

## **Certification Report**

Certification at the

**Center of Excellence, Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan**

**Educational in-service Professional Development Programme for school teachers  
“Development and Expertise of Assessment Tasks” for the subject “Mathematics”**

**&**

**“Educational in-service PD programme for psychologists of educational organisations”**

### **I Procedure**

**Date of Contract:** 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020

**Receipt of self-evaluation report:** 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020

**Date of Online-Conferences:** 12<sup>th</sup> October 2020

**Standing Expert Committee and lead management:** not applicable

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**Certification scheduled:** December 2020

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The **evaluation report** of the expert group is based on the self-evaluation documentation of the Center of Excellence and the online-discussions with the heads of the training programmes, the developers of the programme as well as administration and management of the Center of Excellence in Nur-Sultan.

**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.

## **II Evaluation 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 and the heads of educational organisations 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 and the heads of educational organisations, 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 Nur-Sultan, the CoE has branches in 15 cities in Kazakhstan, such as in Almaty, Shymkent or Karaganda. This way, the organization is represented in all regions of the country. The central office in Nur-Sultan employs 80 people, including 19 senior managers/managers in the state of CoE, and 61 people from the teachers of preschool organizations of the regions of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The CoE is divided into 10 departments. The CoE is divided into 10 departments. These departments are responsible for Educational Programmes, Methodological

Work, Information Technology, Organization of Educational Processes, Publishing and Production, 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 153 in-service training programmes for the pedagogic staff and the heads of educational organisations of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Over the years, more than 5,659 trainers have been trained in order to implement the in-service training for the pedagogic staff. Since 2012 till now, the Center has trained over 120 thousand pedagogical staff countrywide and since the introduction of the four programmes that are part of this certification procedure, over 200 trainers (including teaching staff and senior managers) have been trained for the purposes of the programmes.

### **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 ongoing reforms in the country's education system pose new challenges for schools, requiring a modernization of the existing methodological support and forms of methodological work in educational institutions. 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 and the needs of the community of students and parents, making it adaptive and able to respond to the modern and future needs in education development.

The following two programmes are part of this certification procedure: Educational in-service Professional Development Programme for school teachers "Development and Expertise of Assessment Tasks" for the subject "Mathematics" and "Educational in-service PD programme for psychologists of educational organisations".

Each programme's basic features are outlined in the following tables:

Educational in-service Professional Development Programme for school teachers "Development and Expertise of Assessment Tasks" for the subject "Mathematics"

Location	Nur-Sultan, Republic of Kazakhstan
Date of introduction	From 2018 to date
Faculty/ Department	Department of Educational Programmes
Number of terms prescribed for the completion of a course	80 hours
Number of ECTS-Credits	Not applicable
Number of enrolled students so far	2483 (including branch establishments)
Target group(s)	Mathematics Teachers
Entry requirements	based on the Rules for organizing and offering professional development courses, as well as post-course support of teacher's activity approved by the order of MES RK dated January 28, 2016 #95
Study form	in the classroom
Tuition fee	within the public contract

Educational in-service PD programme for psychologists of educational organisations

Location	Nur-Sultan, Republic of Kazakhstan
Date of introduction	Since 2019
Faculty/ Department	Department of Educational Programmes
Number of terms prescribed for the completion of a course	80 academic hours (one academic hour = 45 minutes)
Number of ECTS-Credits	Not applicable
Number of enrolled students so far	2190 (including branch establishments)
Target group(s)	Psychologists of educational organisations
Entry requirements	based on the Rules for Organising and conducting professional development courses for teachers, as well as post-course support for teachers, approved by Order No. 95 of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated 28 January 2016.
Study form	in the classroom
Tuition fee	within the public contract

## 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.

There are both internal and external quality control in the courses. External quality control is carried out by the final report of an independent body, the Center of Pedagogical Measurements, with the result of the courses evaluation and by the current application for international programme certification.

#### *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 Center 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 and 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 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. Within this context, the development and strengthening of cooperation with well-known and recognised international organisations of education and science is being sought.

## **Conclusion**

The educational programmes meet the interests of participants of educational services and sufficiently ensure the expected level of professional training of Mathematics Teachers and Psychologists of educational organisations. The objectives of the Educational Programs are aimed at satisfying participants' needs. The mechanism for achieving the set goals is being improved and modernized.

