

SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT

The Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care (ECAQA)

Almaty Kazakhstan
2026

ECAQA
Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care

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ECAQA
Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care

Brief information about Kazakhstan, Higher Education and ECAQA

Area	2.7 million square kilometres
Capital	Astana
Population*	20,575,979 people (as of June 1, 2026)
Currency	Tenge (KZT)
**GDP per capita ** **	$17,503 in nominal terms and estimated at $40,813 in purchasing power parity (2026)
Number of HEIs * **	116 (2026), consist of: – National Universities – 12, – Public Universities – 31, – Non-State Universities – 14, – Autonomous Educational Institutions – 1, – International Universities – 1, – Publicly Traded Universities – 11, – Private Universities – 52. – 40 branches and strategic partnerships with leading international universities from 13 countries around the world. Number of Medical HEIs: – 1 Kazakh National Medical University – 1 Astana National Medical University (since 20226) – 6 Medical Universities (Semey, Karaganga, Aktobe, Almaty (3)) – 1 Academy (South Kazakhstan) – 4 Faculty of Medicine at 4 Universities
Number of newly enrolled students 2025-2026 (HEIs)	724 107, including: Master's programmess: 39,883 students (the total number of students in the postgraduate education system is 42,600). Residency programmess: 9,631 students. Doctoral programmes: 9,491 students. In 2025, 93,232 grants were allocated for the training of personnel with higher education and postgraduate education, of which 77,084 were for those with higher education.
ECAQA established	2017
Years of external reviews	APQR (since 2019) ENQA (2022-2027) EQAR (2022-2027) WFME (2022-2032)

* https://stat.gov.kz/en/
** **https://primeminister.kz/ru/news/rost-vvp-kazaxstana-za-2025-god-sostavil-65-30945**
*** https://www.gov.kz/memleket/entities/education/activities/31809?lang=ru

1. Introduction

The Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care (ECAQA) was registered with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan as a non-governmental non-for-profit organisation for quality assurance in higher education on February 3, 2017. ECAQA is recognised by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan and was included on the National Register of Recognised Accrediting Agencies (Register 1) on March 13, 2018. By the decision of the Republican Accreditation Council (Minutes № 2 of 14.03.2023) Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Education and Health Care extended the period of registration in the Register of 1 recognised accreditation bodies of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 5 years until 14 March 2028.

ECAQA, as a specialised/professional accreditation agency in medicine, biomedicine and health sciences, is included on the Directory of Organisations that Recognize/Accredit Medical Schools (DORA) of the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER), USA and The Council for Higher Education Accreditation International Quality Group (CHEA/CIQG) International Directory, USA http://ecaqa.org/en/international-collaboration/membership/413-chea-2.

Taking into consideration the Kazakhstan Ministry of Education and Science Policy in internationalization and enhancing the quality assurance in higher education, the ECAQA was externally evaluated by Asia-Pacific Quality Register/Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQR/APQN) and included on the APQR in December 2019. The process of re-listing in the APQR has begun, and an external evaluation is scheduled for February 2027.

ECAQA is a full member of the associations of accreditation bodies of OECD member states - European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN), Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA) and a member of the International Quality Group of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation of the United States of America (CHEA CIQG). ECAQA has signed the Memorandum of Affiliation: Promotion Partnership in Quality Assurance to implement CHEA's International Quality Principles (2015) at higher education institutions in Kazakhstan and the CIS as well.

On June 22, 2022, ENQA confirmed the membership of the Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care in ENQA for a period of 5 years (External Review of ECAQA on the ENQA website). ENQA Board decision letter on ECAQA membership.

The ENQA Board concluded that ECAQA complies with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015) and thus fulfils the membership criteria according to Article 6, paragraph 1 of the ENQA rules of procedure. Letter from the ENQA President on the decision of the ENQA Board.

On June 19, 2024, a progress visit by ENQA experts took place. The ECAQA was visited by international experts. The purpose of the visit was to engage in a dialogue focused on the improvement and strategic development of the ECAQA (ENQA Agency Evaluation Guidelines, 2021 edition) and to discuss issues raised by the accreditation center (State Policy on Quality Assurance in Higher Education: QAA's Response and Responsibility; Cross-Border Accreditation in Medical Education: Regional and National Context; Quality Assurance in Postgraduate Medical Education: Challenges and Prospects). The visit proceeded according to the program. The ECAQA ensured the participation of members of the Accreditation Council, the Expert Council, accreditation experts, and student experts.

May 31, 2024: The ECAQA prepared and submitted a Follow-Up Report to ENQA.

