmes strive to improve the competences of teachers and principals in terms of effective teaching and/or school management. Much attention is paid to the work in school pedagogical community. The methodical activity of trainers focuses on effective planning of teaching and learning, introduction of innovative methods and technologies to teaching and learning, implementation of criteria-based assessment, development of pedagogical skills in management of teaching and learning, development of functional literacy of students, study one's own practice, and supporting teachers' work in network learning community. Therefore, training activities promote the development of teacher's skills, help to explore own potentials, enriches teaching, and develop problem solving skills in teaching and learning. As the discussion between peers and staff of the CoE showed, the programmes take into consideration children with special needs – very gifted children as well as those with disabilities. However, the aspect of inclusion is not well elaborated in the description of the programmes and course materials. Thus, the aspects of inclusion and the integration of children with special needs should be highlighted more in the programmes.

General structural features

Each of the programmes is designed and implemented in the same way. After the selection of teachers and principals from schools in the regions of Kazakhstan, trainings are conducted in the headquarters in Astana or one of the regional centers. The concept of in-service training makes

the programmes of the CoE unique in Kazakhstan and even entire Central Asia. With the approach to change the mindset of teachers and to establish student-centered learning as the dominant way of teaching, the programmes are innovative and contribute a lot to the state of the art school education. At the same time, the CoE is aware of the challenges, which go along with the implementation of new approaches in real school life.

To be effective in reaching the goal of the in-service training, each programme comprises full time presence periods, distance learning periods and practical periods in school. The participation in the programmes is free of charge for teachers, who are selected in the admission procedure.

The concept of the training programmes are designed as compulsory programmes without providing opportunities for electives based on individual interests. From the perspective of the reviewers, this programme structures make sense, since they guarantee that all trainees participate in the same learning opportunities.

Implementing the in-service training, the CoE does not use workload calculations according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). However, the programmes have a sound workload calculation, being expressed in academic hours, where one academic hour equals 45 minutes.

a. “Effective Teaching and Learning”

Objectives

Participants of the programme shall be able to use tools of practical planning of teaching, reflect their own teaching practices and live various facets of pupil-centered learning. The programme has a strong practical focus on teaching and learning in schools of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The qualification objectives are well defined and focus on practical content and real-life problems of teachers. Trainees learn to understand metacognition concepts of learning in order to improve their way of teaching and to adapt to the special needs of pupils. During the training, teachers acquire competences in professional conversations, working in authentic classroom situations and in reading and reflecting sessions. The theoretical background of the teaching content and the used materials are well documented. Therefore, participant of the programme are able to achieve the indented objectives during the course and will be enabled to deepen knowledge and improve individual competences on their own after finishing the programme.

Concept

The programme is conceptualized as a comprehensive programme, which comprises a duration of 296 hours. This time is divided into three consecutive parts. The first part is designed as a face-to-face session of four weeks (160 hours). Trainees attend training session for eight hours a day

and familiarize themselves with material that cover seven different topics: (1) new approaches in teaching and learning, (2) learning to think critically, (3) assessment for and of learning, (4) using ICT in teaching and learning, (5) teaching talented and gifted children, (6) responding to age-related differences in teaching and learning and (7) management and leadership of learning.

The first face-to-face session is followed by a phase of school-based practice (96 hours). Trainees are expected to teach a sequence of four lessons and collect evidence of student learning with the four lessons. In addition, trainees are expected to conduct eight school-based tasks, which are related to the topics that were covered in the first four weeks of training. Throughout the practical phase, trainees are expected to critically reflect about their practice and the implementation of the new approaches that they have acquired. The training programme concludes with a second face-to-face of one week (40 hours). This week is used for self- and peer-reflection. Trainees are expected to demonstrate the changes they have made during their instruction and how this impacted student learning. The trainers will also support the trainees in compiling the portfolio that is used to assess the learning of the trainees.

The programme is to be evaluated by a portfolio that has been put together by the trainees and by an oral presentation. The portfolio should demonstrate how trainees integrated the seven topics of the programme into their teaching and it should include an analysis of the sequence of lessons taught. The written portfolio is expected to be presented orally as part of a short presentation. This presentation should focus on the implementation of programme ideas in the classroom and the trainees need to address how he/she integrated the seven programme topics into their school-based practice. Finally, trainees are also expected to critically evaluate their own teaching.

Conclusion

Overall, the programme seems to be very attractive for many teachers in Kazakhstan. About 1.200 teachers participate in this programme every year and a total number of about 9.400 teachers have been trained since the start of the programme. The programme aims at developing teachers' pedagogical skills in planning, conducting and assessing instruction. It furthermore focuses on the learning processes of the students. The goals of the programme and the desired outcomes were clearly described in the documents and are well aligned with each other. In accordance with the research on effective professional development, the programme combines phases of instruction (i.e., face-to-face setting) with a phase of practice in school. This combination allows that trainees to apply the knowledge that they have acquired in the first part on their studies. The programme also implements strategies in order to assess the knowledge that teachers have obtained throughout the programme. The embedded portfolio assessment allows the trainees to document the learning process and demonstrate what they have learnt throughout the nine weeks of

training. In conclusion, the objectives of the programme are highly demanding for the trainees, but the structure of the programme makes it possible to achieve the goals in the specified timeframe.

