



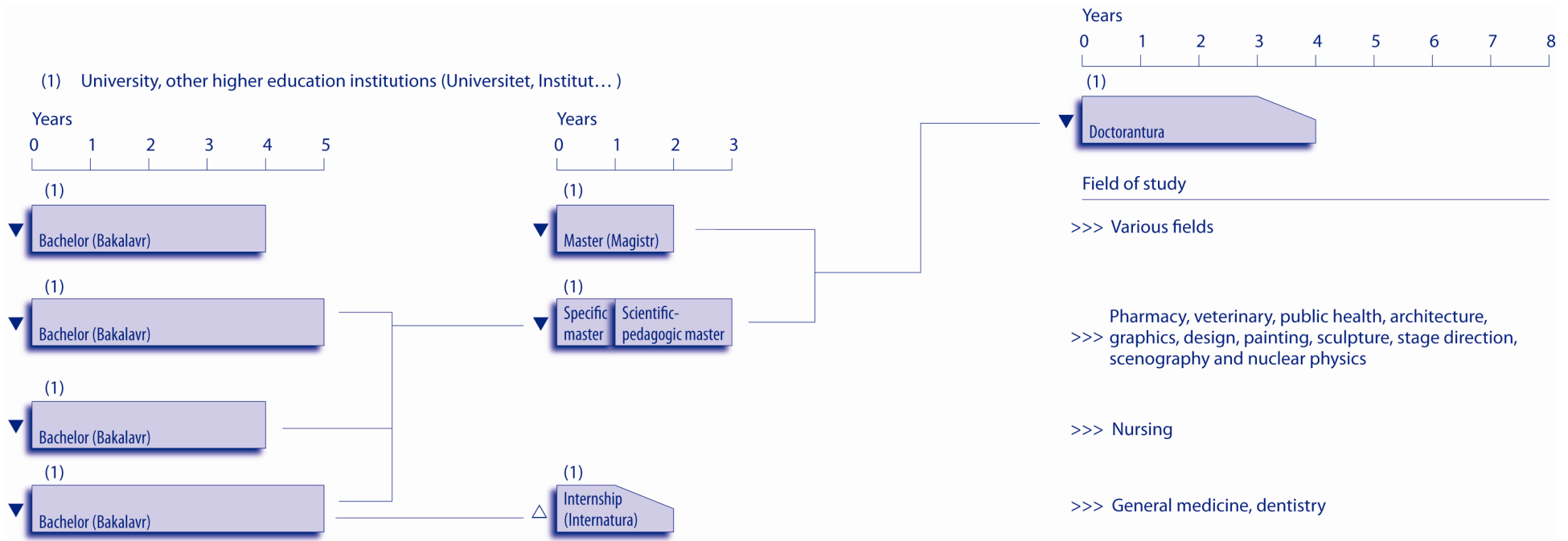
HIGHER EDUCATION IN KAZAKHSTAN



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Tempus

The higher education system in Kazakhstan



- Most common length of a Bologna cycle
- Other length of a Bologna cycle
- Programme outside the typical Bologna model
- Professional programme

ECTS
Credits according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

		regulated at national level	decided at institutional level
ALL	programmes have admission requirements	▼	▲
SOME		▽	△

I. Overall description

1. Major characteristics of tertiary education in the country

Legislation covering the field of tertiary education

The three main pillars of State Policy in the field of tertiary education in Kazakhstan are the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan (RK), the 'Law on Education (2007)', and the State Programme of Education Development for 2011-2020. The main law providing a general framework for defining the strategy of higher education development in Kazakhstan, shaping the new national model of the system of education and principles of state policy in the area is the 'Law on Education (1999)'. In July 2004, a Law 'On introducing amendments and changes to the Law on Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan' was adopted. It marked an important step in strengthening and improving the legislative and normative provisions of higher and post-higher education. It considerably tightened qualification requirements for the operation of higher education institutions (HEIs) and affiliated branches (restricted to social sciences, humanities and scientific disciplines). New standards were introduced for full-time staff members.

The requirements related to the material and technical base of HEIs and the availability of their own facilities were increased. A compulsory requirement for implementing Ph.D programmes was the availability of foreign teachers and researchers with Ph.D degrees. New principles of university management were adopted based on strategic planning and corporate governance, quality management and enhancing autonomy of HEIs.

The Law on Education adopted in 2007 reflects issues related to integration of Kazakh higher education system with the Bologna Process.

To adapt the norms of education legislation to the international standards new amendments and changes related to all levels of education were introduced in October 2011. Among them, we could find aspects such as regulating

the transition to 12-year education, defining the legal status of 'profile' school, enhancing requirements to the quality of textbooks etc. Unified centralised controls and the monitoring of education quality in education institutions were introduced. Voucher-modular principle based system of funding the in-service teacher training is to be implemented aimed at cardinal improvement of the status of teachers. A new article was included in the Law on the individual activity of teachers. In addition, new types of higher education institutions have been introduced (i.e. National Research Universities, National Higher Education Institutions, Research Universities).

The State Programme of Education Development for the period of 2011-2020 is in charge of implementing the state policy in the field of education, providing support and continuity in the ongoing process of modernisation of the Kazakh system of education, shaping the national model of competitive multi-level higher and post-graduate education, and its integration with the world education area.

Types of tertiary education institutions

Higher education is open to citizens who have completed general secondary, technical and vocational education or further education.

In accordance with the Law on Education (2007) the following levels and qualifications have been set up:

1. Bachelor programme (Bakalavriat). Duration of study is determined by the State Compulsory Standard of higher education and must be not less than four years. Individuals completing a Bachelor programme and successfully passing the final attestation are awarded the academic degree of Bachelor and can work on a position for which higher education is required.
2. Master programmes and doctoral studies (Magistratura and Doctorantura) can be obtained by citizens who have completed a

Bachelor programme.¹ Moreover, these two programmes can also be accessed by holders of 'Bolashak' scholarships² through full-time study at leading international universities in line with the approved priority specialties. Higher military education programmes are implemented in post-graduate military academies and colleges (adjunctura).

3. Magistratura (Master degree) is based on Bachelor studies plus a Master programme in two areas:
 - Scientific-pedagogic education with a duration of two years of study;
 - **Profile** with a duration of a minimum of one year of studies.

Those who have passed the final attestation and publicly defended their Master dissertation are awarded the academic degree of a Master in the relevant discipline.

4. **Doctoral studies** comprise preparing a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) and doctoral studies in selected disciplines (Doctorantura) upon completion of a Master programme. The duration of study is a minimum of three years.

Higher medical and pharmaceutical education includes resident, Master and doctoral studies. Resident programmes include in-depth training in clinical specialties with a duration of two-to-four years of study depending on the specialisation.

Types of tertiary education institutions

Higher education institutions in Kazakhstan are national research universities, national higher education institutions, research universities, universities, academies or institutes. Conservatories, higher schools and higher colleges have a similar status.

¹ In Kazakh law, the term "post-higher education" is used. It means that Bachelor level is the level when a graduate is viewed as an individual having completed higher education. Before, the understanding was that Bachelor level is incomplete higher education. Thus the law indicates two levels: higher (Bachelor - undergraduate) and post-higher (Master and doctoral programmes – post-graduate).

² A scholarship programme ensuring mobility for talented students who can study abroad in leading institutions.

The type of higher education institution is determined at the licensing stage and depends on the number of programmes and orientation of the research work.