The ENQA partial review of the ECAQA with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). The review took place from March 2023 to March 2024 with a site visit to the agency from 12-14 December 2023. The international expert commission have visited ECAQA as part of the procedure for the inclusion of ECAQA in the European Quality Assurance Register - EQAR. The review and consequently this report describes the following ESG standards: 2.4 Peer-review experts; 2.5 Criteria for outcomes; 2.6 Reporting; 3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance ESG 3.3 – Independence.

Following the decision of the EQAR Register Committee of 11 October 2023, ECAQA was included in EQAR. The registration period is from 23.06.2023 to 30.06.2027. In this regard, information about ECAQA accredited Higher and Postgraduate Education Institutions and educational programmes, as well as Reports of external expert commissions are placed in the EQAR database - The Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR).

On April 18–22, 2022, the ECAQA underwent an external evaluation by an international team as part of the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) accreditation process in the area of quality assurance in basic medical education. ECAQA was granted World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) Recognition Status on October 10, 2022, that is valid until October 31, 2032 and applicable to the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Tajikistan. The information on the ECAQA Recognition Status by the WFME is available on the agency's website. Also, the WFME has posted the information about ECAQA having been recognised for Uzbekistan on the website: Agencies with WFME Recognition Status.

The Self-assessment of ECAQA was conducted to determine ECAQA's compliance with the ESG criteria (Part 2, Part 3) to confirm its membership in ENQA, as well as its compliance with the requirements of the EQAR for the purpose of re-registration.

ECAQA SAR includes the description of the agency's practice in quality assurance in higher education including medical and healthcare professions education, current activities, status in the national context and its compliance with the national requirements and ESG (Part 2, Part 3). The SAR has been developed in accordance with the Guidelines for ENQA Agency Review's requirements (December 2025) and the provided main structure.

2. Development of the self-assessment report (SAR)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool (ChatGPT) was used to support certain aspects of the preparation of this document. Specifically, AI was applied to assist with the following tasks: translation, language refinement, clarification of meaning, and improving the consistency and readability of the English text. All content was subsequently verified by ECAQA staff and reviewed by Alibek Amandykov, Head of the International Cooperation and Public Relations Department, to ensure accuracy, objectivity, and compliance with ENQA Policy on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Agency Reviews (link). The use of AI did not replace human oversight or decision-making at any stage of the process.

In accordance with the procedure for renewal as ENQA members, the members of the ECAQA Expert Board once again carefully reviewed the Guidelines for ENQA Agency Reviews (December 2025), as well as the latest information on the ENQA and EQAR websites regarding the confirmation of ENQA membership and the evaluation process for compliance with the ESG criteria.

On 5 December 2025, ECAQA confirmed to the ENQA Secretariat (Milja Homan, Project and Reviews Officer) its intention to renew its ENQA membership and to apply for registration on EQAR. The review process will be coordinated by ENQA.

The preparation of the SAR began with the establishment of a dedicated Self-assessment Commission. The Commission was formally established by Order No. 12/1 dated 16 March 2026, "On the formation of the Self-Assessment Commission in Preparation for the ENQA International Evaluation". The composition of the Commission is specified in the Order and below.

The ECAQA's Self-Assessment Commission consists of:

Alma Kuzgibekova, MD, PhD, Associate Professor	**Chair of ECAQA Expert Board Chair of SAR Commission**
Alibek, Amandykov, Msc	Chair of the Department for International Collaboration and public relations
Farida Nurmanbetova, MD, DMedSc	Adviser to ECAQA
Saule Sarsenbayeva, MD, DmedSc, Professor, MBA	Director General of ECAQA

Makpal Umarova, BA	Chair of ECAQA Department for Accreditation and Monitoring
Akbota Kozybaeva, BA	Planning and Administration Department
Elena Zinchenko, BA	Accountant
Sholpan Kaliyeva MD, PhD, Professor	Chair of Commission on Higher and Postgraduate Medical and Pharmaceutical Education
Kemelova Gulshat, MD, PhD, Associate Professor	Chair of Commission on Simulation education of ECAQA Expert Board
Gulmira Ibrayeva, MD, PhD Associate Professor	Chair of Commission on Continuing Professional Development in Health Care of ECAQA Expert Board
Asyl Arenova, Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor	Member of Commission on Higher and Postgraduate Education ECAQA of ECAQA Expert Board
Sholpan Ramazanova, MD, PhD	Member of Commission on Higher and Postgraduate Medical and Pharmaceutical Education ECAQA of Expert Board
Elena Roslyakova, MD, PhD, Associate Professor	Member of Commission on Higher and Postgraduate Medical and Pharmaceutical Education ECAQA of Expert Board
Kamila Mustafina, MD, PhD, Associate Professor	Member of Commission on Higher and Postgraduate Medical and Pharmaceutical Education ECAQA of Expert Board
Saule Esenkulova, MD, DMedSc, Associate Professor	Chair of the Appeals Commission of ECAQA
Alfiya Shamsutdinova, MD, PhD	Chair of the Complaints Review Commission of ECAQA
Амангелді Bekzhat Polatuly	Member of ECAQA Accreditation Council A 5th-year student studying general medicine, Kazakhstan-Russian Medical University