From a conceptual perspective, the first face-to-face session seems to be very long. The trainees attend classes for four weeks in a row and eight hours per day. During this time, the trainees have the chance to learn about numerous different topics and acquire a number of different methods. The newly acquired knowledge and skills cannot be applied immediately in the classroom, because the school-based practice starts only in week 5. Therefore, the expert group recommends providing a better link between theoretical input and practice in school. The programme also requires the trainees to conduct eight school-based tasks that are related to the content of the face-to-face session. It remains unclear, what these tasks may be and how they should cover the course material. For a better understanding, it would be helpful to describe possible sample tasks that the trainees should solve. This provides some degree of clarity for future trainees who are interested to sign up for this programme.

The group of experts makes a few minor recommendations and concludes that the programme “Effective Teaching and Learning” complies with Standard 1.2 Design and approval of programmes. The standard is **fulfilled**.

b. “Teacher Leadership in School”

Objectives

The programme “Teacher Leadership in School” highlights the aspect of “leadership” in the context of schools. The purpose of the course is well defined and based on existing competencies of participants. Practical experiences of teacher practice may lead to further competencies of regulated cooperation, and passing on special knowledge as well. Currently, the content of the programme focuses more on mentoring and coaching, less on leadership in a broader sense. Hence, other aspects of leadership should be included in the programme.

There are two target groups: a) experienced teachers and former school heads who will work as trainees and b) school leaders in the schools. The selection criteria for becoming a trainee include not only the proof of being experienced, but also of having successfully participated in professional competitions at school or district levels or having good results of competitions (Olympiads).

In general, the requirements for professional action are reflected. However, the main objective of the programme is the development and improvement of professional teacher action. Criteria that are closely related to the main objectives of the programme, professional learning and

development, are not mentioned. However, if trainees have to train teachers in their competences to become effective mentors and coaches, specific knowledge and skills related to these competences are necessary. Therefore, the selection criteria should get adapted to these specific requirements.

The scale of taught skills refers to the wide spread scope of skills needed in teacher profession. A focus is on “teaching talented and gifted children”. At the same time school in Kazakhstan also have to deal with children with other special needs. Due to the UN-Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (signed by Kazakhstan in 2008, ratified in 2015), same more attention should be drawn on this issue.

The profile of the programme seems to be appropriate, change of face-to-face, school-based practice and distance learning fits and gives students the opportunity of self-organized and self-regulated learning. During the entire programme, a support by trainers (via e-mail or other long distance communication) is provided.

Concept

The programme provides a certain number of well-described units and terms. The quantitative objectives to train 1.200 teachers annually and to implement the training with 320 academic hours are realistic. A sufficient number of sessions are described that can ensure successful achievement of goals.

The modules and units seem to be not oversized, so workload may be appropriate. Self-learning ability is target of the program, so this self-learning includes the learning of self-organizing and self-regulation and time-management as well. A main target is – and this is also topic of the programme – the permanent reflection of pedagogical processes. A detailed description of the goals and methods is provided for teachers and trainees. The descriptions are sufficient informative and provide important theoretical knowledge of the main concepts (e.g. Continuing Professional Development, effective teaching and learning).

Conclusion

The group of experts makes a few recommendations and concludes that the programme “Teacher Leadership in School” complies with Standard 1.2 Design and approval of programmes. The standard is **fulfilled**.

c. “Teacher Leadership in Pedagogical Community”

Objectives

According to the self-evaluation report of the CoE, the in-service training programme “Teacher leadership in pedagogical community” is at the heart of the training mission of the CoE. It provides trainees with both academic knowledge and skills, including broad-based skills that may influence their personal development and/or be used in their career. Meeting education needs of the pedagogic staff in obtaining additional knowledge and skills, supporting continuing professional development of Kazakhstani teachers in a constantly changing world. The programme is aimed at developing the following teachers’ skills:

- planning and conducting a sequence of lessons;
- coaching and mentoring in school;
- providing professional support to teachers within pedagogical community of the school;
- reflective thinking on the process of teaching and learning.

The programme supports the introduction of new approaches to their own practice of teaching and learning. Further, it is providing assistance for the professional development of colleagues in their school, acting as a mentor for one colleague, who in the future should implement the coaching process with other teachers at the place of work in the school. Finally, the programmes fosters the exchange of professional experience and innovative ideas with school teachers and colleagues from other schools, the creation of a pedagogical community, involving the introduction of new approaches in teaching and learning, consistent with the context of specific school practices.

The programme provides a separate section, which is devoted to the development of research skills of teachers, including action research and lesson study that are intended to improve the teaching processes of individual teachers, and to develop the pedagogical potential of a group of teachers, and, consequently, to improve student performance.

As kind of teaching modules, the programme considers the following areas of work and activities for trainees, presented in the form of seven topics, which are “New approaches to teaching and learning”, “Learning to think critically”, “Assessment for and of learning”, “Using ICT in teaching and learning”, “Teaching talented and gifted children”, “Responding to age-related differences in teaching and learning” and “Management and leadership of learning”.

Currently, the content of the programme focuses more on mentoring and coaching, less on leadership in a broader sense. Hence, other aspects of leadership should be included in the programme.

Concept

To implement the programme, teachers plan and conduct a series of consecutive lessons, and become a mentor for one colleague for the purpose of professional development. Teachers who study under this programme conduct coordinated activities with their own colleagues and with other colleagues who can be involved in this pedagogical community from other schools.

Teachers who have completed the training program are responsible for progress in monitoring, assisting in eliminating barriers that arise in the implementation of the pedagogical community development program, and in assessing the impact of it on school practice.

