Certification report

Center of Excellence of the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools

Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan

"School Team: Effective Management and Quality of Education"

I   Procedure

Date of contract: 22 August 2022

Date of the submission of self-assessment report: 30 September 2022

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Attendance by ACQUIN office: Yuliya Balakshiy

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Peer review experts:

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The **Assessment Report** of the peer-review experts is **based on** the self-assessment report of the Education Institution and discussions with its management, heads of the departments, heads of the study programme, lecturers, staff representatives, students, and alumni.

The basis of the **Assessment Criteria** is part 1 of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) in the current official version. At the same time the national context, particularly the national regulations regarding the establishment of study programmes, are taken into account.

Content

II Introduction

The experts would like to thank the representatives of the institution as well as its trainees for taking part in the discussions and readily sharing information and their views during the discussions. These conversations are valuable not only for the assessment of the institution but also for a better understanding of the legal and sociocultural context of the local education system.

The evaluation basis for the peer-review experts is the self-assessment report of the institution as well as intensive online discussions with the institution management, heads of the departments, head(s) of the study programme, study programme coordinators, trainers, trainees, graduates, and administrative staff.

The main objective of the certification procedure is to assess the quality of the study programme and its compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). The ESG standards are applied as the main assessment criteria in the international certification procedure. In addition, the respective country-specific criteria and standards are taken into account.

A group of experts is set up to ensure that all areas relevant to the certification procedure (e.g., legal, structural, social, etc. aspects) as well as the ESG and national criteria are considered. The peer-review experts include professors, a representative of the professional practice, and a student representative. A certificate with the ACQUIN seal is awarded upon successful certification of the study programme.

1 Short profile of the Institution

The Center of Excellence is a state-funded public educational institution in the Republic of Kazakhstan. In 2011, the government authorised conceptual approaches to the development of the training system and professional development of Kazakhstani teachers by order of the President. The autonomous educational organisation, Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools, was given the authority to establish the Center of Excellence for developing programmes of in-service training for domestic pedagogic staff and educational organisation heads based on the best local and global practice in collaboration with foreign partners.

The institution's profile comprises planning, devising, and delivering in-service teacher professional courses and programmes, monitoring course training and post-course activities, and providing methodological assistance to educators. The Center of Excellence consists of a central office (currently employing staff of 77) and 15 branches spread out across regional hubs and cities in Kazakhstan (with a

total of 109 employees): Shymkent (15), Almaty (10), Ust-Kamenogorsk (10), Taldykorgan (9), Petro-pavlovsk (7), Kyzylorda (7), Uralsk (7), Aktobe (6), Karaganda (6), Kokshetau (6), Kostanay (6), Aktau (5), Atyrau (5), Pavlodar (5), and Taraz (5).

The central office is located in Astana. The structure includes executives (a director and 3 deputy directors) and 10 departments (73 people): Department of Educational Programmes (13), Department of Methodological Work (13), Department of Publishing and Image Support (10), Department of Information Technology (9), Department of Administrative and Legal Support (7), Department of Organising Educational Process (6), Department of Accounting (6), Department of Analysis and Monitoring (4), Planning and Economic Department (4), and Printing Office (1 person).

The overall number of full-time employees amounts to 186, including 85 qualified trainers. The Center of Excellence employs 18 Doctoral degree holders, 77 Master of Science degree holders, 3 Bolashak international scholarship recipients founded by the President, and graduates of renowned foreign institutions.

Over 213 in-service teacher advanced training courses have been created by the Center of Excellence in collaboration with its strategic partner, Cambridge University (UK). Upwards of 7,100 trainers have been trained for the implementation of in-service teacher professional course programmes, including 25 trainers for School Team: Effective Management and Quality of Education. Since 2012, the Center of Excellence has taught approximately 318,000 Kazakhstani teachers.

Following the onset of the pandemic, the in-service teacher professional courses have been partially or entirely delivered in a distance learning form. The education portal (sdo.cpm.kz) has been created for this purpose.

Teachers and school leaders receive post-course support after completing in-service teacher professional courses through the educational portal (www.cpm.kz offers a network community, blogs, forums, etc.) and have access to the Center of Excellence methodological library, workshops, conferences, coaching, trainings, webinars, and consultations. Since 2012, 40 issues of Pedagogical Dialogue journal have been published. The Center of Excellence methodological library contains 563 methodological and information-analytical elements.

The implementation of the educational process is supported by internal monitoring studies, so far these are the basis for the compilation of 33 analytical reports. The Center of Excellence have conducted 123 surveys with 603,080 respondents within the period of 2012-2021. The results were published in 55 books and 20 brochures.

Achievements of the Center of Excellence and Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools are recognised by international organisations. Since November 2015, the Center of Excellence has been the 18th member of the World Association for Lesson Studies, a pedagogical approach that promotes the professional development of teachers. It regularly participates in the World Association for Lesson Studies conferences, presenting the best Kazakh experience in the practical use of lesson studies. In 2017, Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools was included in the short list of 11 organisations in Asia and the Pacific region of the Wenhui 2017 Innovation in Teacher Professional Development Award by the UNESCO Secretariat, Bangkok.

Ten educational programmes of in-service teacher professional courses have been honoured with unconditional international certification from the Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute ACQUIN. The Center of Excellence actively cooperates with educational organisations in Kazakhstan, Finland, Estonia, Russia, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.

2   General information on the study programme

School Team: Effective Management and Quality of Education

Educational programme of teacher professional course for leaders of educational organisations

Location	Astana, Kazakhstan
Date of introduction	01.11.2021
Faculty/department	Department of Educational Programmes
Duration	176 hours
Target group(s)	Teams of principals, vice-principals, and teachers at schools
Admission requirements	Student enrolment is carried out in accordance with paragraph 7 of the current Order of the Minister of Education and Science of Kazakhstan dated 28 January,2016, No. 95, which reads as follows: Teachers applying for training in the courses should have higher pedagogical, postgraduate education, as well as other professional education in the relevant profile or technical and vocational education, a document on retraining; work in educational organisations, educational authorities, bodies for methodological support; know the legislation of Kazakhstan regulating the activities of the education system. The programme requires the enrolment of a team of three people from each school: a principal, a vice-principal, and a teacher-leader.
Form of study	Face-to-face training
Tuition fee	Funded from the state budget

III   Implementation and assessment of the criteria

1   ESG Standard 1.1: Policy for quality assurance

> **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.**

1.1   Implementation

The Center of Excellence sees itself as a leader in the field of in-service professional development of Kazakhstani teachers. Its mission which is defined as "to use the best domestic and international experience, human and methodological resources of the organisation for the continuous professional development of teachers in order to improve the education system of Kazakhstan," is consonant with the mission of the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools' Strategy-2030 "to contribute to increasing intellectual potential through the integration of the best national, international experience, and significant scientific achievements of practical orientation in the field of secondary education."