The mission expresses the role of training courses in educational and scientific context of the country. There is a correspondence of the mission, goals and objectives to the potential of the



CoE and market requirements. For the purpose of the educational programmes, the professional orientation, professional areas of activity of trainees are reflected. Much attention is paid to measures to maintain legality, equality, academic integrity and academic freedom, collegial decision-making.

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

- For more strengthening strategic partnership with regional universities the expert group recommends to include the educational programme for Psychologists of educational organisations as an elective course in HEIs. The discipline will contribute to the development of future psychologists' necessary professional competencies.
- To make external quality control productive the expert group recommends to invite for discussion of training programs not only CoE administration and programme developers, but also trainers who work in practice.

## 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 similar way. Therefore, the structural and organizational features of each programme show similarities, which are mainly found in the concepts, didactical approaches and the duration of the programmes that foresee 80 academic hours). The following description and evaluation of each programme highlights specific objectives and structural characteristics.

#### *General objectives*

The two evaluated training programmes are developed in the framework of upgrading the content of school education with the aim to prepare pedagogues improve pedagogical skills in organizing the process of education. The “Mathematics” training programme aims at improving the professional level of teachers in the development and expertise of assessment tasks as part of updating of secondary education content, whereas the training programme for “Psychologist of educational organisations” aims at improving teachers’ professional knowledge and skills in effective organization of psychological service of the educational organisations.

As the discussion between peers and staff of the CoE showed, the activities of trainers focus on effective planning of teaching and learning, introduction of innovative methods and technologies and development of lesson plans based on learning objectives.

#### *General structural features*

Each of the programmes is designed and implemented in a similar way. The programmes are approved by the Ministry of Education. Schools announce lists with teachers that were selected for further education to the Ministry of Education and after the approval of the Ministry, the lists are forwarded to CoE. The training programmes are not compulsory, but teachers and pedagogic staff (schools-HEIs) have to go through a continuous training programme every 5 years. The training programmes are run in all regions of Kazakhstan. The methods and approaches can be also applied in neighbour countries (i.e. Kyrgyzstan).

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-centred learning as the dominant way of teaching, the programmes are innovative and contribute a lot to the state of the art of 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 of two weeks. The participation in the programmes is free of charge for teachers, who are selected in the admission procedure. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the programmes were transferred to an online format and training was provided in a distance format.

Since both programmes didactically refer to the Experiential Learning Cycle following David A. Kolb's concepts, the participants should be given opportunity to collect experiences in their occupational context. It is therefore recommended to split the two weeks programmes into two separate weeks with a several weeks interval. The first week of the course should be used for learning and training in a supervised environment; the second week should be used to reflect the practical experiences the participants have collected in the meantime in their home institutions.

The concepts 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 structure makes sense, since it guarantees 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. "Educational in-service Professional Development Programme for school teachers  
"Development and Expertise of Assessment Tasks" for the subject "Mathematics"**

*Objectives*

The Programme has been developed in two priority areas:

The first is: knowledge acquisition by types of tasks for evaluation and their features.

The second is: focus on the development and expertise of criteria-based evaluation tools (assessment criteria, tasks, descriptors, and mark schemes).

During the training, teachers acquire competences in analysing learning objectives system and long-term plan in the subject programme for selecting learning objectives to assess, the

development of tasks for summative assessment for unit and term, in expertise tasks for summative assessment for unit and term, in providing feedback on developed tasks, and in improving criteria-based assessment tools (assessment criteria, tasks, descriptors, and mark schemes).

Training is blended: Curriculum involves combination of self-training and classroom training. The training is based on a four-stage empirical model of the learning process (Experimental Learning Model) by David A. Kolb. Curriculum involves learning through personal experience; observation and reflection; using abstract conceptualization; by way of active experiment. Therefore, the programme implements: direct experience; observation, where the attendee considers what she/he just heard; new knowledge comprehension, their conceptual consolidation; pilot testing of new knowledge and their independent application in practice.