- **Institute** (Institut) - an institution that implements professional educational programmes of higher education.
- **Academy** (Akademia) - an educational institution that implements educational programmes of higher education in one or two groups of specialties.
- **University** (Universitet) - a higher education institution that implements educational programmes of higher education, Master and doctoral programmes in three and more groups of specialties, carries out pure and applied research, and is a scientific and methodological centre;
- **National Research University** - a higher education institution which has a special status and programme of development for five years approved by the Government, independently developed educational training programmes of higher education in three and more groups of specialties, using the outcome of pure and applied studies for generating, and in the transfer of, new knowledge;
- **National Higher Education Institution** - a higher education institution which is a leading scientific and methodological centre in the country with a special status.
- **Research University** - higher education institution which implements programmes of development for five years, approved by the Government and educational training programmes of higher education, in three and more groups of specialties. It uses the outcome of pure and applied studies for generating, and in the transfer of, new knowledge.

Between 1993 and 2001, the number of HEIs had increased dramatically due to the setting up of non-state (private) universities.

At the beginning of the academic year 2011/2012, there were 146 higher education institutions.

Of those, nine were national, one international, 33 state, 16 JSCs (joint stock company), one JSC 'Nazarbaev University' with a special status, 73 private, and 13 non-civic academies.

According to the statistics there are around 610 000 students studying in HEIs, 320 000 of them in state HEIs and 290 000 in private institutions. Around 170 000 new students are admitted to HEIs each year.

Number of HEIs (in academic year 2011/2012)	
146	

Number of students (in academic year 2011/2012)	
610 000	
Public	Private
320 000	290 000

2. Distribution of responsibilities

The education system is regulated by the Government.

The aim is to ensure the implementation of constitutional rights for education and provide quality in education.

The Government is responsible for the development and implementation of state education policy, strategic plans, development of state programmes, regular monitoring of labour market needs, approval of rules on state licensing of education institutions, qualification requirements in education, state compulsory education standards, defining staff lists for state education institutions, lists of teaching staff positions, setting up, reorganisation and closure of state education institutions which are funded by the public budget, defining the procedure of education monitoring, and the development and approval of standard rules of practice for education institutions.

The rectors of national HEIs are nominated by the President of the RK. The rectors of state HEIs are nominated by the Government based on the proposal of the Ministry of Education and Science (MES).

The competency of the central authorised body in the field of education (MES) comprises the implementation of state education development policy and scientific-methodological guidance of all education institutions. . The MES develops and approves legislative acts to regulate the activities of education institutions. In particular, the MES issues licences for the education activity of HEIs, conducts state attestation of HEIs, sets the requirements for recognition of accreditation bodies -including foreign ones- and establishes a register of recognised accreditation bodies, accredited education institutions and education programmes. Furthermore, the MES supervises the development and approval of rules for the allocation of state education in the training of specialists. The MES also sets up the quota and standard rules of admission to HEIs, transfer and reinstatement of learners depending on the type of education institutions, arranges the development of state compulsory standards, approves standard education programmes, etc.

Such regulations ensure equal conditions and rights for all players in the field of education.

Measures are being taken towards broadening the rights of HEIs, so that they can independently organise the teaching and learning process, select and nominate staff members, in implementing scientific, financial and economic activity within the framework set up by legislation. HEIs have autonomy to set up the structure, fix numbers and establish the admission procedure. HEIs are also responsible for the:

- Development and approval of internal regulations;
- Development and approval of work programmes, except for military specialties;
- Setting up salary scales, additional payments, premiums and bonuses, other payments to staff of state education institutions within the limits of their own financial resources;
- Material and technical provision, facilities and equipment of education institutions;
- Provision of goods and services in line with the licence on a fee-basis;
- Sourcing additional financial and material resources to implement the activity within the terms of the licence.

The head of a higher education institution operates on behalf of the institution and represents its interests in all areas: signs agreements, issues warrants, opens bank accounts, etc. Heads of institutions can recruit and dismiss staff members and teachers, adopt incentive measures and impose penalties.

In general, the deputy heads are nominated by the heads of HEIs upon approval of the authorised body (MES) or its founders. The roles of deputy heads, and other administrative staff, are determined by the heads of HEI.

In accordance with the legislation, public and private education institutions operate on equal terms in most cases. All HEIs can establish direct links with national and international partners and conclude contracts on mutual cooperation in various fields.

Compared to public universities, private HEIs have more operational autonomy and greater management flexibility in some areas. State HEIs do not own their land and buildings whereas private universities can.

While public higher education institutions have their own budget and freedom to use it within the parameters set by the Ministry, private institutions have more flexibility. They can also pay teaching staff better salaries than the public HEIs, and they are free to choose which subjects to teach.

At present, neither type of institution has autonomy over curricula or admissions. They have to implement state standards related to the content of education, examination and graduation standards and quality assurance procedures. Student entry standards are also set by the MES through UNT (Unified National Test) pass scores.

In accordance with the State Programme of education development for 2011-2020, it is planned to revise the system of education governance based on involving the wider community. Specific attention will be given to enhancing the role of Boards of Trustees through involving employers, public bodies, parents and learners. The principles of corporate management will be implemented in HEIs.

In 2013, it is expected that the procedure of nominating rectors of state HEIs will be

revised. Rectors will then be elected in all accredited HEIs.

3. Governing bodies of the Higher Education Institutions

The Head of a higher education institution is responsible for its daily management. The governing body of a higher education institution is the Academic (Scientific) Council which is a collegial body. Its membership is confined to representatives of the academic staff, students and public bodies, as well as of the administrative staff of the higher education institution.

The procedure for forming Councils is defined by specific rules issued by the MES. Members of the Academic Council are elected for three years at a general meeting by secret ballot; the exact procedure depends on the institution. The general rule is that all subdivisions should be represented. The average number of members is 65-70 per university. In big universities it can go up to around 100.

The subdivisions of HEIs are set up by the institution itself and operate according to the Charter of the higher education institution. Their number and activities are defined by the Council based on the specialties and specialisations of the higher education institution, as well as on the number of students and teachers.

All members of the Academic Council have the right to vote. Voting by secret ballot is carried out when issues are considered sensitive (election of teachers for competitive positions, awarding professorship status, etc.). When the issues considered refer to approving the curricula, methodological documents, etc., the voting is open.

The chairperson of the Academic Council is the rector. The responsibilities of the Academic Council are:

1. Creating conditions for learners and academic staff to enable them to participate in professional education programmes;
2. Providing financial support, strengthening the material and technical bases of HEI;
3. Contributing to the further development of HEI.

The competences of the Academic Council are quite numerous, and they include:

1. Approving the structure of HEI;
2. Introducing amendments and supplementing the HEI Charter (Statute);
3. Creating, reorganising and terminating HEI training and other subdivisions (laboratories, chairs, faculties, etc.);
4. Determining the direction of the HEI development;
5. Making decisions on fundamental matters of HEI operations (e.g. teaching, research and economic activities);
6. Evaluating the reports of the rector, deputy rectors and heads of structural subdivisions on various aspects of HEI operations.

4. Financing

The financial provisions of the education system are determined by Articles 61-64 of the 'Financial provision of the system of education' (part of the Law on Education).

Kazakh citizens can receive free higher education on a competitive basis within the framework of state education if education at each of these levels is received for the first time. Kazakhstan has introduced public educational grants which provide selected students a better access to the institution of their choice. The main share of funding is allocated to state education institutions. In order to regulate the training of specialists, the state (through the MES) draws up an order each year. It is funded by the state and covers the number of training specialists in the most demanded fields to satisfy the needs of the economy.

The government annually allocates budgetary funds for education in respect of its priorities along with various budget programmes (approximately 11) within the overall budget. These priorities depend on specific national programmes. Those who would like to choose prestigious careers or which are not urgently needed on the labour market, have to cover the cost education and training on their own.

Allocation of education grants among HEIs is based on the decision of the Republican Commission. It consists of rectors of HEIs, representatives of Ministries and trade unions.

