

**Approval of the Application**  
**by Kazakhstan Association of Modern (Elite) Education**  
**(KAZSEE)**  
**for Inclusion on the Register**

**Register Committee**  
13/10/2023

**Ref.** RC40/A124  
**Ver.** 1.0  
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<b>Application of:</b>	2022-01-29		
<b>Agency registered since:</b>	2023-06-01		
<b>Type of review:</b>	Full	<b>Site visit:</b>	2022-11-10
<b>External review report of:</b>	2023-06-28	<b>Submitted:</b>	2023-07-24
<b>Review coordinated by:</b>	European Association for Quality Assurance of Higher Education (ENQA)		
<b>Review panel members:</b>	Anna Klampfer, Erdal Emel, Luna Lee Solheim, Nora Skaburskienė		
<b>Decision of:</b>	2023-10-13		
<b>Registration until:</b>	2028-06-30		
<b>Absented themselves from decision-making:</b>	n/a		
<b>Attachments:</b>	1. External Review Report (as a separate file), 2023-06-28		

1. The application of 2022-01-29 adhered to the requirements of the EQAR Procedures for Applications.
2. The Register Committee confirmed eligibility of the application on 2022-02-14.
3. The Register Committee considered the external review report of 2023-06-28 on the compliance of KAZSEE with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015 version).

**Analysis:**

4. In considering KAZSEE's compliance with the ESG, the Register Committee took into account the following activities:
  - Institutional accreditation in Kazakhstan
  - Program accreditation in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan
  - Awarding EUR-ACE Label to educational programs

5. The activities *institutional accreditation of TVET (colleges)* and *programme accreditation of TVET (colleges)* are not within the scope of the ESG and, thus, not pertinent to the application inclusion on the Register.

6. The Register Committee found that the report provides sufficient evidence and analysis on KAZSEE's level of compliance with the ESG.

7. With regard to the specific European Standards, the Register Committee considered the following:

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## **ESG 2.2 – Designing methodologies fit for purpose**

8. KAZSEE includes stakeholders in the bodies responsible for designing of the accreditation methodologies. The Committee, however, learned from the report that the agency has a somewhat of a passive role in the inclusion of stakeholders beyond the members of the decision-making bodies.

9. While the Committee concurred with the panel's conclusion of compliance, it highlighted the panel's recommendation that the agency should encourage further involvement of stakeholders in the development of its methodologies i.e., "*through wider consultations and consideration of larger groups of stakeholders*".

## **ESG 2.3 – Implementing processes**

10. The Committee learned that KAZSEE follows up on its recommendations from all of its reports since 2019. The follow up, though consistent, is not described in the agency's methodologies. The panel noted that not all higher education institutions were familiar with the follow up process.

11. While the Committee concurred with the panel's conclusion of compliance, it highlighted the panel's recommendation that the agency should describe the follow up procedure, the possible implications and outcomes in its guidelines.

## **ESG 2.6 – Reporting**

12. The panel noted that at the time of the site visit (10-10-2022) the agency's website was under development, and the access to all reports was not possible. **The Committee noted that the website was still not upgraded and fully functional at the time of taking the decision - almost one year after the panel's visit. This circumstance prevented the Committee from verifying whether all the reports are publicly available. Following this, the Committee concurred with panel's conclusion of partial compliance.**

## **ESG 3.3 – Independence**

13. KAZSEE's organisational structure involves several bodies that exercise different roles (a Supervisory Board, an Accreditation Council and

an Appeal's body). The agency also has a vice – president, who is appointed by the president of KAZSEE.

14. The Committee learned that both the president and the vice president of KAZSEE have voting rights in the two bodies in which they are members of, i.e. the Accreditation Council and the Supervisory Board. In panel's view the "*mixture of roles* [of the President and the vice President] *could make the* [decision making] *system vulnerable*".

**15. The Committee could follow panel's reasoning that the current arrangements could pose threat for the operational independence and the independence of formal outcomes. The Committee concurred with panel's view that KAZSEE only partially complies with the standard.**

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### **ESG 3.4 – Thematic analysis**

16. The panel explained that the agency does reports covering different topics – however they are mostly related to projects, rather than findings from the external quality assurance activities. The panel further highlighted that the agency is aware of the importance of collecting and analysing data from the review processes for its own development purposes, but also for contributing to the system level policies.

**17. The Committee acknowledged that while the thematic analyses are not taking place in a systemic and formal manner, KAZSEE is a relatively new agency that demonstrates interest to further formalise the processes for producing thematic analyses. The Committee concurred with the panel's conclusion that the agency partially complies with the standard.**

### **ESG 3.5 – Resources**

18. From the report, the Committee learned that KAZSEE is currently having sufficient staff and material resource to maintain its operations. The panel, however, that the agency plans to expand its activities and that would require further resources. While the Committee concurred with panel's conclusion of compliance, it highlighted panel's recommendation that the agency should consider hiring more staff with further expansion of its activities.

### **ESG 3.6 - Internal quality assurance and professional conduct**

19. While the Committee concurs with the panel's conclusion of compliance, it further emphasises that concrete improvements based on the IQA system should be planned within strategic and operational documents and documented systematically.

20. For the remaining standards, the Register Committee was able to concur with the review panel's analysis and conclusion without further comments.

**Conclusion:**

21. Based on the external review report and the considerations above, the Register Committee concluded that KAZSEE demonstrated compliance with the ESG (Parts 2 and 3) as follows:

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<b>Standard</b>	<b>Review panel conclusion</b>	<b>Register Committee conclusion</b>
2.1	Compliance	Compliance
2.2	Compliance	Compliance
2.3	Compliance	Compliance
2.4	Compliance	Compliance
2.5	Compliance	Compliance
2.6	Partial compliance	Partial compliance
2.7	Compliance	Compliance
3.1	Compliance	Compliance
3.2	Compliance	Compliance
3.3	Partial compliance	Partial compliance
3.4	Partial compliance	Partial compliance
3.5	Compliance	Compliance
3.6	Compliance	Compliance
3.7	(not expected)	<b>Compliance</b> (by virtue of applying)

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22. **The Register Committee considered that KAZSEE only achieved partial compliance with some standards. In its holistic judgement, the Register Committee concluded that these are specific and limited issues, but that KAZSEE complies substantially with the ESG as a whole.**

23. The Register Committee further underlined that KAZSEE is expected to address the issues mentioned appropriately and to resolve them at the earliest opportunity.

24. **The Register Committee therefore approved the application for KAZSEE's inclusion on the Register. KAZSEE's inclusion shall be valid until 31-06-2028<sup>1</sup>.**

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<sup>1</sup> Inclusion is valid for five years from the date of the external review report, see §3.25 of the EQAR Procedures for Applications.