The self-assessment commission, comprising 17 members, guided by the action plan for preparing ECAQA for the ENQA international review (approved 24 March 2026), carried out an analysis of the implementation of the recommendations of the ENQA Panel Experts 2022 and the recommendations of the experts who conducted the ENQA partial review of 12–14 December 2023.

Members of the self-assessment commission determined that, in accordance with the action plan for improvement developed by the ECAQA Expert Board (Action Plan for Improving the Activities of the ECAQA based on the Recommendations of ENQA Experts for the Period July 2022 – June 2023, Minutes of the Expert Board No. 2 of 11 July 2022), improvement tasks were allocated according to the points of the ENQA Panel Experts' recommendations, and completion timelines were planned in accordance with the priority of the improvement objectives. The completion deadline for the majority of the recommendations was set as June 2023, i.e. within one year. Activities such as, for example, training of accreditation experts and staff professional development, are included in ECAQA's annual work plan.

Members of the self-assessment commission paid particular attention to the recommendations of the ENQA Panel Experts 2022 in which partial fulfilment was noted. Thus, Standards 2.5 (ESG 2.5 Criteria for Outcomes), 2.6 (ESG 2.6 Reporting), 2.7 (Complaints and Appeals) and 3.1 (Activities, Policy and Processes for Quality Assurance) were partially fulfilled. The ECAQA Follow-Up Report of 31.05.2024 includes information on the amendments and additions made to ECAQA's documents and procedures, with references to supporting documents. The recommendations of the ENQA Panel Experts were incorporated into ECAQA's three-year Strategic Development Plan for 2023–2025.

By the end of 2023, additions and corrections had been made to 8 accreditation standards and 4 self-assessment guides, 7 regulations had been updated, and 3 new regulations and 2 guides had been developed. In 2024, new accreditation standards for residency programmes and a corresponding self-assessment guide were developed, as well as accreditation standards for the Master's programme for the Republic of Uzbekistan. Sections 1–10 of two accreditation standards were updated to reflect the new regulatory and legal framework of the Republic of Kazakhstan. In 2025, a new version of the standard for institutional accreditation of HEI and PGME in healthcare was developed, together with a guide for conducting self-assessment.

Between July 2022 and August 2026, textual information on the website www.ecaqa.org was updated in the sections "About ECAQA" (Accreditation Council, Expert Board), "Documentation" (Strategic Plan, ECAQA Reports), "ECAQA Quality Assurance" (QA Programme, Thematic Analysis), "Accreditation" (Complaints and Appeals Procedure), and "Students" (where a new section, "Students and Quality Assurance Policy in Education" was created), as well as "Requirements for Educational Organisations for Submitting an Accreditation Application". ECAQA staff consistently and regularly add updates to the informational sections of the website. In 2024, the main-menu section "Submit an Application" was completely revised to present a differentiated approach for organisations of different types and levels of education. Since autumn 2024, the Register of Accredited Educational Organisations and Educational Programmes has been automated, including a search filter. Information from the Register (Accreditation Council decisions and expert reports) is synchronised with the EPVO portal of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MSHE RK), and the English-language version of the Register with EQAR.

The self-assessment commission carried out preparations for the ENQA international review in accordance with the work plan (Link).

A SWOT Analysis process supported by all ECAQA staff and Expert Board members and their conclusions and offers for IQA and EQA improvement as well as the feedback on the work of the ECAQA from external stakeholders were analysed and summarised by the ECAQA Self Assessmnet Commisson (SAC).

The SAC finalised the SAR, and it was approved by the ECAQA Expert Board, Minutes No.3, August 31, 2026.

This is the second time for ECAQA to undergo external review against the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the Higher Education Area (ESG). The Self-Assessment Commission (SAC) reflected and described its practice in internal quality assurance (ESG/Part 2) and external quality assurance (ESG/Part 3) in the SAR with supporting documents to meet the requirements for the Membership of ENQA and registration for the EQAR as well.