The implementation of the Center of Excellence strategic objectives is based on the system of internal quality assurance of education, which is a set of organisational structures, procedures, processes, and resources necessary for quality management, regulated by the Quality Assurance Policy of the Center of Excellence.

The Policy aims at supporting the organisation and quality assurance systems, taking responsibility, and involving stakeholders in the quality assurance process and ethical standards, ensuring transparency and social responsibility, innovation, integration of science, practice, and production. The Policy promotes culture of quality in which all stakeholders are committed to the values and principles of the Policy, take responsibility for quality, and are involved in quality assurance at their respective levels.

The administrative and management apparatus, employees and trainees are committed to the principles of the Policy, promote the integration of science, education, and practice, and bear mutual responsibility for their implementation.

The Policy is reflected in the approved internal Rules for the development, coordination, and approval of educational programmes for professional development courses for teachers and the Regulations for the organisation and conduct of professional development courses for teachers and employees of the Center of Excellence.

1.2 Assessment

The implementation of the strategic objectives of the Center of Excellence is based on the system of internal quality assurance of education, which is a set of organisational structures, procedures, processes, and resources necessary for quality management, regulated by the quality assurance policy of the institution. The policy is available in three languages – Kazakh, Russian, and English – on the official website of the Center of Excellence. The quality assurance policy sets out the general rules for the internal organisation of the activities of the Center, its structural units, and branches.

The administrative staff, employees, and trainees of the Center of Excellence are committed to the principles of the quality assurance policy, promoting the real integration of science, education, and practice, and being mutually responsible for its implementation.

In its quality assurance policy, the Center of Excellence follows the principles of tolerance, which are interpreted as openness to all regardless of ethnicity, gender, nationality, social status, or physical condition, and equality, understood as provision of equal conditions regardless of origin, social, official or property status, gender, race, nationality, language, place of residence, or any other circumstances. Quality management of the educational process, as well as the processes accompanying its effectiveness, is implemented as a sequence of stages forming a single algorithm of actions.

1.3 Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

2 ESG Standard 1.2: Design and approval of programmes

> **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.**

2.1 Implementation

The Center of Excellence can establish programmes based on a state directive from the Ministry of Education, a request from Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools or third-party organisations within the scope of contractual relationships, or its own initiative.

The programme development process includes several stages. First, a preliminary review of Kazakhstani law and regulatory legal framework is performed to look for modifications in present requirements or the development of new ones. After that, to identify professional challenges and needs, diagnostics (pre-course research) using instructor surveys is conducted. An analytical report is included. Subsequently, at a meeting of the Scientific and methodological council, the results of the legal acts analysis and pre-course study are discussed. The debate leads to the decision to create a training programme, which is followed by the issuance of a programme creation order outlining the time, title, duration, and structure of a course, as well as the programme creators. Employees from different departments and branches, as well as external organisations, might be engaged in the development of programmes. The next stage involves the official website. Under the heading Discussion of Educational Programmes for Teacher Professional Courses, the project for the created educational programme is posted for public discussion. Ten working days after the programme posting on the internet, it can be publicly discussed. The penultimate stage is revision of educational programme by Expert Council of Ministry of Education and Science, followed by expert opinion with approval, reviewing, or refusal. Finally, approval of the educational programme follows the orders of the Center of Excellence and Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools.

The programme corresponds to the general objectives of Strategy-2030, particularly the strategic direction of Transmission of experience and support of innovations. According to the Policy, the programme content is based on the findings of an analysis of Kazakhstani regulatory legal statutes, pre-course research on the challenges and needs of school administrators, and a public discussion among

the pedagogical community and other interested parties on the website. The programme integrates external expert data and guidelines.

The programme, which is a component of the system of ongoing professional development for teachers, guarantees the steady advancement of its target students who had previously taken courses in Teacher Leadership in the Pedagogical Community, Teacher Leadership in School, and Innovative Management in School Management.

The programme determines the expected workload of students in accordance with the Rules for the organisation and conduct of professional development courses for teachers, as well as post-course support for teacher activities. It was approved by the Expert Council of the Ministry of Education and by the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools Board.

The needs of the programme participants have been determined and confirmed by the data of the pre-course study conducted by the Center to establish the teacher needs in professional development and difficulties in the context of continuous professional development and change management in school on a team basis.

The scientific and theoretical underpinnings, aims, objectives, and anticipated outcomes of the programme have been identified based on the stated needs of the students. The programme aims at developing the professional competencies of school leaders in managing changes in the school through project management on combining the efforts of school leaders in the school team.

The training contributes to the development of the following skills and competencies: skills in designing the development of their school as a learning organisation; skills of creating a school team, defining the tasks of the team and assigning roles to its members, taking into account their personal and professional qualities, skills in managing resistance to change; skills to determine the values and principles of work of their team, the skills of effective communication and stimulation of team members; skills to determine the current state of the school on the basis of a problem-oriented analysis of the work of the school to determine the direction of further development; skills in developing an educational project to improve the learning process and manage its implementation using project management tools.

The formation of skills and competencies of the programme students is monitored by the trainers in the course through formative assessment with tasks, given in the presentation materials of the course and the student's workbook, student reflective reports; and the final summative assessment of the educational project to improve learning in accordance with the assessment criteria in section 8 Assessment of learning outcomes.

The programme implementation involves three stages. Stage 1 is theoretical part for the development of professional competencies in accordance with the goals and objectives of the programme, which includes the following modules: school as a learning organisation, formation of school teams of teachers, the team and the basics of its productive activity, change management in the school, and project activities.