### *Concept*

The programme is combined with the expected objectives of the course in introducing a system of criteria-based assessment, and modern pedagogical approaches of active teaching mathematics. The programme is conceptualized as a comprehensive programme, which comprises a duration of 80 academic hours (one academic hour = 45 minutes) of two weeks.

Trainees attend training session for eight hours (9:00 till 18:00 hours with 1 hour lunch break and breaks in-between) in a five-day school week. Occupancy of training groups is not more than 30 trainees. Change of schedule is made on the basis of the relevant order of the Director of CoE.

Trainees familiarize themselves with material that covers different topics: (1) Theoretical aspects of assessment, (2) Closed-ended tasks, (3) Development and expertise of assessment tasks, (4) The process of task development for summative assessment for a unit, (5) The process of task development for summative assessment for a term, (6) Work with assessment outcomes, (7) The process of task development for portfolio.

More attention is suggested to be drawn on the mutual interdependence of teaching, learning and assessment: Do I teach, what I intend to teach? Do the students learn what I intend them to learn? And finally, do I assess what I intend them to learn? Especially when there are some central examination, then “teaching to the test” is well known. And one should confess that some of the well formulated curriculums’ objectives turn out to be anything but easy to assess.

Furthermore, in the course one should reflect and discuss the following problem: it is a big challenge to construct good examples of real-world-centred mathematical tasks. Many so-called “real-world tasks” are anything but artificially “disguised” typical mathematical tasks where

students might learn nothing but to disrobe the text. The worldwide PISA-Programme emphasising mathematical literacy and modelling competences shows how challenging it is for central examinations to cope with this problem.

The expert group recommends that the material (teachers' manuals) should encompass much more of best practice examples. These should address not only calculating and using ready-made recipes, but also reasoning, problem solving, and modelling. Some resources for such an enrichment could be found by respective websites in USA, United Kingdom and Germany, e.g.

<https://www.map.mathshell.org/index.php>

<http://www.corestandards.org/Math/>

<https://nrich.maths.org/>

<https://www.iqb.hu-berlin.de/abitur/sammlung/mathematik>

These examples should allow to be varied and adapted in real classroom situations, and the respective consequences for teaching and learning should be discussed. Such adaptations could be practiced during the training, discussed and reflected and after the training implemented in class and finally reflected concerning the experiences after implementation.

## Conclusion

Overall, the programme seems to be very attractive for many teachers in Kazakhstan. Since its introduction in 2018, the number of enrolled students was 2,483. Out of them, 1,266 completed training in the classroom and 1,217 in a distance learning format. The programme aims at expanding knowledge of basic approaches in criteria-based assessment tools development in the field of Mathematics, as well as raising knowledge and understanding of types and characteristics of tasks used in the process of criteria-based assessment.

The group of experts makes some recommendations and concludes that the training programme "Mathematics" complies with Standard 1.2 Design and approval of programmes. The standard is **fulfilled with recommendations**.

- The teachers' manual should, to a greater extent, include well-chosen tasks serving as best practice examples.
- The course should foster reflecting on the mutual interdependence of teaching, learning and assessment, including the respective challenges and problems.

**b. “Educational in-service PD programme for psychologists of educational organisations”.**

***Objectives***

The needs of participants have been identified and confirmed by the data of a preliminary survey conducted by the CoE in order to establish their readiness for their professional development in the context of updating the content of secondary education in the Republic of Kazakhstan. Based on the attendees' needs, the scientific and theoretical foundations, goals, objectives and expected results of the educational programme were formulated. In addition, regulatory and legal acts regulating the activities of the psychological service of educational organisations were studied.

The programme is aimed at improving the activities of the psychological service of educational organisations. Attendees are introduced to modern practical approaches and concepts aimed at understanding the nature of children's psyche, mechanisms of psychological protection, and consider the development of psychological counselling skills of students, parents and teachers, practical skills in preventing cognitive, emotional, social, behavioural difficulties and disorders, as well as professional psychological reflection for systematic supervision and personal therapy.

Among the competencies that are taught are:

- in-depth knowledge of structure, standards of legal framework for psychological services;
- in-depth knowledge of modern approaches and practices of child, adolescent and youth psychology;
- developed skills in psychological counselling to learners, parents, and teachers;
- developed practical skills in preventing cognitive, emotional, social, behavioural difficulties and disorders;
- developed skills in professional psychological reflection for systematic supervision and personal therapy, school mediation.