3. Higher education in the context of the agency

On July 1, 2026, a new Constitution was adopted and brought into force in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The Constitution was adopted by a national referendum on March 15, 2026. https://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/K2600000000 New Version of Article 33 of the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan: 1. Citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan are guaranteed the right to receive secondary education at state educational institutions free of charge. Primary and lower secondary education are compulsory. 2. Citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan have the right to receive higher education at institutions of higher education in accordance with the law. 3. Tuition-based education at private educational institutions is provided on the grounds and in accordance with the procedures established by law. 4. The state establishes universally binding educational standards. The activities of all educational institutions must comply with these standards. 5. The system of education and upbringing in educational institutions within the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan is secular in nature, with the exception of religious educational institutions.

Currently, in the Republic of Kazakhstan: 116 institutions of higher education and postgraduate education will be operating in 2026, including: National Universities – 12, Public Universities – 31, Non-State Universities – 14, Autonomous Educational Institutions – 1, International Universities – 1, Publicly Traded Universities – 11, Private Universities – 52. 42.2% of higher

education institutions are publicly owned, and 56% are privately owned. One university (Nazarbayev University-NU) holds autonomous position.

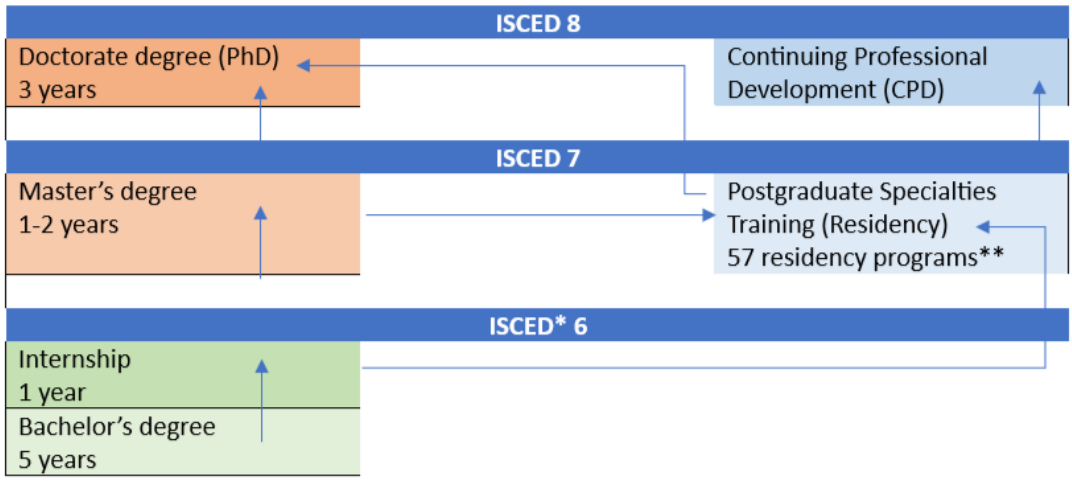
Kazakhstan has 40 branches and strategic partnerships with leading international universities from 13 countries around the world. The largest campuses and institutes have been established in collaboration with relevant government agencies to expand access to quality education.

The following is a list of countries whose universities opened branch campuses in Kazakhstan between 2022 and 2026: United Kingdom (8 universities, including Cardiff University Kazakhstan, Coventry University Kazakhstan, and Heriot-Watt University); United States (7 universities, including programs from Arizona State University, the University of Arizona, and the University of Minnesota); China (6 educational institutions, including Lu Ban's workshops and Beijing Language and Culture University); Russia (9 universities).

The current structure of higher and postgraduate education in Kazakhstan is based on the Bologna Process and follows a three-tier model (bachelor's degree—master's degree—doctoral degree):

1. Higher Education (First Cycle). Bachelor's Degree: The primary level of higher education. The programme typically lasts 4 years (for medical education: Higher medical education + Internship (the "6+1" basic model), Figure 1). Graduates are awarded a "Bachelor's" degree.

2. Postgraduate Education (Second and Third Levels). (A) Master's degree: The second level of education, accessible after completing a bachelor's degree. It is divided into two tracks: Professional (1–1.5 years) - training of managerial and production personnel for the real sector; Research and teaching (2 years - training of personnel for research and teaching at universities. (B) Doctoral Program (PhD / Specialized): The highest level of postgraduate education. The program lasts at least 3 years following completion of a research and teaching master's degree. It concludes with the defense of a dissertation and the awarding of a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or a specialized doctoral degree.



* ISCED - unified reference standard adopted by UNESCO for organizing and comparing educational programs and qualifications at the international level.

** On the Approval of the List of Medical Specialties for Residency Programs No. ҚР ДСМ – 43. Order of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. ҚР ДСМ - 43, dated May 25, 2021. Registered with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan on May 28, 2021, under No. 22844.