The funding procedure depends mainly on the form of ownership. The State is responsible for funding state higher education implemented in the frame of the State Education Order. Selected private HEIs meeting the criteria set by MES can also receive funding from the State Education Order. In 2011, 85 institutions were awarded the State Education Grants out of the 146 HEIs.

State expenditure per student in higher education is annually increasing. The amount established and allocated to state HEIs (with a national status) is higher than for other HEIs.

	State education order (number of grants)		Average expenditure for education per student, KZT thousand Tenge ³	
	Full-time	By correspondence	HEIs (national status)	Other HEIs
2009/2010	33840	1 000	Not less than 505	Not less than 250
2010/2011	34425	1 000	Not less than 600	Not less than 318
2011/2012	35046	1 000	Not less than 635	Not less than 341

Education grants are awarded on a competitive basis in concrete specialties, language and forms of education in accordance with the points indicated in the Certificate. Certificates are issued as a result of the Unified National Test or Comprehensive Test in accordance with the priority speciality indicated by the graduate.

All types of HEIs can raise funds through providing paid services which are not in conflict with legislation as well as through loans, sponsoring, charity assistance and grants, etc. Private HEIs can use income from paid services at their own consideration. The legislation stipulates that the expenditure of HEIs implementing higher education programmes

³ The rate of Tenge (KZT) to US Dollar is about 148:1

per student on a self-financed basis cannot be less than the amount of the state education grant.

At present, 20 % of the students receive state grants. Thus, the share of private fees is rather high and makes up around 80 % in the overall budget of HEIs.

According to the State Education Programme by 2015, the government will be able to establish the funding levels per capita at all levels of education.⁴ The funding per capita has proved to be efficient. Consequently, the government is considering its implementation at other levels too. Students are free to choose a HEI depending on their preferences. This provides equal access to state funding for all HEIs disregarding the form of ownership.

An important measure towards state support of the system of higher education is preferential taxation. At present, the income of HEIs from licensed activities is exempt from corporate income tax and VAT. These measures contribute to stimulating competition on the market of education services.

Along with funding through state education order (grants) public HEIs also receive funds for implementing specific projects. For instance, for inviting foreign professors and equipping new laboratories, etc. In 2011, allocations from the public budget were made for inviting 1 493 foreign researchers and teachers in 27 HEIs.

Overall, a sustainable tendency towards increasing state funding of education is observed. During the last five years, public allocations for education have increased more than threefold. In 2011, compared to 2010, it increased by KZT 203 billion and made up over KZT 1 trillion thus reaching 3.8 % of the GDP. However, the share of state funding of higher education is still not high and makes up less than 10 % of the overall education budget.

⁴ Funding per capita means that the state defines the minimum amount that a student has to pay to the higher education institution of his/her choice – be it private or public. Either the student receives the grant or he/she pays the tuition fee.

5. Student contributions and financial support

As mentioned in the previous part, the Ministry lays down the minimum amounts of grant/tuition fee per student (please see Table above).⁵ This amount is charged to students by universities and can vary from university to university. However, it cannot be less than the state education grant. Some private HEIs may charge more if they believe they will be able to recruit students. In some institutions it varies from KZT 780 000, in selected specialties from KZT 900 000 and up to KZT 1 900 000.

Since 1999, Kazakhstan has introduced a new, voucher-like, education grants system in higher education. The eligibility of grant holders is determined by the score applicants receive during the highly competitive Unified National Test and their subject choice. This replaced the previously existing university entrance examinations. In other words, the government money is allocated to grant beneficiaries who themselves decide what institution to choose – irrespective of whether it is public or private. Grants are mainly available for priority fields (selected centrally and determined by employment projections).

The students who score highest in the UNT and take courses defined by the government as national priorities receive public grants. Those students who do not receive government grants can find sponsorship or have to pay tuition fees on their own.

In addition to the education grant scheme, the Government has adopted a package of measures aimed at the social support of students, including scholarships (stipends).

Among the incentives available for students there are state scholarships, increased scholarships and personalised scholarships. Presidential specialised scholarships are awarded to full-time students of public and private HEIs based on their overall academic performance. If they qualify, education grant holders are eligible to receive state

⁵ The minimum amount of grant and of tuition fee should be the same and is decided by the government. The amount can vary but the minimum remains the same throughout the country and should be respected.

scholarships in addition to their grants. A reduction of travel expenses is also available for students (for daily public transport and twice a year they can have a reduced travel ticket for railway and intercity bus communication).

There are a number of privileges for students at the level of individual HEIs. To support and encourage students, HEIs have set up their own grants for various selected groups of students. For example, a reduction of fees by 15-50 % for those students with high academic performance, for two students and more from the same family, students from disadvantaged families, married students, disabled students, students who have children and prominent sportsmen, etc.

In many universities (e.g. Kazakh Satpaev National Technical University, Kazakh-American Free University, Kazakh University of Management and Economic Planning), it has become a tradition that enterprises allocate grants to students. In addition, many universities award their own internal grants. For instance, Kazakh-British Technical University annually carries out a competition called 'Win KBTU grant'. As a result of the competition, winners receive either a full grant or pay a reduced tuition fee.

A system of education loans is being implemented in Kazakhstan - both preferential and general. Preferential loans are available for those students who are paying tuition fees. Bachelor students of the 1st year should have received high points in the UNT and Comprehensive Test (CT), students of other years - good academic achievements during the previous academic period. Master students also can obtain education loans.

Since 2012 to improve access to education a new mechanism - the state education accumulation system - has been developed. It is assumed that any citizen of Kazakhstan would be able to accumulate funds to cover tuition fees for their children.

6. Licensing, quality assurance and accreditation of institutions and/or programmes

In Kazakhstan a comprehensive legal framework has been developed to address issues of higher education quality. Among them the Law on Education, the Law on Licensing enacted on 11 January 2007 (# 214-III) and various normative documents regulating the process of external assessment:

- Rules on licensing education activity and qualification requirements approved by the Government Decree (2007) with changes and amendments as of 5 December 2009;
- Regulation on state attestation of education institutions - Government Decree (# 1270) of December 2007;

In addition, there are a number of supporting documents (instructions, methodological recommendations, etc.).

The new Law on Education together with its correspondent amendments made in 2011 have represented an important step in improving the national system of quality assurance in education. Assessment of quality of education comprises the totality of institutional structures, procedures, forms and ways towards indentifying whether the quality of education provided meets the state compulsory education standards, at the same time as it covers the needs of individuals, the society and the state. A new element is the use of international standards (in particular, MS ISO 9001:2008) for assessing the correlation of the system of quality management and accreditation of education institutions by agencies which are internationally recognised.

The MES developed criteria for assessing risks in the field of education which form the basis of checking compliance with the legislation.

HEIs are referred to high, average or insignificant risk group based on the assessment of their operations (accreditation, compliance with state compulsory educational standards, number of full-time staff, material and technical base, external assessment of learning achievements of students, etc.) and the results of inspection.

The principal authority responsible for the evaluation of HEIs and programmes in Kazakhstan is the Ministry of Education and Science. The MES defines the general policy and strategy and has established a number of government agencies and government-based committees to monitor and improve the quality of the higher education system. All of them are answerable to the MES and, whatever their functions might be; the final decision is made by the MES.

Besides, there are independent accreditation agencies that carry out the independent external evaluation of education quality provided by HEIs.