During the whole period of training under the programme (2012-2018), the number of enrolled trainees was 15,514 students. The training load comprises 344 academic hours in total and the complete programme lasts for 11 weeks and is structured in three phases:

1. First "Face to Face" – four weeks;
2. "School-based practice" – six weeks;
3. Second "Face to Face" – one week.

Face to face training is conducted on a study leave basis for trainees in accordance with the study plan and the session outlines that allow optimally carrying out the training without additional loads.

The study plan provides a combination of independent, face-to-face training and learning with asynchronous support of the trainer. The training is based on the following logical sequence: review of the ideas at the stage of theoretical training (completion of pre-course tasks), acquisition and understanding of the key ideas of the programme during the period of face-to-face training, their consolidation and implementation during the school-based practice. For this purpose, school-based tasks are given to perform. In the process of fulfilling the tasks during the school-based stage, teachers are supported by trainers through an online asynchronous forum and personal e-mails.

Conclusion

The programme is harmonious with regard to the desired course objective and the course title coincides with the content. The thematic content of the programme envisages, firstly, the introduction of new approaches to their own practice of teaching and learning. Secondly,

providing assistance for the professional development of colleagues in their school, acting as a mentor for one colleague, who in the future should implement the coaching process with other teachers at the place of work in school. Third, the exchange of professional experience and innovative ideas with schoolteachers and colleagues from other schools, the creation of a pedagogical community, involving the introduction of new approaches in teaching and learning, is consistent with the context of specific school practices. To implement the programme, teachers plan and conduct a series of consecutive lessons, and become a mentor for one colleague for the purpose of professional development. Teachers who study under this programme conduct coordinated activities with their own colleagues and with other colleagues who can be involved in this pedagogical community from other schools. Teachers who have completed the training programme are responsible for progress in monitoring, assisting in eliminating barriers that arise in the implementation of the pedagogical community development program, and in assessing the impact of it on school practice.

The group of experts makes a few minor recommendations and concludes that the programme “Teacher Leadership in Pedagogical Community” complies with Standard 1.2 Design and approval of programmes. The standard is **fulfilled**.

d. “In-service training programme for the head staff of the comprehensive secondary schools of the Republic of Kazakhstan”

The in-service training programme for the head staff of the comprehensive secondary schools of the Republic of Kazakhstan was introduced by the CoE in 2014 and approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan on 14th of September 2016. According to the self-evaluation report, 4.424 principals were trained between 2014 and 2018.

Objectives

The main aim of the programme is to achieve professional excellence of Kazakhstani school principals in line with the international best practice. Head staff requires training for the reason of changed circumstances and modernization of the secondary education in Kazakhstan as it is determined in the Programme of Education Development for 2011 to 2020. The programme focuses on active school principals, with several years of experience in school management. Hence, the long-term-training programme is intended to meet the following objectives:

- to provide an understanding of the role and mission of the modern principal as well as of the importance of personal and professional growth;

- to develop principals' core competencies in the fields of leadership, management and strategic planning;
- to teach principals the skills, methods and forms that will improve their own work and that of teachers and finally student's performance;
- to build practical skills which are necessary to establish professional networks and social partnership, to collaborate with parents and the community as a whole.

On completion of the training, participants should be able to act with more confidence in professional areas. This comprises in the first place principal's self-development. The principals should show commitment to own personal and professional development as well as be able to support and encourage others to develop their knowledge and skills. They should be competent to implement self-evaluation and strategic development plan. Furthermore, they should be enabled to foster the development of schools as organizations. As a principal's leadership results in students' progress, the principals should have the ability to create a culture of effective teaching. They should be able to design and manage the organizational plan, to support teachers' professional development, to provide a productive environment for learning and working. Moreover, they should be qualified to evaluate different types of data and anticipate future trends. Finally, the training programme is intended to contribute to the social and professional partnership. The participants should be able to interact with all members of school community, create and manage social and professional networks.

Concept

The above-mentioned competencies should be developed throughout the nine-month period of the programme, which consists of two face-to-face stages, and two school-based periods. Each of face-to-face phases is taking four weeks, the first practical stage is taking also four weeks, and the second practical part is the longest and is taking twenty-four weeks (6 months). The total workload amounts to 640 academic hours.

Before the programme starts, principals attending the training should fulfil pre-course tasks. They have to collect relevant data regarding their own schools. The face-to-face phases which cover totaling 320 academic hours include theoretical subjects based on current (international) research topics and the teaching of leadership skills, decision-making processes, involving community and parents in educational practice, evaluation and assessment, and more. The trainees work in groups of maximum 30 and are supported by a certified trainer. During the school-based periods (workload 320 academic hours), the principals should transfer acquired knowledge and skills to real working place and offer solutions for development of their own schools.

Conclusion

The training programme is designed to address the needs of active working principals and consider the specific development of secondary schools in Kazakhstan as well as the actual tendencies abroad. Its content and the structure allow the conclusion that the set objectives can be met. The lengths of the training and the workload correlate with the requirements of the Kazakhstani Ministry of Education and Science. The key elements of a training programme include course work, learning tasks, and practical application. It combines full-time and distance learning. As the CoE has a wide network of branches in all regions of the country, the intention to train up to 1.000 principals annually seems to be realistic. However, it would make sense to reduce the size of the groups and in this way to increase the effectiveness of the training.

It is recommended to expand the target group and to offer the training also for the vice-principals. Another recommendation addresses the description of the programme. Some parts of programme description and content might be check according to appropriateness and relevance for the objectives of the training and the suitability for the target group. Readers will benefit from clear structure as well as concise description.