Students get acquainted with the concept of the school as a model of a learning organisation, in which a principal and teachers collectively and continuously create a common vision of school improvement and jointly implement it based on culture of innovation and research, team learning and cooperation. Realising the value of the school team in the growth of the institution as a learning organisation, school administrators choose the team organisational structure, forecast the distribution of roles, and plan activities to deal with any potential resistance to change based on situational leadership and resistance-busting techniques. In order to execute changes to improve the school, students also practice coordinating good communication and providing incentives for efficient management of the school team.

Based on the analysis of the school profile (a set of traits and parameters derived from academic data that describe the current state of the organisation), the study of current educational trends, and the development of project management skills using project management tools, school leaders create an educational project to enhance learning.

In Stage 2, students put the programme principles into practice by creating a school team and completing project tasks to enhance teaching and learning in the classroom. Practice in school lasts for 80 hours. A school team is formed by school leaders during school practice, and its productive efforts are organised in accordance with the team project on school improvement. Intermediate outcomes are then analysed in order to make adjustments. As part of formative assessment, trainers assist (offline/online) school teams in managing the educational project on school improvement and team growth.

Stage 3 involves reflection on the implementation of a project to improve education in schools using the following set of criteria: productivity, cohesion, teaching, and integration.

The programme includes educational and methodological set consisting of the Student Guide with theoretical content of the programme; Student Workbook for independent and collaborative work of students on the development of knowledge and skills, in accordance with the goals and objectives of the programme; presentation materials on the main ideas on the topics of the programme; practical tasks for working out student skills and competencies; and lesson plans for methodological support of the trainer.

Within the parameters of the state order put out by the Ministry of Education, the number of students participating in the programme is specified. All trainees within the programme are supposed to be taught by 5,133 instructors. In 2021, only 223 students received training due to the pandemic, and 369 students will be trained by the end of 2022. Additionally, the Center expect to train another 4,541 more Kazakh school leaders between 2023 and 2025. In 2021, all students completed the programme with certificates. 100% completion was ensured by the continuous support of students by the programme trainers through consultations, school visits and online webinars.

Stage 1 of the programme lasts for seven days (56 academic hours in the classroom), Stage 2 is completed in four weeks (80 academic hours of classroom instruction), and Stage 3 is completed in five days (face-to-face) (40 academic hours). The programme requires the enrolment of a team of three people from each school: a principal, a vice-principal, and a teacher-leader.

2.2 Assessment

Based on the documents made available, the programme appears to be fully aligned with the overall strategy of the Center of Excellence. The programme development process is a systematic, multi-stage process that involves all key stakeholders at some point and is developed in a way that ensures that the design of the programme is aligned with the objectives set for it.

An extensive pre-course teacher survey was used to gather important clues about challenges teachers and school leaders are facing. Students are involved in the design of the study programme in the sense that many activities are based on their experiences and in the sense that there appears to be a system of feedback and evaluation in place.

The main objectives of the study programme are to convey theoretical and practical knowledge of key subject areas for school leaders as well as leadership teams. These subject areas include schools as learning organisations, knowledge about the formation of school teams of teachers and about change management in a school. The theoretical components are contextualised and put into practice through individual school projects which are also reflected. The objectives adequately reflect the requirements from the professional field. They are very ambitious for a course with a total of 176 academic hours.

The curriculum covers all central aspects derived from the main objectives. It is comprehensive as all subjects covered are relevant, not only in the context of educational leadership in Kazakhstan, but in the context of effective educational leadership in general.

At first glance, the student workload is not sufficiently defined. While the workload per stage of the programme is precisely defined, it still leaves room for interpretation on what part of what stage corresponds to what number of hours. There are detailed course schedules, however, that provide a helpful overview of the structured time spent in class.

The experts are of the opinion that the programme reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe to the limited degree that these purposes can apply to such a programme. The programme succeeds in creating a broad advanced knowledge base and in providing many drivers for personal development.

The contents of the curriculum appear to be well-chosen. The project also holds tremendous potential as an avenue of applied school improvement where everything that the participants learn in the programme can be put to use. However, with the project being a central piece, trainers need to ensure that participants have sufficient time to choose a project and that the support for developing and implementing a project is meaningful. Based on the documentation and the virtual on-site visit, the expert group sees the potential for trainers to do more in this regard.

While the documentation involving Stage 1 of the programme was detailed and transparent, experts recommend rights and obligations of the trainees, trainers, and the Center as an institution to be made more transparent for Stages 2 and 3.

That all being said, the expert group would like to highlight the unique nature of this in-service training programme that involves teams of three from each of the schools, a headmaster, deputy head, and a teacher. They join efforts in drafting and implementing of a project made-to-measure for the needs and requirements of their specific school context.

2.3 Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

3 ESG Standard 1.3: Student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment

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

3.1 Implementation

The programme is being implemented by the Center of Excellence trainers that follow the andragogy, coaching approach, interaction, equality, and constructive feedback tenets. Based on the trainees' prior knowledge, active learning techniques are used, such as brainstorming, sociometry, video analysis, cinema metaphor, role-playing games, theme exercises, mini-lectures, warm-ups, facilitation, moderation, sharing, etc. The trainer can act as an organiser-facilitator of activities and groups, while the semantic content is created by the participants themselves, based on their experience. The social component of learning is reinforced in group and pair work.

The importance of defining precise goals is highlighted. The trainers do this by using innovative models for designing training sessions, the backward Design process, and the SMART-goals approach. These strategies attempt to make learning inclusive and to help each learner receive personalised results session by session.

To conduct evaluation (quality assessment) of teaching and learning, the trainers use methods of self- and mutual evaluation according to specific criteria and standards of assessment. These criteria are known to the students in advance, discussed and analysed by them beforehand. The criteria and standards are aimed at assessing the knowledge and understanding of the ideas of the programme. Special consideration is given to the authenticity of practice and the principles of academic honesty, reflections of students, the ability to analyse the results of their own activities.

Assessment of learning outcomes includes current formative and final summative assessment. Formative assessment is implemented based on assessment criteria developed in accordance with the learning objectives and expected outcomes for the topic of the training session. Trainers offer comments to students while they work in pairs and groups, along with students reflecting on their own efforts and progress in learning.