Among the mechanisms for the evaluation of education quality operations are:

Mechanisms of state management:

- Licensing education institutions and education services;
- Inspecting to identify compliance with legislation in the field of education;
- Introducing External Evaluation of Learning Achievements (EELA). In November 2011 it replaced the Comprehensive National Mid-Term Test and Unified National Test which evaluates learning achievements of those who would like to join HEIs;
- Inspection by Administration of the President;
- Attestation of HEIs;
- Attestation of education services;
- Attestation of academic staff;
- Attestation of rectors of state HEIs;
- Audit.

Mechanisms of state regulation⁶:

- National ranking;
- Accreditation of education institutions (institutional);
- Accreditation of education programmes (specialised or professional);
- Special award of the President 'For achievements in the field of Quality';,
- Coordination of strategic planning.

Mechanisms of public regulation⁷:

- Ranking by independent and foreign agencies;

- Certification towards compliance with international standards (including the system of quality management);
- Public and professional accreditation;
- Accreditation by recognised reputable foreign agencies;
- Certification of staff.

Mechanisms of self-regulation:

- Benchmarking;
- Self-inspection,;
- Internal audit;
- Self-assessment;
- Ongoing improvement.

In line with the 'Government Decree of 7 July 2011 (#778) on building the vertical system of quality control', 16 territorial bodies were set up with the mandate to monitor the operations of HEIs, including EELA. The Committee for Control in the field of education and science (CCES) develops a methodology of quality assurance and controls the quality of education. On behalf of the state these territorial subdivisions implement the function of control in the field – monitoring and analysis of quality of education, accreditation, attestation, licensing, EELA and UNT-.

State attestation of education institutions is carried out every five years by a commission chaired by a representative of the MES. The commission judges the effectiveness and adequacy of HEI. Attestation determines whether HEIs are meeting state compulsory education standards for level, content and quality, as well as the qualification requirements reported during the licensing process. The first state attestation is carried out in all newly established HEIs after the first graduates have completed their education.

Based on the self-assessment and the conclusions of the attestation commission, the MES adopts a decision on whether the higher education institution would be attested or non-attested. The decision is formalised by an order or decree of the MES. The information on attested or non-attested HEIs is uploaded on the official website of the CCES as well as being published in the mass media.

In case a HEI is non-attested, the licence shall be suspended and the head of the HEI shall be held liable to administrative proceedings.

⁶ State means by government.

⁷ Public in this case means by other than government agencies, companies, society at large.

Accreditation is the process by which an certification body evaluates the quality of the services provided by a higher education institution, in order to formally attest that it has met certain predetermined criteria and standards. It also provides objective information regarding the quality and the availability of efficient tools for improvement.

The Law on Education defines two types of accreditation:

- Institutional – evaluation of the overall operation of HEIs;
- Specialised – evaluation of the quality of selected education programmes offered by HEI.
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In accordance with the Law on Education and the State Programme of education development, it is foreseen that from 2012 accreditations are to be carried out by public or professional bodies.

HEIs and colleges which have passed institutional accreditation by recognised accreditation agencies shall be exempt from state attestation.

Kazakh HEIs are encouraged to pass international specialised accreditation.

Education institutions that have been accredited by accreditation agencies included in the register, shall have the right to issue documents (diploma) of their own format in the accredited education programmes (specialties).

State attestation of medical and pharmaceutical education is carried out by the Ministry of Health.

At present, the MES is developing three national registers and requirements for registration, as follows:

- Register of accreditation agencies (both national and foreign),
- Register of accredited education institutions,
- Register of accredited education programmes.

Accreditation of HEIs is carried out on a voluntary basis. Institutions are free to select the accreditation agency. However, allocation

of education grants and of state education orders, exemption of state attestation for the period of validity of accreditation will depend on whether accreditation was carried out by eligible agencies or not. A new condition is that the accreditation agency should be either a full or an associate member of the international networks of quality assurance (INQAAHE, ENQA, APQN etc.) and international cooperation agreements.

HEIs have the right to pass national and international institutional or specialised accreditation by accreditation agencies included in the register of the MES. All costs incurred are covered by the HEIs themselves.

The internal assessment of education quality is the responsibility of HEIs themselves and includes a system of quality management, various procedures of self-assessment and monitoring of academic achievements.

Assessment of HEI operation also includes the opinion of students on the quality of the teaching process. The quality assurance procedures and accreditation mechanisms are the same both for public and private HEIs.

7. Admission

Admission to HEIs is carried out based on the Standard Admission Rules approved by an order of the Ministry of Education and Science which can be amended and complemented when necessary.

In Kazakhstan, funds are received by the beneficiary and not by the supplier of education services. The admission of students from secondary schools is based on the results of the Unified National Test (UNT). All others - graduates of former years, graduates of initial and secondary vocational schools, graduates of secondary schools who have studied abroad and some other categories - must pass the Comprehensive Test (CT) which is administered using the same procedures as the UNT. All HEIs have to accomplish the UNT regulations. The UNT is administered simultaneously throughout the country, normally at the beginning of June. Since 2007, it has to be kept in secret and is treated accordingly in terms of security and involvement of the relevant structures. The UNT lasts for 3.5 hours. Re-examination is not

permitted. In 2011 the UNT was taken by 126 109 school graduates.

The content of the UNT and CT is based on the curricula of general secondary education in five subjects, three of which are compulsory – the mother tongue, Kazakh history, the language of instruction and mathematics. The fifth 'profile' subject is chosen by the student and depends on the student's career choice. The results are evaluated based on a 125 point scale. Since 2012, a minimum of 70 points is required for admission to HEIs which have national status, for other HEIs 60 points are sufficient. Applicants with at least 30 points can be admitted to TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) colleges.

Winners of international and national Olympiads, scientific contests and sport competitions have preferential treatment in the allocation of grants.

The admission procedure to Kazakh higher education is as follows:

- Step 1: The UNT and CT are administered by the Committee for Control in the field of education and science (CCES) and the National Centre of State Standards and Testing and marked using advanced information technology. Applicants taking the UNT and CT receive a State Certificate indicating the scores achieved.
- Step 2: A Republican Commission awards state education grants in selected specialisations based on the applications of HEI newcomers and the scores of their State Certificates. The results of the UNT are published in the national press and on the website of the Ministry.
- Step 3: Holders of state education grants select a HEI and apply directly to the HEI of their choice. The university commission accepts and enrolls them.

Admission to Bachelor studies on a fee-paying basis is administered by the Admission Commission of a higher education institution based on the scores indicated in the State certificate. Admission to Master studies is based on competition taking into account the results of the admission examinations. Those who apply to Master courses have to pass entrance examinations in one foreign language (English, French or German), as well as the

language of instruction (Kazakh or Russian) and in a specialty.

To improve access to higher education for disadvantaged groups, quotas have been established. Grants to rural students, for priority social and economic disciplines, for Kazakh ethnic minorities, for Kazakhs who are citizens of another country, for disabled children, for orphans and children without parental support are provided. In the case of equal scores in the UNT and CT, orphans and children who need support receive preferential treatment. The same applies to Kazakh children who are citizens of other countries. Grants can be awarded also to foreign citizens and persons without national status permanently living in Kazakhstan, as well as citizens of the Russian Federation, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic. Other foreign citizens and individuals without citizenship can be admitted to HEIs in the order established by legislation as well as by international agreements ratified by the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Admission of students who are older than a typical tertiary education student is the same as for 'traditional' students. Thus, they have to pass the Comprehensive Test and then they follow the same rules and procedures.

Discussions are ongoing that all those with vocational/professional qualifications also have to pass the CT. In the past, there were two ways: those who would like to apply for a state grant had to pass the CT and to participate in the competition. A decision on the admission of applicants who did not claim a state grant and could cover the cost of their education on their own was made based on an interview at the higher education institution where he/she would like to study. In either case, these applicants are admitted to the second year of study if the profile of their previous education is similar to the one of their choice.