However, it can be doubted that a two weeks course is sufficient to acquire “in-depth” knowledge and “developed” skills, especially as no prerequisites for course participation are defined (professional experience, other training). Therefore it is recommended to lower the aspirations for the programme.

The course contents are defined with respect to the participants' job demands. The theoretical and methodical bases of the practices taught can only superficially be dealt with during the course.

The programme is structured according to five important professional practices necessary in teaching students of pedagogical specialties:

1. The basics of modern practical psychology of students (8 hours).
2. Child and adolescent coaching (24 hours);
3. Educational kinesiology (16 hours).
4. Crisis assistance in difficult life situations (24 hours).
5. School mediation (8 hours).

The participants are introduced to practical approaches and concepts aimed at understanding the nature of children's psyche and the mechanisms of psychological protection. They also consider the development of psychological counselling skills for students, parents and teachers, practical skills in preventing cognitive, emotional, social, behavioural difficulties and disorders, as well as professional psychological reflection for systematic supervision and personal therapy.

The contents of the programme do not systematically build on each other. They represent a practice-oriented mix of different approaches and should lead to consultants being able to carry out their work more effectively. As the participants already have a scientific education in psychology, it is acceptable that the present programme places emphasis on practical skills and only sketches out the theoretical foundation.

### *Concept*

The programme provides a certain number of well-described units and terms. The duration of the programme is 80 hours (2 weeks) of classroom training. During the training, time is allocated for practical training of theoretical material within the framework of the intervention and supervision.

The programme's classroom training is carried out on a break from work and in accordance with the training plan and timetable, which allows for optimum performance of training work without additional workloads. During the training, psychologists are relieved of their jobs while retaining their salaries. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the programme was transferred to an online format and training was provided in a distance format.

Trainees familiarize themselves with material that covers different topics: foundations of modern practical psychology of learners, educational kinesiology, Child and adolescent coaching, Crisis assistance in difficult life situations and School mediation. Nevertheless, the expert group considers that the curriculum should include modern-recent practical approaches and concepts (e.g. the mindfulness concept instead of educational kinesiology) to counselling procedures.

CoE should take into consideration the social conditions for school and personal problems, such as cultural, linguistic, and economic disadvantages in the families of problem children.

## Conclusion

Since its introduction in 2019, the number of participants enrolled in the programme has been 2,000 and there have been no dropouts. Out of 2,000 people, 1,135 have completed the course in classroom form and 865 have completed the course in distance format.

The evaluated programme requires learners to study and analyse a significant amount of practical research in the field of practical psychology and psychosocial counselling, and to participate in professional discussions with colleagues and trainers on the practice of using research results in psychological counselling in their own practice. Upon completion of the training, the course provides coaching and psychological support to students in difficult life situations. The expert group recommends that more attention should be given to recent research and suggests the induction of concepts such as mindfulness instead of educational kinesiology, and solution-focused counselling instead of psychoanalytical approaches.

The content of the course is in alignment with the stated objectives, therefore the group of experts concludes that the programme “Psychologists of educational organisations” complies with Standard 1.2 Design and approval of programmes. The standard is **fulfilled with recommendations**.

- The curriculum should include modern-recent practical approaches and concepts (e.g. the mindfulness concept instead of educational kinesiology, and solution-focused counselling) to counselling procedures.
- CoE should take into consideration the social context and societal challenges in the families of school children.
- Due to its broad scope, the programme looks like an introductory course and should be followed up by regular exercises and reflections of good practice.



### 2.3. Student-centred 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 a broader 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 or 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, trainers act as an expert who teaches and develops skills of teachers in unique components of CoE programmes: reflexive writing, self-and mutual evaluation, informational and communicative competence.

#### *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*

Learning methods used in the training are diverse: from mini-lectures to video analysis or role-plays. Learning tasks give the trainees the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned in a real-life or simulated situation. The strategy of choosing the methods follows a well-established procedure: the repertoire used in the training is the one expected to be used in own teaching. All the materials used in classes are available on the homepage of the CoE. Furthermore, the participants can profit from a network community and use webinars or other web-based systems.