During the school practice period, to formatively assess school teams and provide methodological support for the implementation of the ideas of the programme, the trainers visit school teams. They use various methods of formative assessment, including facilitating group meetings with the school team,

individual conversations with teachers and students, lesson observations followed by constructive feedback. For objectivity and independent assessment of the knowledge gained, the programme trainers cross-visit schools and conduct formative assessment of school teams trained by other trainers.

The reflective report on the implementation of the project demonstrates the effectiveness and project outcomes, conclusions of the project, as well as sustainability and institutionalisation section, i.e., an explanation of whether the results or activities of the project will be supported or institutionalised in the school and in what way.

Student reports allow the trainer to evaluate the work of school leaders in creating and developing a school team that promotes the improvement of learning within the framework of an educational project and to track the formation of skills and competencies of the programme. In addition, student reports are evidence for the evaluation of the work of the trainer of the programme.

The final summative assessment is based on the defence of educational projects by school teams to improve the quality of education. In collaboration with a different trainer, the course's instructor conducts the evaluation. Criteria for evaluating educational projects is divided into the relevance of the project, its optimality, implementability, and consistency of the target component of the project.

3.2 Assessment

The evaluation results in general are very positive. The measures, which arise out of the evaluation outcomes, are monitored, and feedbacked to the students. It is visible, that there exists a cohesion within the students and all status groups are interested in quality improvement at schools.

At the same time, as the programme grows to take students from different backgrounds into consideration, the Center of Excellence should ensure that the workload stays reasonable by continuously monitoring it. This also affects the timelines, e.g., for projects, which could be made a little longer for getting more in contact with the topics the students have to work on. It is essential to keep the workload and timescales fair, to keep the discontinuation rate low, and to support students appropriately.

The assessment system allows for ongoing evaluation and improvement of teaching methods. The students have sufficient possibilities to place suggestions for improvement regarding the approaches to teaching.

Autonomy in selecting a specific programme does not exist, the learning curriculum is prescribed. Nonetheless, there are projects which are tailor-made to address specific issues at a specific school.

The types and methods of teaching and learning are sufficiently varied. They are also outcome-centered and offer the possibility of active learning. The criteria and methods of assessment are clearly defined. The whole examination process is transparent and promotes a reliable assessment.

Collaborative learning and student cooperation are valued highly in many teaching and learning methods.

3.3   Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled.**

4 **ESG Standard 1.4: Student admission, progression, recognition, and certification**

> **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.**

4.1 Implementation

The Center of Excellence has approved the rules for organising and conducting teacher professional courses, which are available on the websites www.cpm.kz and sdo.cpm.kz. Admission of students for the programme, their progression, the recognition, and the certification are carried out in accordance with these rules.

Two months before to the commencement of the course, the Center of Excellence compiles a list of participants based on applications received from republican organisations and district, municipal, and regional educational departments. The programme requires the enrolment of a team of three people from each school: a principal, a vice-principal, and a teacher-leader.

Teachers applying for training in the courses should have higher pedagogical, postgraduate education, as well as other professional education in the relevant profile or technical and vocational education, a document on retraining; work in educational organisations, educational authorities, bodies for methodological support; know the legislation of Kazakhstan regulating the activities of the education system.

A contract-offer is concluded for training at professional development courses at the Center of Excellence. The offer agreement outlines the fundamental rights and obligations of the institution and the learner that govern how professional development courses for teachers are conducted and determines the responsibility and procedure for resolving disputes.

The programme educational approach follows the Rules for arranging and conducting teacher professional courses. The Rules are approved by the Ministry of Education and Center of Excellence itself. They outline how courses are organised and delivered, the enrolment procedure and timeframe, the conditions for issuing certificates, the procedure for conducting a post-course support of trained teachers.

By entering a login and password for permission, all programme participants are given access to all resources. Before the start of the course, students are introduced to the support capabilities (library, technical support, the website, and platform).

Courses are conducted in accordance with the curricula, timetable of classes and schedule, approved by order of the director. Student groups are formed according to the languages of instruction. Student groups are limited to a maximum of 30 persons. The duration of one academic hour of training session is 45 minutes. Classroom classes for students can begin and conclude between 9 am and 6 pm but should not exceed 10 academic (8 astronomical) hours per day. Within a 5-day week, the lunch hour runs from 1 pm to 2 pm. The Center of Excellence and its branches provide students with training materials in paper and/or electronic form, certificates of completion of the full amount of the training and final assessment, necessary stationery items, and additional materials.

The procedure for retaking the final exam is carried out in line with Ministry of Education Rules with a maximum of once a year and at the expense of the student. For the students who have attended the course, Center of Excellence issues a certificate (in the established form) according to the standard agreed with the Ministry of Education, reflecting the topic and number of the hours.

The certificate is signed by the Center of Excellence director and is valid for a period of five years from the date of issuance.

4.2   Assessment

The enrolment of trainees to the programme, professional development, recognition, and attestation are carried out in accordance with the rules of the organisation and conduct of professional courses for teachers, approved by the Center of Excellence and published on websites www.cpm.kz and sdo.cpm.kz. The list of trainees for the programme are finalised by the Center of Excellence two months before the actual start of the course according to the applications received from district, city, or region education departments and national organisations.

The requirements for teachers entering the courses are clearly described in the orders approved by the Ministry of Education and in the Rules on organising and conducting professional development courses for teachers of the Center of Excellence. The regulations are publicly available for students on the official website.

The Center of Excellence and its branches provide the trainees with training materials in paper and/or electronic form, certificates of completion of full training and final attestation, the necessary stationery, and additional materials. Collection, monitoring, and processing of information on academic progress and student attendance are carried out on the basis of information systems (esus.kz and sdo.cpm.kz).

If a student requires a re-sit, the final exam is administered at their expense and no more frequently than once per year. Thus, this method gives course students additional motivation to acquire the necessary knowledge and prepare for the final exam. A certificate is given to the students once they have finished the course in the form agreed upon with the Ministry of Education, indicating the topic and the number of hours. The certificate is signed by the Director of the Center of Excellence and is valid for 5 years from the date of issue.

4.3   Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

## 5	ESG Standard 1.5: Teaching staff

> **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**

### 5.1	Implementation

The programme is taught by 25 qualified trainers who are the Center of Excellence employees, 21 of them hold master's degrees and four of them are candidates in pedagogical sciences. The trainers are required to have a higher pedagogical education and at least 8 years of experience teaching school principal training programmes (e.g., Management and Leadership in Education or Innovative Management). The majority of the trainers hold a University of Cambridge certificate.