8. Organisation of the academic year

The Ministry of Education and Science determines the beginning and end of the academic year in educational institutions irrelevant of the form of ownership and subordination (rules on organisation of the academic year based on credit technology

endorsed by order of the Minister of Education and Science of 20 April 2011 No152).

The academic year starts on 1 September which is officially known as the Day of Knowledge.

An academic period includes theoretical education which is determined by a higher education institution independently for an academic year in one of the following forms: semester (15 weeks), trimester (10 weeks) or quarter (8 weeks). The duration of study, except for the final (graduation) year, is a minimum of 30 weeks. The duration of examination sessions is four weeks minimum during one academic year. Upon completion of each academic period the students have academic breaks. The duration of vacations in an academic year is a minimum of seven weeks.

The length of the teaching and learning process in HEIs is determined within the framework of the academic year which consists of academic periods (semesters), a period of interim attestation/final assessment, practical work and an academic break (vacation).

A summer semester may be included, except for final year studies, with a duration of up to six weeks.

HEIs design the academic calendar which includes full information on all education activities, practical work, assessment and attestation, vacations, public holidays, etc. The calendar is the main document regulating the organisation of the academic year; it is approved by the heads of HEI based on the decision of Academic Councils.

9. Curriculum content

In accordance with Article 5 of the Law on Education curriculum design and delivery is normally regulated by the Ministry of Education and Science. State standards are followed for core courses in all academic programmes offered by both public and private HEIs.

HEI curricula are based on study cycles of general education disciplines, of professional disciplines, basic (core) and profile disciplines, as well as professional practical work in the specialty.

Programmes of professional education have two components – a mandatory and an optional component. Programmes of professional education of higher education consist of theoretical studies, including core disciplines, practical work, and research work resulting in a dissertation.

HEIs have the right to develop and implement innovative education programmes oriented to the latest technologies, teaching and learning methods.

State Compulsory Education Standards are developed in line with the 'Governmental Decree on the procedure of developing, approving and term of validity of state compulsory education standards (SCES)'. The Ministry of Education and Science organises and conducts a competition for developing state compulsory education standards.

There are two components of SCES. The mandatory component includes a list of subjects and the number of credit points to be obtained. The optional component comprises a list of disciplines and sets minimum credit points or academic hours offered by a higher education institution which are selected by students and which can be studied during any academic period.

Generally, around 50 % of the total academic workload in all academic programmes is mandatory and the other 50 % is optional.

At national level, students have no influence on the educational content. At institutional level, students' wishes and opinions are taken into consideration in defining optional disciplines. In many HEIs, students are members of Academic Councils and can thus represent their own interests.

New higher education SCES make provision for widening the academic freedom of HEIs: they can determine 55 % of the programme content at Bachelor level, 70 % at Master level and 90 % at doctorate level.

While the first SCES were input-based and defined what was to be taught, in the 'new generation' of SCES there is a positive tendency towards their orientation to developing competences. At present, consultations are ongoing concerning the

necessity to abandon SCES and give the right to determine the content to HEIs themselves.

10. Assessment, progression, and graduation

Conditions for progression from one year to the next are regulated by an order of the MES. According to this order, it is mandatory to fulfil all requirements of the curriculum of the previous academic period and pass an interim assessment (attestation).

When a student is transferred from another university or has to abandon his/her studies (e.g. for health reasons, maternity leave, duty in the army, etc.) he/she may resume studying later and continue in the same specialisation or change the profile of training.

This also can apply to cases when for example a second year student moves from one university to another, or from one country to a Kazakh university, he/she will be allowed to continue studying in the same year if the difference in the study programmes is not more than five subjects of the mandatory component for Bachelor degrees, and not more than three subjects for Master and Ph.D studies.

If there is a big difference then the student will have to repeat the year. Sometimes there might be an exclusion from the programme but these are considered on a case-by-case basis.

As for continuation, students will carry on to the next year if they successfully pass all examinations of the same institution.

Continuation to the next year occurs based on the results of the summer examination session (interim assessment), taking into account the summer semester contents and scores.

Graduates have to pass the final state attestation in the form of a state examination and defend a thesis (diploma) or project.

Since 2012, a new form of assessment – External Assessment of Learning Achievements (EALA) – has been introduced for Bachelor students in the main disciplines. In 2012, the system will be tested and if it meets the expectations, it will be fully implemented as from 2013 involving all HEIs.

The MES issues degree certificates (diplomas) for all universities, both public and private. In accordance with the state compulsory standards, in order to graduate it is mandatory for a student at Bachelor level to pass the final state examination in the form of a state examination or by defending a Bachelor thesis/project.

The state examination is mainly conducted orally. Defences of theses and projects are open to the public. There may be collective (group) projects which have been developed jointly by more than one undergraduate.

Upon successful attestation, graduates receive a degree which allows their access to further education or to employment.

11. Academic staff

The teaching staff in HEIs is categorised as follows: professors, associate professors (docents), senior lecturers, lecturers and lecturer-trainees. The appointment to a specific post depends on the possession of relevant qualifications. This is based on the possession of a degree and working experience.

The recruitment of academic and research staff is regulated by legislation based on competitive selection, signed contracts and on individual agreements. The recruitment procedure for teaching staff posts is subject to the Rules of Substitution of Positions of Academic Staff of HEI which are approved by the central executive body in the field of education. These rules also stipulate that a three-year contract is signed based on competitive selection. It is possible to extend the agreement (contract) without any indication of its duration.

There are also posts for research fellows, divided into: senior research fellows, chief research fellows, leading research fellows, research fellows and junior research fellows.

12. Research activities

The Law on Science (2011) recognises the importance of research and gives it priority along with education activities. New types of higher education institutions called 'Research universities' are being introduced, whose main mission is to provide training for managers in

scientific and innovative activity and to become active centres in developing an innovative economy. A model of such university has already been set up in Kazakhstan: the Nazarbaev University. It is anticipated that it would become not only a higher education institution providing education compliant with the top world level universities, but also an international research university.

In 2011, the overall amount allocated for research was KZT 28.8 billion or 0.1 % of the GDP. For 2012, it is planned to allocate KZT 49 billion – this represents an increase of 70 % (0.17 % of the GDP). By 2015, expenditure for research is planned to reach 1 %, and by 2020 it should be at least 1.5 % of the GDP. Taking into account that Kazakhstan's GDP in 2011 was over KZT 27 trillion (USD 185 billion) and the expected increase in GDP in 2012 is 7 % (to USD 198 billion), it is reasonable to expect a considerable increase of the investment in research.

In April 2010, the Government developed a road map 'Business and science-2020'. Its principal aims are:

- to ensure efficient interaction between business and research;
- to develop private-public partnership in the area of research and innovation;
- to enhance the implementation of scientific achievements in the economy.

Measures are underway to stimulate research activities that help slow down the process of ageing staff.

A state order for the training of experts/professionals has been increased twice, and that for doctors has increased by 2.5 times. By 2020, about 1 000 doctors will have been trained per year, the biggest share will complete their training in leading research centres throughout the world.

In the same direction, a project on the 'Commercialisation of technologies' has been launched with the World Bank. It aims to transfer advanced expertise from abroad into this area. This would help to accelerate the development of the infrastructure, to create

centres of commercialisation in the biggest scientific organisations and HEIs, subdivisions of commercialisation in public research and higher education institutions involved in research in the field of natural sciences and technologies.

Kazakh scientists and teachers have access to foreign resources of scientific and technical information. In November 2011, a National Licence was signed with Thomson Reuters (USA) as well as a contract with Springer (Germany). It enables Kazakh scientists for the first time to gain free access to online scientific and technical platforms.