The group of experts makes a few minor recommendations and concludes that the “In-service training programme for the head staff of the comprehensive secondary schools of the Republic of Kazakhstan” complies with Standard 1.2 Design and approval of programmes. The standard is **fulfilled**.

2.3. Student-centered learning, teaching and assessment

ESG Standard 1.3: Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.

Findings

Trainers of the CoE use a variety of methods and approaches in teaching at the courses of professional development. In the broadest sense, they can be divided into two large groups: a coaching approach and training. With a coaching approach, the trainer employs a variety of methods, such as brainstorming, video analysis, cinematography, role games, thematic exercises or mini-lectures. At the same time, the trainer does not act as an expert, since he/she organizes the activities for the group, but the content is rather created by the trainees themselves, based on their experience. To do this, trainers use group and pair works, strengthening and developing the social component of training. Trainers use the coach position, in which the opinion of each trainee is respected and taken into account without pressure and the imposition of someone else's experience. To support (scaffolding) trainers use high-order questions that allow trainees to formulate their own vision of pedagogical practice and plan their self-development. During the training, the trainer acts as an expert, which train and develop the teachers' skills in what is an exclusive component of the CoE programmes, e.g. preparation of teachers' portfolio, writing reflective account, evaluation of their own practice and ICT competences.

Training programmes

The courses of in-service training programmes are conducted in accordance with the specific study plan, the session schedule and the course schedule, approved by the order of the Center Director. The session schedule is formed based on the approved training programme and the study plan to the programme.

Groups of course trainees are formed based on the languages of instruction, which is either Russian or Kazakh. The number of trainees in a group does not exceed 30 teachers.

One academic hour of trainings has a duration of 45 minutes. The time of beginning and end of face-to-face sessions might be established from 9.00 am to 6.00 pm, but not exceeding 10 academic hours (from Monday to Friday). Further, trainee and the trainer of the course have at least one hour for individual methodical help and consultation after the courses daily.

The provision of courses, including the process of training, evaluation and certification, is carried out at the expense of budgetary funds allocated annually to the CoE. The CoE and its branches

organize and conduct the training of trainees and provide them with educational materials in paper and/or electronic forms. In the framework of the received stipend, the trainees independently search for and pay for their places of residence during the period of training.

Teaching methods

The sessions are conducted in an interactive mode, and organized taking into account an inclusive approach. All trainees are involved in the process of learning and constructing their knowledge: work in cooperation, each contributes to the learning, participate in peer learning, sharing knowledge, ideas and experiences. Interactive teaching methods are based on the principles of interaction, equality, and constructive feedback. The trainer organizes the learning process in such a way that he/she does not act as an expert but rather as a facilitator, who helps and supports trainees, directs them, leads them to independent knowledge acquisition.

Assessment

Trainers use numerous methods of assessment, as well as oral and written feedback as a formative review of the results and achievements of the trainees. An important feature of trainers' instruction is also the use of relevant resources, taking into account the modern world experience and developing their own methods and approaches aimed at achieving learning outcomes and building a collaborative environment that is conducive to learning. Assessment based on the results of training is conducted by the experts from the Center of Pedagogical Measurements of AEO "Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools".

Evaluators have the certificates of trainers for the specific programmes and certificates of evaluation experts in the framework Cambridge Assessment International Education (Cambridge) programmes. Further, experts are supported in the development of assessment skills through training in professional development courses in the country and abroad. Annually, workshops are held to standardize evaluation procedures, which is an opportunity for everyone involved in the assessment process to develop their understanding of standards, the application of criteria and the interpretation of evidence. The CoE trainers, CPM experts and experts from Cambridge develop approaches and assessment tools jointly.

The evaluation involves three components: portfolio, presentation of portfolio evidence, testing. Tasks of testing cover the programme content, are focused on the competence (knowledge and understanding of the content of the programme by teachers) and are developed in the language of teacher training. In the tests, various types of tasks are used: with the choice of one answer, the establishment of consistency and conformity. The reliability and validity of the tests are ensured by the procedures of examination, testing and analysis of test tasks.

Assessments also take into account some circumstances in which participants of training programmes can retake the assessment. In cases of illness or other important reasons, trainees can retake tasks or assessments. After the results of the assessment have been published, participants of the courses have the right to file an application for an appeal on the evaluation procedures.

The variation of the methods and assessment forms is reasonable and supports the successful achievement of the goals of the programme. Somehow unclear is the summative and standardized tests. The quality of the tests (content- and competency-related, validity and reliability) is most important for achieving the goals. Furthermore, it should be ensured that the formative character of assessment for learning is more important than the summative assessment of learning and that the stakes are low.

Conclusion

The programmes are based on face-to-face sessions and school-based sessions. All the sessions are organized in such a way that trainees are active learners, who are strongly interacting with their colleagues. In addition, the trainees can use up to four weeks in a programme to independently practice the newly acquired knowledge on their own. In this setting, they are responsible for the transfer of the knowledge into classroom practice. At the same time, they have the freedom to decide how and in which context they want to implement their knowledge.

The assessment of teacher learning is based on a portfolio of teachers practice. This approach can be considered a competence-based assessment, because teachers need to show proof of their practice and the result of their teaching. This assessment tool also provides a lot of flexibility, since it allows trainees to include all the materials and artifacts, which are important for them and represent the process and the product of the work.

The assessment procedures of the CoE are consistent and implemented based on the principles of fair assessment in accordance with clearly organized procedures. Thus, the assessed programmes comply with the requirements of standard 1.3 Student-centered learning, teaching and assessment, because the programme descriptions convincingly show that students take on an active role as learners and this plays out in the way the learning outcome is assessed. The standard is **fulfilled**.