Most trainers update their credentials and qualifications each year, for example, to date, they have participated in the seminar titled Ideas, tools in the implementation of inclusive education with international experts from the University of Jyväskylä (2021, Finland), Formation of functional reading skills with the experts from Estonia (2020), School management with the experts from the University of North Carolina (2019, USA), training on Neuromarketing with PhD, Dean of AlmaU University (2022, Kazakhstan).

The trainers develop methodological manuals and recommendations with the assignment of ISBN, publish articles in scientific journals and the Center of Excellence journal titled Pedagogical Dialogue.

The educational workload of the Center of Excellence trainers is appropriate and comparable to that of university/college teaching personnel, an average of 800 classroom hours, which contributes to the continuous development of teaching practice. Training activities include curricular (classroom) and extracurricular (educational-methodical and research) work.

The training schedule for the programme is a mix of classroom and out-of-classroom modules. During the classroom module (Stage 1), the trainers support school teams in studying global trends in school education, the characteristics of the learning organisation, change management models, and develop change management projects.

During the practice period, the trainers provide students with additional educational and methodological support, promote the application of the acquired knowledge and skills into practice, conduct formative assessment and provide constructive feedback to school teams during visits to school organisations, as well as online (e-mail, Zoom, the Center of Excellence official website).

Stage 3 is a reflection on the practice in school, when the trainers facilitate school leaders' reflections on the implementation of their educational project on student learning improvement and design the work of the school team for its further implementation.

In the extracurricular period the trainers carry out post-course methodological support for the students of the programme via webinars/seminars, individual/group consultations on the development of school teams, planning activities and supporting change management projects in schools.

On the initiative of local education authorities, the Center of Excellence educates methodologists from regional education departments to provide timely methodological support to programme learners. During the 5-day course, the trainers introduce the methodologists with the aims, ideas, and content of the programme, as well as examine practical scenarios on delivering feedback to school teams in project implementation.

The programme creators provide an 80-hour face to face training session to all of the programme trainers before the course begins. The trainers get acquainted with the key ideas of the programme, the ways of designing training sessions, work out practical cases with the possible implementation options/problems during implementation, as well as find solutions and monitor projects.

To improve efficiency and ongoing reflection on their own practice, programme trainers are evaluated externally once a year (recertification) at the Expert Council of the Center for Pedagogical Measurements (Kazakhstan). Recertification includes the preparation of 2 reports: effective practice (planning, teaching, and assessment), and reflection and development (learning and changing future practice). In addition, external assessment requires the mandatory experts' observations of the trainer classes, with the provision of feedback to improve training practice.

Every two years, the Center of Excellence conducts internal certification of its staff to determine the level of professional training, legal culture, IT skills, and business qualities of its employees. Based on the results of the certification, a decision is made to increase/maintain the category with the appropriate monthly salary. The Center of Excellence has the system of rewarding its employees for performing work that led to an improvement in the performance, based on the quarterly assessment of the work.

In 2022, the Center of Excellence created a methodological day off work (one a month) for working in libraries, writing papers, visiting national museums, conducting research, etc. to minimise professional and emotional burnout among its staff.

5.2 Assessment

The Center of Excellence employs a cascade model involving experts, trainers, and trainees to ensure its programmes are conducted in accordance with the intended approach by those not directly involved into the programme creation. The trainer pool is created based on specific requirements to be considered for the positions available and on the extensive in-person training for the trainers. The latter also have to periodically undergo further training and re-certification.

The priority task of the Center of Excellence is the preparation of the training staff for the training of teachers of the republic in educational programmes of professional development. In order to ensure continuous professional development and increase the methodological potential of the training personnel, a system of continuous training has been created, which includes training on additional courses, seminars, involvement in the drafting of professional development programmes, writing methodological aids for teachers, participation in national and international conferences. On top of that, trainers are provided with comprehensive training materials and manuals which help them maintain the efficiency and quality of training provided by them.

More than 7,100 trainers have been trained to deliver professional development programmes for teachers on a local level, including 25 for the programme undergoing certification.

Various measures have been implemented to provide trainers with opportunities for personal and professional development, including time for being in training on various topics, research, and devoting one day per month for their self-development aspirations and efforts.

All in all, the teaching staff is well trained for teaching in the programme. The Center of Excellence has developed several procedures assuring high quality standards. At the same time, the requirements for staff guiding the learning of the programme's participants have been clearly defined. This is particularly true for Stage 1 of the programme's implementation. Achieving a similarly detailed description for Stages 2 and 3 can even be a further addendum to an already excellent programme. In addition, besides the impressive ways to prepare trainers for their work in the programme, the Center might consider further procedures supporting trainers in the case of unforeseeable events, potential conflicts, or temporarily overload. Established procedures to provide short-term support to staff members can further contribute towards an excellent work environment for trainers.

5.3 Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

6 ESG Standard 1.6: Learning resources and student support

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

6.1 Implementation

Before the programme begins, the instructors inform the learners of the available assistance (technical support, methodological, the Center of Excellence website and platform, library, post-course support). The Center of Excellence and its branches provide the technical equipment and materials needed to arrange and run the course.

All classrooms with a sitting capacity of up to 30 people (from 50-70 sq.m.) are equipped with tables, chairs, modern computer equipment, a trainer's workplace, interactive whiteboards, a speaker's stand, a water dispenser, as well as surge protectors for charging various devices, peripheral equipment and printing devices, individual workplaces where students can work on a personal computer (work on the platform, check personal e-mail, print out the material necessary for them). All stationery is given at no cost. Free Internet with a channel speed of 125 mb/s is available for students in all classrooms, including personal devices (laptops/tablets). Laptops and short-throw projectors with a mobile screen are used to carry out activities of the courses. Every year, the equipment at the Center of Excellence is updated.

The Center of Excellence classrooms contain educational and methodical literature and resources including books, methodical manuals, recommendations, and journals. The classrooms are air-conditioned and have large stained-glass windows. The buildings are equipped with ramps and an elevator.

The Center of Excellence has its own typographic complex where it can print and copy handouts, booklets, digests, and other materials. The Center of Excellence runs the Electronic Library initiative, which offers students access to digitalised books, including rare copies, and additional materials. A business membership or personal full-text access to the Center of Excellence electronic library can be purchased.