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: they work in cooperation; each contributes to the learning, participates in peer learning, sharing knowledge, ideas and experiences. Interactive teaching methods are based on the principles of 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.

The Handbook for Trainers shows that a great part of the teaching time is devoted to small-group work. This is an approach well suited to activate the participants cognitively but it might compromise the systematic and structured presentation of knowledge. Therefore, the group of experts recommend that the balance between structured instruction and case-based reasoning might be reconsidered.

Especially the Mathematics programme is affected by the constructivist approach of learning, compared to "traditional" approaches of knowledge transfer. However, current developments in mathematics education observe a danger of radical constructivism, where learning process is seen in a purely student-centred way, thereby ignoring that teachers have the ethical responsibility not only to organize learning, but be a role model, support according to questions, diagnose and foster learning. The expert group suggests that the training should take into consideration the activity theory (Davydov, Leontiev, Vygotsky) that is already used in the classrooms, and the

mathematical tasks and other material developed in that tradition. Teacher and the students together shape a fruitful mathematical learning arrangement (zone of proximal development developed by Vygotsky).

### *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.

Evaluation approaches and tools have been developed jointly by the Entity's coaches and experts from Center of Measurements (CoM). Evaluation process is consistent and is based on the principles of fair evaluation in accordance with well-organized procedures. Guidelines: Rules for organizing and conducting procedures for summative assessment of attendees' portfolio at professional development courses under "Development and expertise of tasks for assessment" programme on subjects as part of updating the content of secondary education approved by decision of the Management Board dated 12.07.2018 (protocol #41), available on CoM portal at: <http://cpi.nis.edu.kz/> for all stakeholders (teachers, coaches, experts).

For evaluation, teachers prepare portfolios including developed tools for criteria-based assessment of students' academic achievements (tasks for summative assessment for a unit/cross-cutting topic and tasks for summative assessment for a term). Portfolio of summative assessment is carried out by 2 sections:

- section A is evaluated according to "Objectives", "Assessment Criteria", "Tasks", "Descriptors";
- section B - according to "Tasks" and "Mark Scheme".

Regarding the training programme for "Psychologists of educational organisations" a final performance test of counselling competences should be incorporated to get behavioral feedback from the learners. A questionnaire with self-judgments is not sufficient. At least the method of Situational Judgment Tests should be used to examine the participants' progress with respect to the practical application of knowledge and skills.

## Conclusion

The programmes are based on face-to-face 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 artefacts 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-centred 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 with recommendations**.

- Regarding the training programme for “Psychologists of educational organisations” a final performance test should be incorporated to receive feedback on the practical skills of the learners (a questionnaire does not measure skills adequately).

#### 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 enrolment of trainees into courses as well as the certification of achievements. Generally, the enrolment 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*

Teachers applying for courses:

1. have higher pedagogical, post-graduate education, as well as other vocational education in the relevant field or technical and vocational education, document on further training;
2. work in the organizations of education, education authorities, bodies for methodological support;
3. are aware of the laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan regulating the education system;
4. have basic English proficiency (for English competence courses).

The lists of teachers are formed two months before the courses according to the approved plans. Teachers are sent on courses based on the orders of the heads of organizations of education, education authorities, and education departments.

Attendees' admission to courses is executed by the order of the Entity's head based on the letters of the Authorized body responsible for education, education departments with attached lists of attendees. 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 CoE accepts teachers for courses under the educational programme for professional development of psychologists of educational organisations on the basis of the Rules for Organising and conducting professional development courses for teachers, as well as post-course support for teachers, approved by Order No. 95 of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated 28 January 2016.

Attendees are admitted to Educational in-service Professional Development Programme for school teachers “Development and Expertise of Assessment Tasks” for the subject “Mathematics” based on the Rules for organizing and offering professional development courses, as well as post-course support of teacher's activity approved by the order of MES RK dated January 28, 2016 #95.