In April 2011, the session of the higher scientific-technical commission under the Government defined five priorities for developing research in Kazakhstan for 2011–2013: power engineering, deep-processing of raw materials and products, ICT, life sciences, and the intellectual potential of people. State funds will be directed to funding research projects in these priority areas.

Moreover, new forms of funding research have been implemented: basic, grant based and specific programmes. Basic funding will cover the expenditure on infrastructure, communal services, administrative costs, salaries of administrative and support staff, information provision and so on. Research will be grant-based and programme-based.

HEIs considered to have the best potential for training and research are granted the status of national universities which results in better funding. A group of big universities have a well-developed research infrastructure.⁸ Among the HEIs that are known for their research, there are around ten universities. The undisputed leader is Kazakh National Al-Farabi University. Scientific research at this university is carried out in six research institutes (new chemical technologies and materials, biology and biotechnologies, ecology, mathematics and mechanics, combustion matters, experimental and theoretical physics), and also in the national nano-technological laboratory, the laboratory

⁸ This means that with the adoption of the law "On Science" and the introduction of various types of HEIs (e.g., national research university), research is gaining strength.

of engineering, the centre of physical and chemical methods of analysis and last but not least, in the Technopark.

A large part of applied research is carried out at the Kazakh National Satpaev Technical University in the fields of: innovations and commercialisation of technologies, nano-technologies and new materials, information and space technologies, renewable energy, industrial ecology, and information security, etc. There is a tendency to merge academic scientific institutes with HEIs. For example, the Institute of Chemical Sciences, named after Bekturov, and the Institute of Organic Catalysis and Electrical Chemistry, named after Sokolski, are at present a part of the Kazakh-British Technical University.

In 35 subdivisions⁹, research is carried out at the Eurasian National Gumilev University. A variety of research is conducted at the Karaganda Buketov State University and Karaganda State Technical University, Kazakh National Asfendiyarov Medical University and many others.

To stimulate research activities among academic staff, the Government launched an annual competition, the 'Best university teacher' (2005). As a result of the competition each year around 200 teachers receive grants of a cash value equal to USD 18 000 each, enabling them to develop teaching and learning materials, books, participate in international events, carry out research, purchase laboratory equipment, etc.

Prizes have also been instituted in various fields of science. To name a few, there is the Satpaev Prize for innovative research in the natural sciences, the Valikhanov Prize in the humanities and the Altinsarin Prize in the field of pedagogy. Laureates are awarded a diploma, a special award and a certain financial reward.

13. University-enterprise Cooperation

HEIs are very actively involved in increasing the employability of graduates. All public HEIs and the overwhelming majority of private HEIs have set up career promotion centres. Events such as meetings with employers, presentations of graduates, job fairs and meetings with alumni have become usual activities for all HEIs. HEIs have databases with information on the employability of graduates over several years to monitor their career paths, maintain liaison with former graduates and inform job-seeking graduates about vacancies. Regular communication is maintained with enterprises to obtain information on the need for specialists.

There are many examples of efficient bilateral cooperation between individual universities and enterprises and employers' organisations - some have lead to agreements with more than 50 enterprises, institutions and organisations.

Article 45-1 of the 'Social partnership in the field of professional education' indicates that social partnership is oriented towards enhancing the adequacy of HEI operations, bringing the level of training specialists closer to the needs of the economy and employers, strengthening the links between education and enterprises, and involving additional sources of funding. Along with the forms of interaction between partners that have already become usual, the law legitimised also such forms as the involvement of employers in developing state educational standards and programmes, monitoring and assessing the qualifications of graduates.

Practical implementation of the law will give impetus to fostering further cooperation in these fields, improving the content and process of learning, their influence on education policy and planning.

⁹ For example, laboratories, polygons and other testing areas equipped with modern equipment allowing the students to commercialise scientific products.

14. International cooperation

Over the last decade substantial efforts have been made to modernise the national higher education system, make it competitive at international level and enhance its quality and relevance.

International cooperation is increasingly developing in terms of legislative provisions, carrying out events that have international status, academic exchange, promoting international cooperation between Kazakh HEIs and other countries, and through the 'Bolashak' programme.

The number of international agreements signed by the MES with other countries in the field of education and science is increasing (124 in 2011), as well as the overall number of agreements signed by HEIs (around 8 000). In 2011, the number of foreign students amounted to 8 982.

A major step towards the internationalisation of higher education in Kazakhstan is the decision to implement higher education reform along the general lines of the Bologna Process. In line with the national plan, the former types and levels of academic programmes were divided into the three levels established under the Bologna framework: Bachelor, Master and Ph.D.

Along with this, major changes are taking place in the teaching and learning process, the way curricula and programmes are organised and delivered. As a result of the reform it is expected that degrees offered in the country will be comparable with European degrees.

The country is investing in the 'Bolashak' scholarship programme through which talented young people are fully supported to study abroad in leading institutions. At present, more than 28 000 young people are studying abroad, including over 3 000 within the frame of the 'Bolashak' programme, in more than 20 countries.

It is worth mentioning the 'Nazarbaev University' which is expected to provide a quality breakthrough in the training of national specialists in the field of engineering and technical sciences and to be a centre of innovations and advanced research. Each subdivision (school) has close links with academic partners from top universities around the world. The university hosts top-level professors and researchers from abroad to work as visiting scholars. The university is developing its own research and clinical facilities and potential. Young Kazakhstani people will be able to obtain world class education in their own country.

Collaboration and integration in education worldwide is one of the main priorities of Kazakhstan policy.

Additionally, teachers and researchers have the chance to visit research centres and universities in other countries through traineeships using the state scholarship provided for each Master and doctoral student.

In the framework of the 'Bolashak' programme, the focus is on Master and doctoral studies. It also includes trainee visits for a period of one month to a year, and a complementary language training for up to six months.

Opening the country to international universities also contributes to some extent to internationalising the higher education system. Currently, there are five branches of foreign universities in the country.

Other initiatives are being implemented to further enhance the process of internationalisation, including visiting scholars, attracting international students, international joint/collaborative research projects, the presence of Kazakhstan HEIs and government agencies in international forums and international higher education organisations, etc.

II. Current challenges and needs

1. Trends and challenges

During the last years Kazakhstan has made significant progress in reforming its higher education system. To achieve this aim the Government has fully renewed the legislative base of education development by adopting several legislative documents. Among them we can find amendments and changes to the 'Law on Education (2011), the State Programme of Education Development in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011-2020, the Strategy for Industrial-Innovative Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2003-2015, the Law on Science and other normative documents. In 2011, seven laws were adopted and more than 70 Government decrees are under consideration.

According to the Human Development Index, Kazakhstan is in the group of countries with a high HDI (68th place).

State policy in the field of higher education is aimed at strengthening the competitiveness of education, developing human capital through providing access to quality education. This is the principal goal of the State Programme of Education Development in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011-2020.

Kazakhstan is the first in Central Asia which signed and ratified the Lisbon Convention. In March 2010, Kazakhstan became the 47th to join the Bologna Process. The aims are to increase access to EU education, further improve the quality of the national system of education, as well as increase academic mobility of students and teachers through adopting a comparable system of degrees, using the system of credit accumulation, and issuing Kazakh graduates with the EU diploma supplement.

A number of steps are being taken to implement the Bologna principles. The three cycle system of Bachelor-Master-Doctorate (Ph.D) was introduced in 2004.

Kazakhstan's adherence to the Bologna Process gives good opportunities for Kazakh

universities to implement joint education projects, such as double diploma education, mutual recognition of academic courses, international accreditation, etc. At present the double diploma programme is implemented by 37 HEIs. The involvement of visiting professors and researchers is currently gaining strength. In 2011, over 1 500 professors visited and gave lectures and seminars in 27 HEIs of Kazakhstan with all costs covered by the hosting side.