Technical support for students is provided through the electronic student accounts esus.kz. Students register in the system and are immediately enrolled in a certain group with a specific trainer. Students can access electronic instructional and methodological kits through their own account. Students may see the test results and download their electronic certificates when the course is over.

The certificate has a unique number and a QR code for verification and authenticity. Since archival and active courses are available to the students in their personal account, they can track their own professional development.

The electronic system contributes to communication between the Center of Excellence staff and the trainees through processing and feedback functions. Each day, the instructors fill up an electronic account of student attendance. They notify the students, or if necessary, the students can provide a justification of their absence with supporting documentation.

Considering external factors that may affect the form of organisation of the educational process, the Center of Excellence provides the possibility for organising the course in a distance format on the platform sdo.cpm.kz based on Moodle. Students who have previously been authorised to use the electronic system may switch to it and have access to adapted content and links to webinars. Chatbots that operate across all Center of Excellence Internet resources and via a phone line also assist trainees.

The Center of Excellence library, which is in the central office in Astana, was established in 2015. It is a contemporary, convenient, multifunctional facility for familiarisation with educational and methodological literature and organisation of meetings, conferences, seminars, briefings, trainings, and presentations of various formats. The library has modern computer equipment, including an interactive tribune, sound amplification and presentation equipment, bookshelves, comfortable furniture, flipchart, wi-fi, and air conditioning. The library is open from 9 am to 6 pm on workdays.

The Center of Excellence annually issues about 70 publications of educational and methodical literature to provide professional and methodological support to Kazakhstani teachers. All the resources are freely available in the classrooms of the Center of Excellence and its branches and at the website www.online.cpm.kz. The library contains more than 600 methodical manuals, dictionaries, books devoted to actual issues of pedagogy, psychology, androgyny, management, and leadership. The library resources, available in Kazakh, Russian, and English, are in demand among teachers of all levels of education (from preschool to higher and postgraduate), and systematised by headings, for instance, Help the teacher, From teacher practice, Help the school head, Help the teacher of university/college, International experience, and Research.

The Center of Excellence library resources include more than 90 publications of teaching aids, workshops, anthology on primary and basic school subjects (mathematics, science, biology, chemistry, physics, etc.); more than 70 publications of textbooks, reference books on subjects of primary school; about 360 publications of textbooks on pedagogy, psychology, self-development, leadership and management, andragogy; 30 publications of educational and visual aids; more than 30 publications of exclusive

piece editions; more than 10 publications of unique in design of artistically designed publications; more than 20 publications of normative acts, programmes.

The library has a subscription to international scientific-methodical and information-methodical journals. The library organises different book exhibitions (new arrivals, thematical, issues, foreign exhibitions, exhibitions for significant and memorable dates).

The publications from the Center of Excellence received golden medals of the Moscow International Book Exhibition (Russia), the Frankfurt Book Fair (Germany), as well as BookExpo America 2019 (USA).

Methodological post-course support of the programme trainees is carried out through online contacts, individual consultations, face-to-face meetings within trainer school visits and lesson observation, workshop, seminars, conferences, competitions, forums, etc.

The purpose of the post-course support is to provide school teams with motivational, informational, conceptual, and methodological resources necessary and sufficient for the successful implementation of their projects on improvement of quality education.

Practical objectives of post-course support for programme trainees include maintaining and advancing the overall direction of school teams projects to raise educational standards; to stimulate the team nature of the implementation of projects of school teams and the expansion of team members; to increase the values of teamwork, individual and team competencies in the field of analytics and development, project implementation, and organisation of teamwork.

6.2 Assessment

The infrastructure of the building and the learning equipment is appropriate and sufficient to achieve the qualification goals. This can also be said regarding the qualifications of the supervisory and administrative staff.

The daily work of the trainers with the students is conducted in-person and via direct messenger communication. The Center of Excellence provides support, if necessary, they also provide webinars and a platform for exchange. The students also have access to the materials via this platform which they describe as very helpful.

The teaching methods have the focus on student-centered learning and differ in form belonging to the learning outcome. Case studies, mind mapping, data tables, and other techniques are used. The students learn to analyse provided data and to interpret results based on it. All in all, there are many methods of active learning which enable a flexible learning path.

Collaborative learning methods such as video analysis or role play to learn how to give good instructions and improve soft skills are also within the portfolio of the schools.

The current positive results of the projects could be even more beneficial if trainees would get more time for working on a single project.

The Center of Excellence also offers a distance learning platform which allows to trace what has been searched, downloaded, worked with closely, etc. This data is gathered and analysed.

6.3   Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

7 ESG Standard 1.7: Information management

> **Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.**

7.1 Implementation

The information management system at the Center of Excellence is used to ensure that the programme is implemented effectively. It is built on the foundation of the information systems sdo.cpm.kz (distance learning system) and esus.kz (electronic student registration system based on Moodle), which enable management of the academic calendar, the placement of the required educational and methodological resources, the creation of electronic records of attendance, and academic performance.

For the purpose of creating reports on the Center of Excellence activities (monthly, quarterly, and annual reports on the implementation of the performance indicators in terms of the number of students trained, activities for information and methodological support for teachers, the number of developed programmes, and publications), data from the Center of Excellence information systems are used. Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools and the Ministry of Education get the reports, so the operations are strategically managed at various levels and quick action is taken to ensure that programmes for teacher professional development are effectively implemented.

Information management in Center of Excellence is carried out jointly by the Department of Information Technologies (technical support), the Department of Organisation of Educational Process (planning and organisation) and the Department of Analysis and Monitoring Studies (data analysis, reporting on the implementation of the indicators of the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools Strategy).

The structure, frequency, and responsibility for the reliable and timely provision of information, its safety and accessibility to interested parties are regulated by internal regulatory documents (policies, regulations, orders, and job descriptions).

The safety of information management system is ensured through timely monitoring of information systems, updating anti-virus programmes, system administration, protection of servers from access by unauthorised individuals.

Information security is offered in accordance with the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools information security policy. This includes database storage on the physical servers of the Center of Excellence, data encryption using an SSL security certificate of the cpm.kz domain and its subdomains, backup information, and protection of information from phishing and DDoS attacks.