Figure 1. **The Structure of Kazakhstan Medical and other Healthcare Professional Education**

The National Qualifications System was adopted in 2012 with amendments as of 18.12.2013. The National Qualifications Framework aided in systematizing and providing a basis for recognition of learning outcomes, contributed to the enhancement of quality and access to all levels of education, including TVET, higher and post-higher education, facilitated the improvement of the relationships with the world's labour markets and the mutual recognition of qualifications, as well as the

implementation of lifelong learning strategies. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) completed the cross reference of its frameworks to the European Qualification Framework (EQF LLL).

The healthcare system in Kazakhstan is based on a multi-tiered system, which underwent a major overhaul in September 2026 (in accordance with the Order of the Acting Minister of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated September 15, 2026, No. 108. Registered with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan on September 17, 2026, No. 39894/ Available in Russian (Link). The gist of this document is as follows: (1) starting in 2026, admissions to continuous integrated medical education (CIME) programmes will be completely discontinued (Note: at the same time, students who were admitted to these programs earlier will be able to complete their studies under the current curricula or transfer to the new programmes); (2) Science September 2026 Internship (1 year) conducted under a dual-track system. The minimum number of credits for each educational programmes are as follows: “Nursing”, “Public Health” - 280 credits; “Pharmacy,” “Preventive Medicine” -350; “Dentistry” - 420; “Medicine”, “Pediatrics” - 490. The future physician is granted official status as an intern, works under the supervision of a mentor at a clinic, has access to medical information systems, and receives compensation for their work. Graduates are awarded the qualification of “Physician,” with an indication of their internship specialty (there are a total of 8 core specialties available: general practice, internal medicine, pediatrics, surgery, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatric surgery, dentistry, and hygiene and epidemiology); (3) the final assessment for graduating students will take the form of a comprehensive exam; (4) new requirements for residency programmes - a mentorship system and mandatory evaluation will be officially established for residents; (5) changes to educational standards - Qualification requirements and approaches to the professional training of future specialists have been updated.

According to the Insider Global Education Index, Kazakhstan ranks 18th in the world, placing it among the group of countries with a rapidly developing education system that is integrated into the global academic community (Link).

The state support provided to higher and postgraduate education, together with the implementation of a multi-level quality assurance system—including licensing, post-licensing monitoring, various types of audits of higher education institutions, the recognition of accreditation as a mandatory requirement, assessment of graduates’ achievements (including independent assessment of residency graduates), graduate employment indicators, national rankings of higher education institutions, surveys of graduates and students, and the positioning of higher education institutions in international rankings—demonstrates the steady progress of higher education in Kazakhstan toward international recognition.

Kazakhstani universities are featured in leading global rankings, such as the QS World University Rankings and Times Higher Education. The leader in national education is the autonomous institution Nazarbayev University (ranked 401–500 in the Times Higher Education rankings). In 2023, the ECAQA accredited the “Doctor of Medicine” bachelor’s program at Nazarbayev University’s School of Medicine. A total of 19 universities in the country is included in the international QSWUR rankings. For example, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (Almaty) ranked 166th. (The ECAQA accredited 24 educational programmes, including 2 bachelor’s programmes and 22 residency programmes); Asfendiyarov Kazakh National Medical University (Almaty) – 1001–1200 (The ECAQA accredited 38 educational programmes in 2020–2022, including 5 bachelor’s programmes and 33 residency programmes).

Kazakhstan's rankings in other global indices are shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2. **Kazakhstan in Global Rankings in 2026**

Kazakhstan is a country where the education sector is clearly regulated by legislative documents, and compliance with the requirements established by the relevant regulatory and legal acts of the authorized bodies is monitored. In the field of medical education, the authorized body responsible for undergraduate and residency programmes is the Ministry of Healthcare of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MoH RK). The Ministry of Science and Higher Education regulates processes related to PhD degree programmes. At the same time, the MoH RK serves as the key regulator of educational content and develops and approves the State Compulsory Educational Standards (SCES) for medical specialties. The Master's degree programmes in "Health Care" is jointly regulated by two Ministries, but the key standards and specifications are set by the MoH RK. This allows the ministry to independently regulate the amount of grants, educational programmes, and residency requirements based on the actual needs of the healthcare system and staffing shortages in the regions. However, the Register of Educational Organizations and Educational Programs, including those in the field of healthcare (the Unified Higher Education Platform https://epvo.kz/#/), which contains information on accreditation outcomes, is maintained by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education.

Legislative changes concerning higher education and postgraduate education in general, and medical education in particular.

1) Modernization of higher and postgraduate education (2010-2022).

– Kazakhstan engaged in Implementing the principles of the Bologna declaration and the Internationalization of the educational system of Kazakhstan. The major changes were Incorporated into the State Programme of Education Development 2011-2020. Kazakhstan adopted a National Qualifications Framework (2012).