2.4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

ESG Standard 1.4: Institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student “life cycle”, e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification.

Findings

The CoE has a well-described procedure for admission and enrollment of trainees into courses as well as the certification of achievements. Generally, the enrollment of trainees to the courses is formalized by the Order of the director of the Center based on the letter from the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Admission

School teachers and principals are admitted as trainees to in-service training programmes on the basis of the rules for organizing and conducting in-service training courses for the pedagogic staff approved by the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated from January 18, 2017 No. 18. According to these rules, the selection of trainees for the courses is carried out by the pedagogical council of the schools. Pedagogic staff applying for a training should meet a number of requirements, such as a higher pedagogical education, teaching experience of at least seven years or higher technical and vocational education, teaching experience of at least nine years; participation in professional competitions of district (city), regional, republican (international) levels preparation of winners, prize-winners of subject Olympiads, use of innovative methods and pedagogical technologies in teaching and learning and the development or participation in the development of methodological manuals and curricula and articles in pedagogical publications. The compliance with the admission requirements of a programme is confirmed by documents, such as letters of recommendation, expert opinions, decisions of collegial bodies or materials and results of analysis and evaluation of open lessons, materials on the generalization of experience, documentary evidence of students' achievements and progress.

The pedagogical council a school annually examines the documents of pedagogic staff applying for training in the courses until September 20 and submits for approval by October 1 to the district (city) authority of an application. In accordance with the schedule agreed by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the CoE carries out the courses from the beginning of the next calendar year.

Certification

Participation certificates are obtained after attending in courses and passing the evaluation procedure. The procedure for retaking the final examination is made based on the Rules of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan no more than once a year and at the expense of trainees. Upon completion of long-term courses, the organization conducts a final assessment of knowledge in the form approved by the organization. Trainees, who have passed courses, are issued a certificate by the organization on the model agreed with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Trainees who have not received a certificate have an opportunity for re-evaluation of knowledge at the expense of their own funds, no more than once a year; or for re-evaluation of knowledge with the next cohort of trainees of the same course, for transference for good reason from one cohort to another cohort in the current year, or for completion of the interrupted course for a good reason with the provision of supporting documents. A certificate is signed by the Center Director and is valid for five years from the date of issue.

Conclusion

The assessed programmes comply with the requirements of standard 1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification. The standard is **fulfilled**.

2.5. Teaching staff

ESG Standard 1.5: Institutions should assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff.

Findings

Only certified trainers are allowed to be instructors in in-service training programmes. The Center of Excellence carries out the training of trainers for the support of in-service training programmes for the pedagogic staff. This training programme for trainers was developed jointly with the Faculty of Education of the University of Cambridge. As experts in the training of trainers, experts from the Faculty of Education of University of Cambridge were involved.

Based on the results of the initial training of trainers for the programmes of the CoE, Cambridge made a decision on the compliance of applicants with the standards for the trainer and issued the appropriate certificates. The validity of this certificate is 2 years. At the end of this period, the trainer of a programme undergoes the procedure of recertification in accordance with the “Trainer Assessment Model” developed by the Astana based Center for Pedagogical Measurements (CPM) for the support of their professional development. Within 2 years, between the next recertification, trainers work on improving their own practice, send reports to the CPM to confirm continuous training activity (report B - effective practice, C - reflection and development). During the training of the pedagogic staff, the CPM experts provide support for the training activity of the trainer.

Teaching staff

Within the CoE, 107 trainers carry out the training of the pedagogic staff. The teaching load of the trainers is comparable with the workload of the teaching staff of universities/colleges and is on average 700 hours of classroom hours per year. Training activities include the training in courses (face-to-face and online support) and extracurricular activities (methodological, scientific-research). In the framework of extracurricular activities, the trainers carry out post-course support for the pedagogic staff after completion of the in-service training. Further, the moderation of evaluation results is an essential component of an assessment process in ensuring its validity, reliability, sufficiency and authenticity.

Continuous improvement

The CoE is keen to improve the competences of trainers continuously. Therefore, the Center created the conditions for the continuous professional development of trainers, through professional training, self and peer learning. For the continuous professional development of the

trainers, work is carried by providing workshops and meetings, mentoring by international experts or the participation in international and Kazakhstani conferences. The training of trainers is systematic and continuous in order to achieve quality results as well as the formation of a competitive team of professionals. One component focuses on external reviews, another on self-assessment.

On the one hand, external experts observe the practice of a trainer according to four standards: values, planning, teaching and assessment, give feedback in oral and written form. At the end of the course, the experts conduct a formative and summative assessment of the trainer's portfolio. On the other hand, a fundamental principle is that trainers take responsibility for their own individual training. In order to collect data on the effectiveness of the work of the trainer on teaching of the pedagogic staff of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the continuous professional development of trainers, a programme of professional development has been developed including annual reviews of professional development in accordance with the trainer's individual work plan. The individual plan includes sections on training activities and professional development (action research, seminars, publications, conferences).