To facilitate international recognition of national education programmes, academic mobility of students and teachers, enhancing the quality of education and providing continuity of all levels of higher education, a credit system has been introduced.

To improve the quality of higher education and to create a competitive environment, the Government introduced a new system of classification of HEIs.

Special attention is given to external assessment of Kazakh HEIs by national and international accreditation and ranking agencies. The number of institutions that have passed international accreditation is increasing. The MES is developing a National Register of accreditation bodies, rules and procedures to operate the register. From 2012, accreditations have been carried out by non-commercial accreditation agencies.

From 2015, state attestation will be replaced by national institutional accreditation of HEIs and colleges.

The Labour Code was complemented by a new Article 10-1 'National system of Qualifications'. In the future, all education programmes should be compliant with the NQS. The work on developing sectorial qualification frameworks is ongoing.

Conditions are being created towards providing more autonomy to HEIs. In 2015, national research universities will be given full autonomy. In 2016, this will be the case for national higher education institutions and from 2018 all other HEIs will be able to function autonomously.

A voucher-like system of upgrading qualifications of adult population is in progress.

A National Centre to handle the Bologna Process and academic mobility has been set up.

High expectations have been put on the Nazarbaev University established in 2010. The experience of the Nazarbaev University will be disseminated among other HEIs.

In relation to the governance and management of HEIs, the considerable autonomy in operational, management and financial matters enjoyed by HEIs, especially private ones, is worthy of note. New principles of university management based on the principles of corporate management, strategic planning and the autonomy of HEIs are being drawn up.

As analysis has shown, large scale reforms are being implemented in Kazakhstan to modernise higher education.

However, there are a number of aspects that need to be further improved. Among them:

- Education programmes offered by many HEIs are not outcome based;
- Centralised control over the content of education (courses and curricula) and process (organisation of teaching and degree standards) is still limiting universities' freedom and ability to respond to the needs of the economy, students and employers;
- Research, development and innovation need substantial strengthening. The productivity of research activities of HEIs remains low;
- The Higher Education Quality Assurance System is rather complicated. There is too much emphasis on compliance checks and too little on university self-evaluation and improvement;
- Inter-country, regional and international academic mobility need further development.

2. The Bologna Process¹⁰

General Information

Level of integration in the Bologna Process	X	Bologna-Signatory Country (in 2010)
		Non Bologna-Signatory Country
		Bologna Process officially embedded in the education system
		Bologna Process being implemented by ad hoc groups under the supervision of the Ministry of Education
		No particular mechanism supporting the implementation of the Bologna Process

¹⁰ Source: Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency. 'State of Play of the Bologna Process in the Tempus Partner Countries (2012)', A Tempus Study, No 9, April 2012, EACEA, Brussels.

Bologna cycle structure

Level of implementation of a three-cycle structure compliant with the Bologna Process	Extensive but gradual introduction of Bologna structure/ongoing adaptations or enlargement
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Student workload/duration for the most common Bologna programmes			
Bachelor programmes	240 ECTS (4 academic years)	Master programmes	Various combinations

Bachelor/Master cycle structure models most commonly implemented	240+120 ECTS (4+2 academic years)
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European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

Definition of the Learning Outcomes Concept	Learning outcomes are defined in national steering documents and implemented through guidelines and recommendations
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Level of implementation of ECTS	More than 75% of institutions and programmes are using ECTS for both transfer and accumulation purposes. Allocation of ECTS is based on learning outcomes and student workload.
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Indicative number of hours of student workload corresponding to one ECTS	1 ECTS = 40 – 50 hours
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Bologna Diploma Supplement (DS)

Level of implementation of the Bologna Diploma Supplement	Bologna DS is issued to students in most (approximately 75%) institutions and study programmes
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Diploma Supplement issued	Bologna DS issued on request and free of charge	Bologna DS issued in the language of instruction and/or more official languages
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National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

Stage towards establishing a National Qualification Framework		Not yet started formally/not foreseen.
	X	<u>Step 1</u> : Decision taken. Process just started.
		<u>Step 2</u> : The purpose of the NQF has been agreed and the process is under way including discussions and consultations. Various committees have been established.
		<u>Step 3</u> : The NQF has been adopted formally and the implementation has started.
		<u>Step 4</u> : Redesigning the study programmes is ongoing and the process is close to completion.
		<u>Step 5</u> : Overall process fully completed including self-certified compatibility with the Framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

Quality Assurance Practices

National Quality Assurance body				
Name	Independent Kazakhstan Agency on Education Quality Assurance			
Status	A Government-dependent body or Ministry has responsibility for quality assurance.			
Year of establishment	2008			
Involvement in external quality assurance process		Decision-making role	Participation	No participation
	Academic staff	X		
	Students			X
	International Experts			X
Cross Border Evaluation: Institutions are allowed to choose a foreign quality assurance agency.				

Recognition of foreign qualifications

Ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention	X	1997 (signature), 1998 (ratification)
Recognition of Foreign Qualifications for academic study	Recognition for academic study by central or regional governmental authorities	
Recognition of Foreign Qualifications for professional employment	Recognition for professional employment by central or regional governmental authorities	

Joint Degrees

Establishment of joint degrees and programmes in higher education legislation	Joint programmes and joint degrees are not mentioned at all in the higher education legislation.
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III. Participation in EU programmes

1. Tempus

Kazakhstan has participated in the Tempus Programme since 1994.

1.1 Statistics

Number of projects in which one or several institutions in the country have been involved (as coordinator, contractor or partner)

	TEMPUS I and II	TEMPUS III	TEMPUS IV				
	1990-1999	2000-2006	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Joint Projects	7	13	7	3	3	7	5
Compact Projects	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Structural & Complementary Measures (Tempus III)	0	9	3	0	0	2	3
Structural Measures (Tempus IV)							
Total	10	22	10	3	3	9	8

Higher education institutions with highest TEMPUS participation during TEMPUS IV (2008-2012)

Institutions	Total	Number of projects	
		JP	SM
AL-FARABI KAZAKH NATIONAL UNIVERSITY	9	5	4
KARAGANDA STATE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY	8	6	2
GUMILEV EURASIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY	7	4	3
SATPAYEV KAZAKH NATIONAL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY	6	5	1
BUKETOV KARAGANDA STATE UNIVERSITY	6	5	1
AUEZOV SOUTH-KAZAKHSTAN STATE UNIVERSITY	6	1	5
UALIKHANOV KOKSHETAU STATE UNIVERSITY	5	5	-
SEIFULLIN KAZAKH AGRO-TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY	4	4	-
KORKYT ATA KYZYL ORDA STATE UNIVERSITY	4	2	2
ABAI KAZAKH NATIONAL PEDAGOGICAL UNIVERSITY	3	2	1
BAITURSYNOV KOSTANAI STATE UNIVERSITY	3	2	1

1.2 Impact of the Tempus programme

In Kazakhstan, Tempus has had a strong impact on curriculum modernisation. Many projects were implemented with the active participation of research institutions, business community NGOs and TVET institutions. Moreover, the geographic representation was also extended through the involvement of regional universities as well as of universities with no previous experience in Tempus. The projects aimed at curricular development based on the EU experience covered a wide range of education fields – economic, humanities and technical. The project 'Technical Education on Resource Savings for Industrial Development', the development and implementation of the Master programme 'Eco-Engineering – environmental processing and sustainable use of renewable resources and bio-waste' and the programme called 'Geoinformatics: Managing Energy, Resources,

Environment' demonstrate new approaches to developing interdisciplinary curricular at the edge of different spheres.