–"Expansion of Academic and Managerial Independence of HEIs" Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan (4.07.2018) No. 171 -VI. The main regulatory legal act governing all levels of education, including the fundamental principles of academic mobility, the credit-based learning system, and the establishment of educational institutions.

– Kazakhstan transferred to a new credit system (Bachelor 240 credits; Master 60-120; Doctoral programmes 180) on January, 2019.

– A new Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, No. 360-VI ZRK, dated July 7, 2020, "On Public Health and Healthcare System", has been adopted. Section 4, Chapter 25, dedicated to educational activities in the field of healthcare, has been added to the Code. In particular, new Articles 220 and 221, paragraph 6, have been added, in which the requirements for continuing professional development have become more stringent; Article 222 defines residency as a level of postgraduate medical education intended to prepare physicians for independent clinical practice. The requirements for the training of residents are described.

– In accordance with the Law "On introducing amendments to some legislative acts on the expansion of academic and managerial independence of higher educational institutions" adopted on July 4, 2018 No. 172-VI, HEIs gained more autonomy in: modernising the system of management of higher education institution; developing and approving educational programmes; defining internal standards for academic load, rules for admission, rules for organising internships, rules on student flow and other procedures regulating academic activity of the HEIs; conducting ongoing monitoring of student performance, as well as final certification of students; introducing modern forms of professional training, etc. Moreover, the existing functions of universities were complemented by the following new functions: creating an endowment fund; creating legal entities for scientific and educational activities; opening start-up companies; establishing branches in foreign countries.

These changes led to the development or revision of 56 by-laws, regulating the operation of HEIs. The reform is aimed at increasing the competitiveness of universities. It allows HEIs to gain academic autonomy and managerial independence through the transformation into non-profit joint stock companies. It is expected that universities will increase the effectiveness of their activities through accountability to corporate bodies of governance. In addition, HEIs will be able to diversify their sources of income and introduce modern methods of management and budgeting.

2) The quality of education to international standards, to drive digital transformation, and to develop intellectual potential (2022 - present).

–The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MES) was split into two separate ministries on June 11, 2022, by a decree of President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education were established from it. The Need to Reform Science. https://www.bilim.expert/post/министерство-образования-и-науки-разделили-на-два-ведомства (Available in Russian). The president emphasized the importance of strengthening the country's scientific and technological capabilities and improving the coordination of scientific activities. The creation of a separate ministry has made it possible to focus directly on the development of universities, attracting investment in science, and commercializing research findings. The Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan monitors and regulates both public and private higher education institutions. Moreover, all universities are subject to regular certification and accreditation.

– The Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan has been delegated functions and authority in the field of preschool, secondary, technical and vocational education (4 level), post-secondary non-tertiary education (5 level) as well as the protection of children's rights. The Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan supervises issues of higher and postgraduate education, language policy, and science. The Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan monitors and regulates both public and private higher education institutions (HEIs). Moreover, all universities are subject to regular institutional and specialized (programme) accreditation.

– The Concept for the Development of Higher Education and Science for 2023–2029. Government Decree of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 248, dated March 28, 2023. https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/P2300000248 (Available in Russian). It is a national strategic document that outlines key reforms, performance indicators, and directions for modernizing the country's higher education and scientific sectors. Main Objectives of the Concept: To enhance the competitiveness of Kazakhstani universities and the quality of workforce training; To integrate science, education, and the real sector of the economy; To increase the contribution of science to the country's development and technological modernization. Key Objectives and Targets by 2029: Achieve a university graduate employment rate of 79%; increase business spending on research and development (R&D) to 50%; gradually raise scholarship amounts and expand the preferential

loan program with interest rates of 2–3%; Addressing student housing issues, including the addition of new dormitory beds (up to 70,000); Increasing access to higher education for young people and developing the non-formal education system.

–On Amendments and Additions to Order No. 595 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated October 30, 2018, "On the Approval of Model Rules for the Activities of Educational Organizations of the Respective Types". Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 207 dated May 18, 2020. Registered with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan on May 18, 2020, under No. 20651 https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/V2000020651 (Available in Russian). This document establishes a uniform set of procedures for all educational institutions, including universities. It replaces previous regulations and sets forth modern requirements for the educational process. It outlines the rules for admissions, the organization of instruction, the administrative structure, and safety requirements for educational institutions.