Various methods and workshop programmes, containing workshops by experts from Cambridge as well as international and Kazakhstani experts, who are professionals on topics that require a deeper understanding and further application for the training of the pedagogic staff, foster the professional development. In order to exchange experience, get acquainted with new trends in education and professional development of teachers, the workshop "Kazakhstani trainer: experience, cooperation and prospects" is held annually by the CoE where trainers discuss the issues of supporting the professional development of teachers and share the best training practices. Additionally, as part of the research work, trainers conduct a study of their own practice. According to the results of research from 2012 to 2017, overall trainers developed methodical literature for teachers on effective lessons, planning and assessment, for school leaders on leadership, in-school supervision and school development plans. Trainers publish their papers in the international informational and methodical journal "Pedagogical Dialogue", present their experience at annual scientific and practical conferences of various levels (international, republican and regional).

Once in two years the CoE carries out certification of employees, including trainers, on job competence. Trainers take a test for the knowledge of the basic normative documents regulating the activity of educational organizations, world trends in education. In addition, the trainers prepare a presentation where they introduce the results of the SWOT analysis of their professional activity and define tasks and future development plans for improving practice. The procedure of

attestation of the CoE is a confirmation of the importance of internal self-control and adherence by the administration of the approved quality control policy.

Conclusion

In general, the data indicate a constant increase in the level of qualifications of the teaching staff. Strengths of the training programmes are the alignment of the staff potential with the specifics of courses, monitoring of the activities of the teaching staff, systematic assessment of the competence level of trainers, and the comprehensive evaluation of the quality of teaching.

Therefore, the expert group concludes that the assessed programmes comply with the requirements of standard 1.5 Teaching staff. The standard is **fulfilled**.

2.6. Learning resources and student support

ESG Standard 1.6: Institutions should have appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided.

Findings

Learning resources

The Center of Excellence and its branches have all the necessary material and technical base, which makes it possible to organize and conduct the educational process successfully. All classrooms are equipped with computers, a workplace for the trainer, interactive boards and stands as well as peripheral equipment and printing devices. There are individual workplaces in the classrooms where the trainees can use personal computer (check e-mail, print out the materials they need, talk on Skype, etc.). All classrooms have 24-hour access to the Internet. For trainees with their own personal devices such as a laptop or tablet, free access to the Internet. For provision of offsite training, laptops (ultra-books) and short-focus projectors with a mobile screen are used. The CoE renews computer facilities in the whole organization and classrooms annually.

At the CoE, training is conducted in classrooms with a capacity of up to 35 people. At the same time, the filling capacity of one training group and classroom is no more than 30 people. Classrooms are equipped with appropriate mobile furniture, which fosters interactive forms of learning. The Center has its own printing office for printing the handout materials for the trainees, various booklets, digests, etc.

Currently, the CoE is developing a concept for the implementation of the e-library in which rare copies of books will be digitized, including free additional materials for trainees and the opportunity for a corporate or individual subscription with the full-text access in the Center e-library. The e-library is convenient because it allows providing access to a book at the same time for many people while it is unrealistic in the case of its hard copy, which is available in one copy.

The existing library is a multifunctional hall for review of educational and methodical literature as well as for conferences, workshops, briefings, trainings and different types of presentations. Currently, the library has various types of educational-methodical literature on pedagogy and other related disciplines of Kazakhstani and foreign authors. The library has a subscription to scientific and methodical, information and methodical journals of the countries of near and far abroad.

Besides the facilities being used for the training, the CoE provides extensive and well-elaborated course material for trainers and trainees. In the long run, the CoE might evaluate, whether the

provided information is too much. For instance, the content of the individual sessions in the first face-to-face period of the programmes are thoroughly described in the programme description. For each day, a short description of the content can be found in the study plans. The topics that are put together in this plan foster teachers' understanding of teaching and learning processes and represent important topics in the educational sciences. However, the large variety of topics may also overwhelm participants of the programmes. The developers of the programmes should therefore check, whether such a strong heterogeneity of topics is necessary.

Student support

In accordance with the Center's Regulation and the Instruction for the payment of scholarships, non-resident trainees, who take the in-service training in the CoE and its branches, are paid a scholarship in a fixed amount of money for the period of face-to-face training. The scholarship must cover for the trainee travel expenses, food and accommodation. The teacher training also includes post-course support for teachers, the main purpose of which is to provide timely methodological assistance in teaching and assessment. This covers distance (on-line, off-line) support, which is an immediate and continuous form of support and individual consultations. Other supportive elements are meetings within the framework of the trainers' and trips to the regions for fieldwork (in accordance with their approved schedule). Post-course support for teachers of general education organizations is carried out during visits to the regional centers of each region on the basis of leading schools with the involvement of pedagogical teams of partner schools in the region through various forms of training events: workshops, master classes, coaching, webinars, round tables and conferences.

Conclusion

In general, the educational process for in-service training programmes undergoing the certification process is provided with all the necessary teaching materials, material equipment and computer technology for an effective and meaningful learning process. The material and technical base and resources of the CoE allow providing high-quality training and preparation of schoolteachers and principals. Strengths of the training programmes include the modern scientific and educational material.

The assessed programmes comply with the requirements of standard 1.6 Learning resources and student support. The standard is **fulfilled**.

2.7. Information management

ESG Standard 1.7: Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.

Findings

Within defined timeframes the CPM assess and analyzes the information in accordance with the Rules of Evaluation with the purpose of determining the quality of programme implementations and the need to improve procedures and assessment tools. Based on the results of the assessment, a mid-year analytical report is developed; statistical data for the annual report are processed. The Department for the Coordination of Assessment Procedures in the CPM administers and maintains a database on the assessment of teachers, trainers and experts. The collected data are used to provide feedback to teachers, trainers and experts, training centers for developing practice and improving the quality of education and assessment. CPM experts participate in conferences where they present the results of their studies concerning assessment. Published papers are available to teachers, trainers and experts to study and use information to develop their own practice.