New curricula and programmes developed within the framework of Tempus projects are finding their place in HEIs. (Projects: Development of a Ph.D programme in agriculture in Kazakhstan (2006); space technologies (project *Curricula Reform in Space Technology*, 2008), chemical engineering (*Chemical engineering: Curricula Development and International Recognition*, 2008).

Active involvement of Kazakh HEIs in the Tempus programme made it possible to considerably increase awareness of the aims and objectives of the Tempus programme, which, in its turn, contributed to closer synergy with the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

In the field of business education at the Kazakh-British Technical University, the International Academy of Business, the University of International Business, Tempus projects (for instance, 'Restructuring Business Education Teaching with Innovative Curricula Development in Kazakhstan', 2004 and 'New Curricula in trade theory and econometrics', 2005) have brought expertise to restructuring curricula and modernising teaching and learning methods and approaches in order to meet the changing economic needs of the business environment in Kazakhstan.

A number of Tempus projects enabled the launching of new approaches in the operation of HEIs, namely in setting up institutes and mechanisms of interaction that contribute to improving collaboration with key stakeholders – business, students and the society at large.

A number of selected projects were undertaken to improve the system of quality management in education. Among them: 'Documentation for quality assurance of study programmes', involving Kazakh Satpaev National Technical University; Eurasian Gumilev National University; Kazakh Ablaykhan University of international relations and world languages; Kazakh leading academy of architecture and construction.

In the field of university governance, Tempus has made a difference as well: at least six projects have supported the introduction and the development of a national quality management and assessment system in the Kazakh higher education system. For example, the Kazakh National Agrarian University has introduced a system of quality assurance (both internal and external) which was disseminated to all universities. The project is sustainable with well-established and functioning structures. In the framework of the Tempus project aimed at developing a quality management system based on international standards and Total Quality Management (TQM) principles implemented in 2005 at the International Business, a general concept of quality accompanied by a Manual for Education Quality Evaluation was developed together with a coherent system of staff development. A key achievement of the project was the

development of two scientific laboratories for quality enhancement; one for students and one for faculty staff. These two laboratories continue to operate under the new Centre for Innovation in Education.

Another Tempus project aimed at developing the system of university governance 'Institute for strategic Management of Universities' was very pertinent and made it possible to identify key directions for improving the performance of HEIs in this area.

Tempus has supported the implementation of the ECTS, an important step in aligning universities with the principles of the Bologna process. The outcomes of the Tempus project 'Implementing of ECTS at Kazakhstan Universities' had systemic effects in the overall system of higher education in Kazakhstan. Beginning in 2011, a system of transferring national Kazakh credits into ECTS was initiated.

New curricula and degrees developed in Tempus projects are being systematically implemented in accordance with the ECTS, notably in business education (under the project 'Restructuring Business Education Teaching with Innovative Curricula Development in Kazakhstan', 2004), space technologies (under the project Curricula Reform in Space Technology, 2008) and chemical engineering (under the project 'Chemical Engineering: Curriculum Development and International Recognition', 2008).

Many more Tempus projects have brought spin-off effects which are visible in the area of cooperation between HEIs and members of consortia. As a result of the project 'Transferring of EU evaluation models in KAUIR functions and processes' (2006), it was decided to implement an overall system of quality management.

As a result of these positive experiences, there is an increased interest in participating in Tempus projects amongst Kazakh universities. It is also worth mentioning that all universities which have recently received international accreditation have been involved in Tempus.

2. Erasmus Mundus

The objective of the Erasmus Mundus programme is to promote European higher education, to help improve and enhance the career prospects of students and to promote intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries, in accordance with EU external policy objectives in order to contribute to the sustainable development of third countries in the field of higher education. It does this through three Actions:

Action 1 – Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes (Master Courses and Joint Doctorates) - with scholarships

Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes are operated by consortia of higher education institutions (HEIs) from the EU and (since 2009) elsewhere in the world. They provide an integrated course and joint or multiple diplomas following study or research at two or more HEIs. Master Courses and Joint Doctorates are selected each year following a Call for Proposals. There are currently 131 Masters and 34 Doctorates offering EU-funded scholarships or fellowships to students and scholars.

Action 2 – Erasmus Mundus Partnerships (former External Cooperation Window) – with scholarships

Under Action 2, Erasmus Mundus Partnerships bring together HEIs from Europe on the one hand and those from a particular region, or geographical 'lot' on the other. Together the partnerships manage mobility flows between the two regions for a range of academic levels – Bachelor, Master, doctorate, post-doctorate and for academic staff.

Action 3 – Erasmus Mundus Attractiveness projects

This Action of the Programme funds projects to enhance the attractiveness, profile, image and visibility of European higher education worldwide. Action 3 provides support to activities related to the international dimension of all aspects of higher education, such as promotion, accessibility, quality assurance, credit recognition, mutual recognition of qualifications, curriculum development and mobility.

More information:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/results_compendia/selected_projects_en.php.

Number of students/staff participating in the programme

Erasmus Mundus – Joint degrees (Action 1)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Students	1	-	3	3	3	6	3	7
Scholars	-	-	1	-	-	NA	NA	NA

Nationals of the country participated in the programme for the first time in 2005-2006 (students) and in 2007-2008 (scholars).

Erasmus Mundus– Partnerships (External Cooperation Window, Action 2)

	Undergraduate	Master	Doctorate	Post-doctorate	Staff	Total
2007	24	15	4	1	2	46
2008	16	14	9	5	7	51
2009	28	18	13	3	11	73
2010*	33	20	25	13	35	126
2011*	47	28	26	12	33	146

Institutions participating in the programme up to and including 2011

Institutions	Action 1 Joint Programmes	Action 2 Partnerships	Action 3 Attractiveness projects
AL-FARABI KAZAKH NATIONAL UNIVERSITY		X	X
ALMATY TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY		X	
ASTANA MEDICAL UNIVERSITY JSC		X	
EAST KAZAKHSTAN STATE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY NAMED AFTER D. SERIKBAYEV		X	
INNOVATIVE UNIVERSITY OF EURASIA		X	
INTERNATIONAL KAZAKH-TURKISH UNIVERSITY NAMED AFTER H. A. YASAWI		X	

KARAGANDA STATE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY		X	
KARAGANDA STATE UNIVERSITY NAMED AFTER E. BUKETOV		X	
KARAGANDA UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS KAZPOTREBSOYUZ		X	
KAZAKH AGRO-TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY		X	
KAZAKH ECONOMIC UNIVERSITY NAMED AFTER RYSKULOV		X	
KAZAKH NATIONAL AGRARIAN UNIVERSITY		X	
KAZAKH NATIONAL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY NAMED AFTER K. SATPAEV		X	
KAZAKH-BRITISH TEKHNICAL UNIVERSITY		X	
KAZAKHS KAYA AKADEMIA TRANSPORTA I KOMMUNIKATSIY IMENI M. TYNYSHPAEVA		X	
KAZAKHSTAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, ECONOMICS AND STRATEGIC RESEARCH (KIMEP)	X	X	
KOKSHETAU STATE UNIVERSITY NAMED AFTER SH. UALIKHANOV		X	
KOSTANAY STATE AKHMET BAITURSYNOV UNIVERSITY		X	
L.N. GUMILYOV EURASIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY		X	
M. AUEZOV SOUTH-KAZAKHSTAN STATE UNIVERSITY		X	
S. AMANZHOLOV EAST KAZAKHSTAN STATE UNIVERSITY		X	
S.SEIFULLIN KAZAKH AGRO TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY		X	
WEST-KAZAKHSTAN AGRARIAN-TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY AFTER ZHANGIR KHAN		X	

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