– On the Approval of State Mandatory Standards for Higher and Postgraduate Education. Order of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 2, dated July 20, 2022. Registered with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan on July 27, 2022, under No. 28916. https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/V2200028916 Document Contents: Defines the maximum course load for students and the mandatory distribution of courses across subject categories (General Education, Core, and Specialized). Establishes the use of academic credits (the ECTS system) to measure the workload of courses. It clearly distinguishes between the requirements for bachelor's, master's (specialized and research-teaching), and PhD (specialized) programmes. It adheres to the principles of academic freedom in higher education institutions. Recent changes to the State Educational Standards closely link education to the development of digital literacy and the use of cutting-edge digital technologies, IT resources, cloud services, and mobile services. This applies to both undergraduate courses and the experimental and research work of master's and doctoral students.

– In 2023, an order was issued that included amendments and additions to Order No. 629. – On Amending and Supplementing Order No. 629 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated November 1, 2016, "On Approving the Requirements for Accreditation Bodies and the Rules for Recognizing Accreditation Bodies, Including Foreign Ones." Order of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 49 dated February 13, 2023. Registered with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan on February 14, 2023, under No. 31901 https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/V2300031901 The changes to this document will be described in greater detail in Chapter 4.

– Since 2026, the admission procedures for students entering higher education institutions in Kazakhstan have changed. More detailed information on the admission rules for higher education institutions and the number of students admitted during the academic year is provided in the link below (Link).

In its operations, the ECAQA takes into account any changes in the country's laws and regulations to update its internal regulations and to ensure that all changes are reflected when conducting external evaluations of HEIs, including an assessment of changes at HEIs and their compliance with the requirements of updated legislation. The changes made to the internal documents of the ECAQA will be described in other sections of this Self-assessment Report.

Table 1 below provides detailed information on the legislative changes that took place between 2021 and 2026 regarding higher and postgraduate education.

Table 1. Governmental regulations (amendments) and key considerations

Regulations	Amendments	Key considerations
The Republic of Kazakhstan's Law "On Education" of July 27, 2007 No. 319-111 (with amendments 2026, No. 171-VI)	✓ Institutional ✓ Specialised (Programmatic) accreditation ✓ Continuum of all level of education	✓ accreditation is voluntary based ✓ accreditation is funded by HEIs ✓ HEIs and the educational programmes should be accredited to issue Degree and State Diploma, student scholarships

		✓ institutional autonomy (organisational, financial, academic, staffing)
Order of the Ministry of Education and Science on Recognition of Accrediting Agencies and Development of the Register of Accrediting Agencies (Register 1), Accredited HEIs (Register 2) and Educational Programmes (Register 3) dated November 01, 2016 No. 629;	✓ Status of Agency - Non-Government Non-Profit Organisation ✓ Standards and Guidelines ✓ Full Membership in International/Regional Associations or Networks for QA in HE in countries member of OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) ✓ Data base of trained and qualified reviewers (experts)	✓ Independence of Agency ✓ Mission ✓ Responsibility of Agency ✓ Public known decision on accreditation ✓ Submitting the information about external evaluation of a HEI for the inclusion on Register 2 ✓ or the information about external evaluation of an educational programme for the inclusion on Register 3
On Amending Order No. 629 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated November 1, 2016, "On the Approval of Requirements for Accreditation Bodies in the Field of Higher and Postgraduate Education and Rules for the Recognition of Accreditation Agencies in the Field of Higher and Postgraduate Education, Including Foreign Ones" Order No. 302 of the Acting Minister of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated June 11, 2025. Registered with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan on June 18, 2025, under No. 36296	✓ The updated regulations established new requirements: institutions must have legal entity status and be listed in the OECD registers, the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR), or be members of two or more international networks. ✓ The submission of documentation for the recognition of an accreditation agency is now carried out electronically via the Unified Higher Education Platform (UHEP), and the procedure itself strictly regulates the composition of the expert commission responsible for the evaluation	Order No. 629: Legal Framework and Amendments: – The mechanisms for forming and maintaining the registers of recognised accrediting agencies have been revised. – The Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the RK has moved from an automatic approval process for international accreditation agencies towards closer oversight of their activity within the country. – The requirements for expert commission members have been revised, including a cap on the share of Kazakhstani (national) experts within the external expert commissions of foreign accrediting agencies. – Accountability to the Ministry has been strengthened, together with the transfer of accreditation results into the unified information system. More detailed information is provided in the document at the link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-P7YffVF48bMZhxBMdt-kabMfaEv50L7/view?usp=sharing
Republican Accreditation Council of the Ministry of Education and Science	✓ Decision on Recognition of Accrediting Agency	✓ Including on the National Register of Recognised Accrediting Agencies No. 1 of the Ministry of Education and Science (Former name until 2022).

4. Quality assurance of higher education in the context of the agency

The higher education quality assurance system in Kazakhstan is based on a decentralized government-civil society model. At its core is the institution of independent accreditation, which has completely replaced the Soviet-era state certification system.