Conclusion

The management of training programmes at the CoE is carried out based on collection, analysis and use of relevant information. The CoE provides this process based on modern information and communication technologies and software, determines the scope and structure of periodically updated information and responsible persons for the reliability and timeliness, completeness of information and its safety.

The assessed programmes comply with the requirements of standard 1.7 Information management. The standard is **fulfilled**.

2.8. Public information

ESG Standard 1.8: Institutions should publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible.

Findings

In order to ensure the transparency of the organization's activities, the CoE publishes all the necessary information on the websites of the CoE and of the Center for Pedagogical Measurements (www.cpm.kz). Annually a report on the activities for the calendar year is drawn up. The reports of the years 2011 to 2017 show the results of the activities according to the main strands, such as the development of educational programmes, in-service training programme for the pedagogic staff, monitoring the quality of programme implementation, post-course support for the pedagogic staff, publishing, work with Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools, professional development of employees, administration and management, and strategic partnership. The main performance indicators of the CoE are presented in the dynamics taking into account the results of the last three years.

The website provides the information about the aims, tasks and expected results of the training programme, its structure, content, as well as the study plan and information on assessment process. The programme includes such teaching materials for each stage of the training (the first stage - "First Face-to-Face", the second stage - "School-based practice", the third stage - "Second Face-to-Face") as Pre-course tasks, School-based tasks, Handbook for trainer and Handbook for teacher. The teacher assessment guidelines, which disclose the principles of assessment, tools for assessment (portfolio assessment, presentation assessment), are separately published. All information is presented in Kazakh and Russian languages. Access to this information is provided to trainees who take training. In order to increase the visibility of the CoE's work, it is recommended to provide more information about the programmes on the website in English.

Since 2012, on the portal the network community is functioning - a social professional network for interaction in online and offline mode. The network was created for the effective interaction of trainees, where they can communicate and conduct joint activities with the help of computer technologies. The network community allows trainees to make some activities, use messaging and social services. The network community has convenient interface, which stimulates users to continuous working there.

Conclusion

Information about the programmes, the educational process and the activities of the CoE are published on the website, as well as on popular social networks and video portals (for instance, Facebook and YouTube).

The assessed programmes comply with the requirements of standard 1.8 Public information. The standard is **fulfilled**.

2.9. On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes

ESG Standard 1.9: Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned.

Findings

Since the beginning of the implementation of the in-service trainings, internal monitoring has been carried out, 33 analytical reports have been prepared upon their results. In 2015-2016, the Center and the Faculty of Education of the University of Cambridge have conducted a research on monitoring and evaluation of integration of the key ideas of educational programmes into Kazakhstani school practice. More than 9.000 certified teachers and almost 220 certified school principals participated in the research. From these, about 94% of respondents noted the positive effect that the in-service training made to their teaching and management practice. The results have also shown that teachers and principals changed their belief about teaching and school management towards constructivist ideas and are ready to use new approaches in their daily teaching practice. Based on the research results, a report has been prepared, and an article has been published in international peer-reviewed journal.

Since 2012 - the period of introduction of educational programmes, up to the present time the CoE has been monitoring using questionnaire, pedagogical observation, interview, exploratory talk, documentation study, study of the artifacts of students' activities, theoretical analysis of pedagogical ideas, methods of mathematical statistics and essays. The used monitoring cover pre-course surveys, course monitoring, post-course monitoring.

Thus, the monitoring, regular evaluation and revision of the study programmes allows the staff of the CoE to adjust programmes in a timely manner, taking into account the achievements of modern science, the trends of change in the labour market and ensure the training of competitive professionals.

Conclusion

The assessed programmes comply with the requirements of standard 1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes. The standard is **fulfilled**.

2.10. Cyclical external quality assurance

ESG Standard 1.10: Institutions should undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis.

Findings

The CoE conducts external quality assurance procedures in accordance with the internal quality assurance regulations. In fixed terms, assessments are conducted by the CPM. Since the CoE is not obliged to go through external accreditation procedures, the current certification procedure by ACQUIN is done voluntarily. Both kinds of external evaluation are planned as ongoing routines.

Conclusion

The assessed programmes comply with the requirements of standard criterion 1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance. The standard is **fulfilled**.

3. Assessment of the implementation "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG) as amended.

The in-service training programmes of the Center of Excellence were assessed based on the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG).

The group of evaluators concludes that standards 1.1 (Policy for quality assurance), 1.2 (design and approval of programmes), 1.3 (Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment), 1.4 (Student admission, progression, recognition and certification), 1.5 (Teaching staff), 1.6 (Learning resources and student support), 1.7 (Information Management), 1.8 (Public Information), 1.9 (On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes) and 1.10 (Cyclical external quality assurance) are fulfilled.

Standard 1.1 Policy for quality assurance: Universities have a publicly accessible quality assurance strategy, which is part of their strategic management. This strategy is developed and implemented by internal stakeholder representatives through appropriate structures and processes, involving external stakeholders.

The criterion is **fulfilled**, since the policy of CoE translates into practice through a variety of internal quality assurance processes. Quality assurance policies reflect the relationship between research and learning & teaching and take account of both the national context.

Standard 1.2 Design and approval of programmes: Universities have procedures for the design and approval of their courses. The courses are designed in such a way that their objectives, including the desired learning outcomes, can be achieved. The qualification obtained during a degree program is clearly defined and communicated; it refers to the corresponding level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, the qualifications framework for the European Higher Education Area.