### *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 the 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. Preparing trainers for the programmes takes place in one face-to-face stage - 80 hours. As part of the training, trainers get acquainted with key ideas of the programmes, features of constructing training sessions, and develop skills for working with an adult audience. The mentoring programme is implemented in two stages:

1<sup>st</sup> stage: mentoring in the inter-course period. In the inter-course period, the expert/mentor conducts trainings, coaching, and master classes on the formation of coaching skills.

2<sup>nd</sup> stage: mentoring during the course. Expert/mentor defines the scope of duties and powers of the beginning coach, especially in the system of training.

In accordance with the Agreement between CoE and University of Cambridge from 2015 to 2019, annually, on the basis of CoE, Cambridge experts hold seminars on professional development of trainers on topics that deepen pedagogical practice: conducting research in action, using methods of subject-language integrated learning, teaching creative writing skills, and developing emotional intelligence. All of CoE trainers underwent advanced training at Cambridge workshops.

Trainers were prepared under programmes of the international school of business trainers ICBT on the issues of conducting effective training, managing group dynamics, conducting managerial coaching and a facilitated session. All of CoE trainers have certificate of training at these seminars.

### *Teaching staff*

Under the training programme for “Psychologists of educational organisations” 37 trainers have been trained, including 7 senior managers/managers on the staff of the CoE and 30 psychologists from Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools JSC, who are engaged as contractors under the Contract of service on conducting professional development courses for the involved individuals who are citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Staff and external trainers carry out identical activities on training listeners and post-course support for teachers.

For the training programme “Mathematics” experts from among the teachers of mathematics working in the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools were involved as experts in training trainers. The programme has trained 35 coaches, including 9 Senior Managers/Managers being employed in CoE staff, and 26 people from among instructors of general education institutions from the regions of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The teaching load of CoE trainers is optimal and commensurate with the load of the teaching staff of universities/colleges. Coaching activities include the following types of work: educational (classroom and out-of-school) and extracurricular (teaching, research). In the framework of extracurricular activities, CoE coaches provide post-course methodological support to teachers who have been trained on in-training courses under the programme.

#### *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.

### *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 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 analyses 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](http://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

Based on the self-evaluation report of CoE, the Center deploys a pre-course, a course and a post-course monitoring process. During the pre-course monitoring, definition of professional needs of the target audience are being set. This input is used for formulating the goals, objectives and expected results of the educational programmes. During the course, the relevance and practical significance of educational programmes, the quality of educational process organization and the efficiency of trainers during teaching are being examined. This input allows timely adjustment of educational programmes and the course of study, while forecasting further development of processes. Lastly, during the post-course monitoring, the real condition of school practice with success criteria is assessed. The post-course input is used for approving the relevance and correspondence of programmes with requests of consumers of educational services and interested persons/stakeholders.

The monitoring methods include: questioning, pedagogical supervision, interview, research conversation, studying of documentation, studying of products of pupils' activity, the theoretical analysis of pedagogical ideas, methods of mathematical statistics, essay writing.

All two evaluated programmes have undergone periodic review, according to the above-mentioned methodology.

For the "Mathematics" programme, 4 monitoring researches have been conducted (1 pre-course, 2 course and 1 post-course). For the "Psychologists of educational organisations" 3 monitoring researches have been conducted (1 pre-course, 1 course and 1 post-course).

Regarding the "Mathematics" programme, the results of course monitoring showed that over 83.0% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the training format, level of organizational solutions and the time budget allocated for programme mastering emphasizing that all factors together ensured the training efficiency. 96.3% rated the Programme content as "excellent" and "good" on rating scale.

Over 93.0% expressed their confidence that training content optimally combines theoretical and methodological aspects, enabled to:

- get comprehensive information on the evaluation principles and features, as well as the basic approaches to the assessment tools development and expertise;
- learn the task types and characteristics used during evaluation;
- understand the basics of assessment tools development and expertise.

On average, about 76.0% noted that over 50.0% of sections and topics are new for them and contain practical information, in particular:

- tasks development algorithms;
- thinking skills levels;
- open-ended and closed-ended tasks;
- preparation and expertise of descriptors and mark schemes.

Over 87.0% believe that despite the meta-subject nature of the programme content, the methods and approaches proposed for the development and expertise of tasks for assessment are suitable and effective for Mathematics.