7.2 Assessment

The information management system of the Center of Excellence is aimed at effective implementation of the programme and is based on information systems sdo.cpm.kz (distance learning system) and esus.kz (electronic registration system for students based on Moodle), which provide the ability to maintain an academic calendar, placement of necessary teaching resources, formation of electronic record of attendance, progress, current and final control results, student support, providing feedback from trainers and students. It is also used for the drafting of reports on the activities of the Center of Excellence (monthly/quarterly/annual reports on the performance in terms of the number of students trained, information and methodological support activities for teachers, number of programmes developed, publications, etc.).

As the digital world takes up more of human lives, one of the main goals for the coming years in Kazakhstan will be devoted to digitalisation. Thus, the implementation of information management of the Center of Excellence through the base of information systems is a major plus. The positive side of information management is that the staff of the Center of Excellence performs timely monitoring, periodic updates, and protection of systems and programmes. This ensures information security of the system and enables timely analysis of data.

On top of that, the staff regularly conducts anonymous surveys among the trainers and teachers who have completed the courses. Such questionnaires include key issues such as course effectiveness and relevance, course help in school life, recommendations for course improvement, etc.

7.3 Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

8 ESG Standard 1.8: Public information

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

8.1 Implementation

The Center of Excellence releases information on the key operations and activities on the www.cpm.kz website to guarantee openness. The website has categories for About Us, Main Activities, Cooperation, Projects, News, and Online Resources that provide in-depth details on the areas of expertise of the Center of Excellence. The previous calendar year's actions are summarised in an annual report. The Center of Excellence's key performance indicators are shown in dynamic fashion while taking the previous three years' worth of data into consideration. Through its official accounts on the social media platforms, the Center of Excellence offers methodological and informational assistance to its students.

On the website sdo.cpm.kz under the Course Showcase, a list of all Center of Excellence educational programmes is available (in the sections Training for Heads of educational organisations). Each course contains information about the goals and objectives of a programme, its expected outcomes, structure, content, as well as curriculum and assessment process. Educational and methodological materials are attached to the programmes. All information is presented in Kazakh, Russian, and English. Students who are presently enrolled in classes, those who have previously finished their coursework, and future students who want to enrol in courses all have access to the information. The Offer-Agreement is also available here.

Methodological publications are presented for teachers of all levels of education: from preschool to higher and postgraduate education and are distributed under the appropriate headings, there is also literature material for studying international experience and research.

All teachers registered on the online.cpm.kz portal have access to the database of electronic methodological resources. All materials are published under the moderation by the administration of the portal.

Individual help and guidance are available to students via the educational website, where they may also engage in network communities, forums, webinars, and other activities.

8.2 Assessment

To adjust to the needs of a broad spectrum of target groups, the information about the activities of the institution is presented in Kazakh, Russian, and English. The goals and objectives of the programmes, expected outcomes, content, curriculum, and assessment process are offered on a per course basis. The information is very thorough and well-structured.

All information is accessible to students and prospective students, graduates, other stakeholders, and the wider public. The content belonging to the deeper context of the studies, e.g., webinars or guidance, is only accessible via the website for the inscribed students.

The information given is transparent, up-to-date, and useful to stakeholders and the public. The fact that methodological publications are provided for instructors at all levels of education – from preschool to higher and postgraduate education – makes a very positive impression. Specific details and resources available online are presented in a user-friendly and intuitive way.

In the discussion round with students, it was confirmed that they all have access to the information deemed necessary and stated that it has proven to be useful prior to, over the course of, and following the training itself.

8.3 Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

9   ESG Standard 1.9: On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes

> **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.**

9.1   Implementation

From 2012 until the present, systematic monitoring studies have been conducted. During this time, 603,080 respondents from various categories participated in 123 studies. 72 official publications carried the findings. They are carried out in line with the Monitoring Study Regulation, which was created in accordance with the Rules and approved by the Ministry of Education.

All key processes related to the development and implementation of teacher professional development programmes are accompanied by monitoring studies. First of all, pre-course monitoring studies are carried out at the stage preceding the development of programmes, to diagnose professional issues and needs of the target audience. The data obtained are used further for the development of goals, objectives, concept, thematic content, and expected outcomes of the educational process.

Subsequently, in-course monitoring studies are conducted upon completion of the training course to assess the content, organisation, and effectiveness of the training, as well as the work of the training staff. The study findings aid in programme content revision, trainer performance enhancement, and methodological resource base replenishment.

After completing training, post-course monitoring studies are carried out in the classroom to evaluate and track the success of integrating new skills and knowledge into teaching practice. The results help to prevent possible risks and manage the quality of post-course activities of teachers and the ongoing transformations in schools.

In the course of monitoring studies, a variety of techniques are employed, including questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, examination of school documentation, observation of lessons. The choice of research methods, the development of tools, the procedure for conducting, collecting, and interpreting data, as well as writing an information and analytical report are carried out by the Analysis and Monitoring Department with the involvement of Centre of Excellence branches to scale and maximise the involvement of respondents across the country.

In addition to the direct assessment of the content of an educational programme, the factors accompanying success are subject to analysis and evaluation: the organisation of training, resources, information, and technological support.

The results of monitoring studies are discussed at meetings of the Scientific and Methodological Council and at personnel meetings and are used for a variety of purposes, e.g., improving the content of educational programmes, making adjustments to the trainer work and determining the directions of their further professional development, improving the organisational conditions for conducting teacher professional development courses, expansion of the forms and targeting of methodological support, as well as clarification of thematic areas of new educational programmes for further professional development of teachers at Kazakhstani schools.

The results of monitoring studies are made accessible to the stakeholders, including programme developers, trainers, teachers and school leaders, teaching staff of universities and colleges who teach pedagogical personnel, parents of school students, etc. Informing the stakeholders is carried out using various forms: via the official website, publications of the series titled Monitoring studies, in Kazakh and foreign publications, or during designated sessions of conferences.

9.2 Assessment

There is an extensive system of monitoring studies in place, with pre-course studies informing the development of a course, as well as continuous monitoring during the training period, the so called on-course monitoring studies, and after a course being post-course monitoring studies. As the results of any monitoring studies being discussed collectively, they can provide strong impulses for improvements.