The criterion is **fulfilled**, but recommendations are made for each programme.

Standard 1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment: Universities ensure that the courses offered are carried out in such a way as to encourage students to play an active role in the design of the learning process and that this approach is also taken into account when assessing students / examinations.

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

Standard 1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification: Universities ensure that the courses offered are carried out in such a way as to encourage students to play an active role in the design of the learning process and that this approach is also taken into account when assessing students / examinations.

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

Standard 1.5 Teaching staff: Universities ensure the competence of their teachers. They use fair and transparent procedures for the recruitment and further training of their employees.

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

Standard 1.6 Learning resources and student support: The university has adequate funding to finance study and teaching and ensure that there is always a sufficient and readily available range of learning and support available for their studies.

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

Standard 1.7 Information management: Universities ensure that they collect, analyze and use the relevant data relevant to the successful conduct of studies and other activities.

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

Standard 1.8 Public information: Universities publish easily understandable, correct, objective, up-to-date and well-accessible information about their activities and courses of study.

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

Standard 1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes: Universities are constantly monitoring their courses and regularly reviewing them to ensure that they achieve the goals set and meet the needs of students and society. The tests lead to a continuous improvement of the courses. All affected parties will be informed about any measures planned or resulting from this.

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

Standard 1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance: Universities regularly undergo external quality assurance procedures in accordance with the ESG.

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

4. Certification recommendation

The expert group recommends the certification of the programmes “Effective Teaching and Learning”, “Teacher Leadership in School” and “Teacher Leadership in Pedagogical Community” for pedagogic staff and “In-service training programme for the head staff of the comprehensive secondary schools of the Republic of Kazakhstan” **without any conditions, but with the following recommendations.**

Recommendations

1. General recommendations for all programmes

- Aspects of inclusion and the integration of children with special needs should be highlighted more in the programmes.
- The Center of Excellence should evaluate, whether course material can be structured less comprehensively.
- In order to increase the visibility of the CoE’s work, it is recommended to provide more information on the programmes on the website in English.

2. Effective Teaching and Learning

- It is recommended to provide a better link between theoretical input and practice in school.

3. Teacher Leadership in School

- The admission requirements should be adapted in order to address programme objectives properly. The selection of trainees should stronger take aspects of professional learning and development in account. Up to now, the selection criteria are more or less related to effective teaching. However, leadership competences like communicative competences, management competences, competences to lead groups are not emphasized. Therefore, the selection criteria should be more adaptive to the prospective work the teachers will do as a teacher leader.
- Currently, the content of the programme focuses more on mentoring and coaching, less on leadership in a broader sense. Hence, other aspects of leadership should be included in the programme.
- It should be ensured that the formative character of assessment for learning is more important than the summative assessment of learning and that the stakes are low.

4. Teacher Leadership in Pedagogical Community

- Currently, the content of the programme focuses more on mentoring and coaching, less on leadership in a broader sense. Hence, other aspects of leadership should be included in the programme.

5. In-service training programme for the head staff of the comprehensive secondary schools of the Republic of Kazakhstan

- The group size of courses should be reduced in order to increase the effectiveness of trainings.
- The programme should also address vice-principals as a target group.

5. Decision of the Accreditation Commission of ACQUIN

Based on the evaluation report of the expert group, the statement of the Center of Excellence and the statement of the Standing Expert Committee, on 10th December 2018 the Accreditation Commission of ACQUIN made the following decisions:

General Recommendations for all programmes

The following recommendations are given for the further development of the programmes:

- Aspects of inclusion and the integration of children with special needs should be highlighted more in the programmes.
- The Center of Excellence should evaluate, whether course material can be structured more focused on core objectives of the programmes.
- In order to increase the visibility of the CoE's work, it is recommended to provide more information on the programmes on the website in English.

Effective Teaching and Learning

The programme „Effective Teaching and Learning “ is certified without any conditions.

The certification is valid until 30 September 2024.

The following recommendation is given for the further development of the study programme:

- It is recommended to provide a better link between theoretical input and practice in school.

Teacher Leadership in School

The programme „Teacher Leadership in School“ is certified without any conditions.

The certification is valid until 30 September 2024.

The following recommendations are given for the further development of the study programme:

- The admission requirements should be adapted in order to address programme objectives properly. The selection of trainees should stronger take aspects of professional learning and development in account. Up to now, the selection criteria are more or less related to effective teaching. However, leadership competences like communicative competences, management competences, competences to lead groups are not emphasized. Therefore, the selection criteria should be more adaptive to the prospective work the teachers will do as a teacher leader.
- Currently, the content of the programme focuses more on mentoring and coaching, less on leadership in a broader sense. Hence, other aspects of leadership should be included in the programme.

Teacher Leadership in Pedagogical Community

The programme „Teacher Leadership in Pedagogical Community“ is certified without any conditions.

The certification is valid until 30 September 2024.

The following recommendation is given for the further development of the study programme:

- Currently, the content of the programme focuses more on mentoring and coaching, less on leadership in a broader sense. Hence, other aspects of leadership should be included in the programme.

In-service training programme for the head staff of the comprehensive secondary schools of the Republic of Kazakhstan

The programme „In-service training programme for the head staff of the comprehensive secondary schools of the Republic of Kazakhstan“ is certified without any conditions.

The certification is valid until 30 September 2024.

The following recommendation is given for the further development of the study programme:

- The group size of courses should be reduced in order to increase the effectiveness of trainings.