For the programme "Psychologists of educational organisations" on average, 84,6% recognized the relevance and practical significance of the programme content; noted effective training format, timely resolution of organizational issues; 94.3% agree that the time budget is sufficient to fully master the programme content and understand the strategy for introducing its key ideas in practice.

On average, 95.0% rated the programme content as "excellent" and "good" on rating scale.

About 87.0% noted the optimal combination of theoretical and practical-methodological information in the Programme content, thereby achieving the training goal:

- development of professional knowledge and skills of effective organization of psychological services in the organizations of education;

and the objectives set:

- 1) to promote a better understanding of the structure, standards of legal framework for psychological services;
- 2) to improve the knowledge of modern approaches and practices of child, adolescent and youth psychology;
- 3) to develop skills in psychological counselling to students, parents, and teachers;



- 4) to develop practical skills in preventing cognitive, emotional, social, behavioural difficulties and disorders;
- 5) to develop skills in professional psychological reflection for systematic supervision and personal therapy, school mediation.

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. Recommendation on certification**

#### **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 expert group 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.

The expert group recommends the certification of the training programmes **without any conditions** and proposes the following **recommendations**.

#### **Recommendations**

##### **1. General recommendations for all programmes**

- To make external quality control productive the expert group recommends to invite for discussion of training programs not only CoE administration and programme developers, but also trainers who work in practice (for both programmes).

##### **2. "Educational in-service Professional Development Programme for school teachers "Development and Expertise of Assessment Tasks" for the subject "Mathematics"**

- The teachers' manual should, to a greater extent, include well-chosen tasks serving as best practice examples.
- The course should foster reflecting on the mutual interdependence of teaching, learning and assessment, including the respective challenges and problems.

##### **3. "Educational in-service PD programme for psychologists of educational organisations"**

- For more strengthening strategic partnership with regional universities the expert group recommends to include the educational programme for Psychologists of educational

organisations as an elective course in HEIs. The discipline will contribute to the development of future psychologists' necessary professional competencies.

- The curriculum should include modern-recent practical approaches and concepts (e.g. the mindfulness concept instead of educational kinesiology, and solution-focused counselling) to counselling procedures.
- CoE should take into consideration the social context and societal challenges in the families of school children.
- Due to its broad scope, the programme looks like an introductory course and should be followed up by regular exercises and reflections of good practice.
- A final performance test should be incorporated to receive feedback on the practical skills of the learners (a questionnaire does not measure skills adequately).

### **III Decision of the ACQUIN Accreditation Commission**

Based on the evaluation report of the expert group, on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2020 the Accreditation Commission of ACQUIN takes the following decisions:

**Educational in-service Professional Development Programme for school teachers  
“Development and Expertise of Assessment Tasks” for the subject “Mathematics”**

**The Educational in-service Professional Development Programme for school teachers “Development and Expertise of Assessment Tasks” for the subject “Mathematics” is certified without any conditions.**

**The certification is valid until 30 September 2026.**

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

- The teachers’ manual should, to a greater extent, include well-chosen tasks serving as best practice examples.
- The course should foster reflecting on the mutual interdependence of teaching, learning and assessment, including the respective challenges and problems.

**Educational in-service PD programme for psychologists of educational organisations**

**The “Educational in-service PD programme for psychologists of educational organisations” is certified without any conditions.**

**The certification is valid until 30 September 2026.**

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

- The Center of Excellence is suggested to include the educational programme for Psychologists of educational organisations as an elective course to HEIs. The discipline will contribute to the development of future psychologists’ necessary professional competencies.
- The curriculum should include modern-recent practical approaches and concepts (e.g. the mindfulness concept instead of educational kinesiology, and solution-focused counselling) to counselling procedures.
- Center of Excellence should take into consideration the social context and societal challenges in the families of school children.
- Due to its broad scope, the programme looks like an introductory course and should be followed up by regular exercises and reflections of good practice.
- A final performance test should be incorporated in the programme to receive feedback on the practical skills of the learners (a questionnaire does not measure skills adequately).

**General Recommendations for all programmes**

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

- To make external quality control productive the expert group recommends that Center of Excellence invites for discussion of training programs not only CoE administration and programme developers, but also trainers who work in practice.