The participation rate of trainees – in this case secondary school teachers – in the survey made available to the experts seems very high. According to the self-assessment report, the survey responses are taken very seriously and used as a foundation for continuous improvement. For instance, there is a range of questionnaires and surveys which content is classic for gathering feedback.

The expert group is of the opinion that the monitoring studies are particularly impressive as they are extensive, cover all key phases of a programme, and are methodologically robust. While the monitoring study presented as part of the documentation and self-assessment report was impressive in scope, the post-course monitoring of the effectiveness of the implementation of the educational programme titled School Team: Effective Management and Quality of Education has not yet taken place at the time of writing this report as the post-course support timeframe after the completion of the programme

comprises the subsequent twelve months. Once this data is available, the Center of Excellence should process and act on it for this specific study programme, not just feed it into an aggregate form.

Additionally, more details could be provided or elaborated on regarding how study results are communicated to trainees and stakeholders, how these results are considered, and how adjustments are subsequently put into place. For this purpose, procedures concerning student feedback and other monitoring instruments as well as their use for continuous improvement should be made more explicit and detailed.

9.3 Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled.**

10 ESG Standard 1.10: Cyclical external quality assurance

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

10.1 Implementation

The Centre of Excellence collaborated with the Faculty of Education at Cambridge University and a team of World Bank researchers to carry out two large-scale studies. The findings of the studies included both positive examples and potential room for improvement. They provided empirical support confirming the qualitative transformations in schools due to the implementation of educational programmes conducted by the Center of Excellence. In addition, the studies findings indicated further amendments to the existing programmes resulting into the School Team: Effective Management and Quality of Education programme. It is important to note that both studies confirmed the existence of objective evidence indicating qualitative transformations in schools due to the integration of key ideas of the educational programmes into the teaching practice and culture of schools.

In 2015, the Centre of Excellence together and the Faculty of Education of Cambridge University jointly conducted a large-scale study to monitor and evaluate its educational programmes. It involved 1,250 secondary schools and over 9,200 teachers and school principals. The results of the study confirmed the presence of school professional network community of teachers who have an understanding of the process of improving the practice in the classroom, the abilities to collaborate with others to share teaching methods and concepts that have become a driving professional resource for updating the content of secondary education.

In 2021, the World Bank conducted a study within the project of the Ministry of Education titled Modernisation of Secondary Education, which noted the following positive changes made by Centre of Excellence to the system of in-service teacher professional development. It highlighted creation of the updated, multi-level and centralised system of professional development; focus of the professional development policy on assisting teachers, researchers and school leaders in professional development, in providing them with best practices, in supporting and/or training to improve the performance of their duties; ensuring teacher readiness for the implementation of programmes of updated educational content; development of practice-oriented educational programmes for all categories of stakeholders; as well as providing post-course support for changing the practice of teachers through regular, targeted training, consultations with each student, improving practice through feedback.

10.2 Assessment

The quality assurance of the Center of Excellence includes external assessment and validation. The Center of Excellence is actively seeking ways to maintain continuous development and recognition of the quality of its programmes by adding a level of joint projects in their drafting and improvement as well as external formal quality assessment procedures.

Organisations providing further and advanced training programmes in Kazakhstan are not legally required to undergo specific types of external review in any form resembling that of an accreditation or a certification. Nonetheless, the Center of Excellence regarded it to be the next step in its development and has been successfully undergoing certification of its advanced training programmes for teachers since 2018. To date, a total of ten programmes have been certified.

The results of those certifications serve as an impetus for the development of programmes that go beyond the list of certified programmes. The outcomes of these procedures are made public and there is a summary published on the official website of the Center for all interested parties.

In the case of existing programmes such as the School Team: Effective Management and Quality of Education programme which started in 2021, the well-conducted evaluation procedures should be further extended by including modules surveying participants and trainers of the programme. The results can provide a basis for regular monitoring of the quality standards and will help achieving regular adaption of the ongoing programme.

10.3 Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

IV   Recommendation to the Accreditation Commission of ACQUIN

1   Assessment of compliance the Standards and Guidelines in the Higher European Area (ESG) in the current official version

The advanced training programme titled *School Team: Effective Management and Quality of Education* was assessed on the basis of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and the national or other relevant regulations.

The expert group concludes that the **ESG** 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.

Comprehensive evaluation of the expert group

The assessment criteria are as follows:

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.**

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 programme 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.**

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.**

National criteria: if applicable, national criteria are integrated in the ESG standards or listed separately.

2 Certification Recommendation

The peer-review experts recommend **unconditional certification** of the *School Team: Effective Management and Quality of Education* programme.

The peer-review experts suggest the following recommendations for the advanced training programme titled *School Team: Effective Management and Quality of Education*:

1. The Center of Excellence should pay close attention to the studyability of the programme to ensure that the workload and the timelines remain reasonable as the programme grows to take into consideration students from different backgrounds.

2. The rights and obligations of the trainees, trainers, and the Center of Excellence should be made more transparent for Stages 2 and 3 of the training programme.

3. The Center of Excellence should gather, analyse, and, where appropriate, apply data from the evaluation of the programme independently of other programmes.

4. The Center of Excellence should make procedures concerning student feedback and other regularly utilised monitoring instruments as well as their use for continuous improvement more explicit and detailed.

5. The Center should consider additional procedures for supporting trainers in the case of unforeseen events, potential conflicts, or temporarily overload.

V. Decisions of the Accreditation Commission of ACQUIN

Based on the evaluation report of the peer group the Accreditation Commission of ACQUIN makes on 19 December 2022 the following decision unanimously**:**

The training programme "School Team: Effective Management and Quality of Education" is certified without any conditions.

The certification is valid until 30 September 2029.

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

- The Center of Excellence should pay close attention to the studyability of the programme to ensure that the workload and the timelines remain reasonable as the programme grows to take into consideration students from different backgrounds.
- The rights and obligations of the trainees, trainers, and the Center of Excellence should be made more transparent for Stages 2 and 3 of the training programme.
- The Center of Excellence should gather, analyse, and, where appropriate, apply data from the evaluation of the programme independently of other programmes.
- The Center of Excellence should make procedures concerning student feedback and other regularly utilised monitoring instruments as well as their use for continuous improvement more explicit and detailed.
- The Center should consider additional procedures for supporting trainers in the case of unforeseen events, potential conflicts, or temporarily overload.