The effectiveness of accreditation agencies in Kazakhstan has a clear legislative and methodological basis:

1. Legislative Framework and Incentives. According to Article 9-1 of the Law of Kazakhstan "On Education" the accreditation of higher education institutions is carried out by nongovernmental, nonprofit organizations on a voluntary basis.

At the same time, the government has established a strict economic incentive: since 2018, independent accreditation has been a mandatory requirement for receiving state funding (grants). Higher education institutions without accreditation are deprived of budgetary funding, the right to issue state-recognized diplomas, and the right to participate in national rankings.

2. The state's "two-register" principle. The Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MSHE RK) has stepped back from its role as a direct inspector but has retained the function of strict oversight over the quality of the inspectors themselves. The MSHE RK of Kazakhstan maintains two key tools: National Registry 1 (Registry of Recognized Accreditation Bodies): this includes agencies (both Kazakhstani and foreign) that have passed a rigorous selection process conducted by the Republican Accreditation Council; Registers 2 and 3 (Registers of Accredited Higher Education Institutions and Programs): a unified database that includes only those educational institutions that have confirmed their status through approved agencies.

As of 2025, the Registry of accredited educational institutions and educational programmes (on the website of the National Center for Education Development under the Ministry of National Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan) ceased to be in effect, and the collection of information for the new registry of the Unified Higher Education Platform (UHEP) began. The ECAQA regularly submits information about accredited educational institutions and educational programs in Kazakh and Russian to the UHEP Registry of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan through its official account.

The UHEP Registry is a module of the "Unified Platform for Higher Education" information system operated by the authorized body in the field of science and higher education, which includes a list of educational programs developed by institutions of higher and/or postgraduate education.

The Unified Higher Education Platform Registry is established in accordance with Order No. 106 of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated October 12, 2022, "On the Approval of the Rules for Maintaining the Registry of Educational Programs Offered by Institutions of Higher and/or Postgraduate Education, as well as the Grounds for Inclusion in and Exclusion from the Registry of Educational Programs". Registered with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan on October 13, 2022, No. 30139. In 2025, amendments were made to the order (On Amending and Supplementing Order No. 106 of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated October 12, 2022 "On the Approval of the Rules for Maintaining the Register of Educational Programs Implemented by Institutions of Higher and/or Postgraduate Education, as well as the Grounds for Inclusion in and Exclusion from the Register of Educational Programs". Order of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 469 dated October 3, 2025. Registered with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan on October 6, 2025, under No. 37072).

3. International Standards (Methodological Rationale). The activities of Kazakhstani agencies are recognized as legitimate at the global level, as their standards are harmonized with the ESG (European Standards and Guidelines) - the European quality assurance standards approved by ENQA. National agencies, including the ECAQA, must be members of ENQA and (preferably) registered in the European EQAR registry. For medical programmes, recognition by the WFME is important. The ECAQA has been recognized by the WFME from 2022 through 2032.

4. A Two-Tier Evaluation System. Agencies conduct evaluations in two areas: Institutional accreditation and Specialized (programme) accreditation: an assessment of whether a specific academic programme (for example, "6B10101 Medicine") meets the demands of the labor market, employers, and academic standards. Thus, the educational quality assurance system is structured in such a way that universities have a financial incentive to undergo ongoing external evaluation as part of the accreditation process.

In addition to the national quality assurance system, most of HEIs started to develop internal quality assurance systems and strategies in response to governmental requirements and imposed regulations. This activity is governed by the following document: Quality Assurance Guidelines by Level of Education (hereinafter referred to as the Guidelines). Annex to Order No. 292 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, dated June 23, 2022. This guide was

developed based on the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG). The Guidelines serve as a basic standard and tool for higher education institutions to establish an internal quality management system. The guidelines help universities make effective use of their academic and administrative autonomy when developing educational programs. They establish uniform rules and criteria for creating an effective internal quality assurance system (IQAS) at the faculty and department levels. They simplify the process of undergoing mandatory external evaluation procedures, as well as national and international accreditation. It enhances academic integrity, transparency, and the recognition of university degrees in the labor market and internationally. Objective of the Guidelines: To establish a unified national framework for the continuous improvement of educational quality based on international standards. The document harmonizes Kazakhstan's quality assurance system with European and global practices (such as the ESG standards for higher education and EQAVET for technical and vocational education). The main aspects of the guidelines can be divided into three key areas: (1) Internal quality assurance: Every educational institution (from kindergarten to university) is required to develop its own internal culture of quality. This includes establishing transparent academic policies, regularly reviewing educational programs, objectively assessing students, and supporting academic integrity among faculty. (2) External quality assurance: This regulates mechanisms for independent oversight—external evaluation, state certification, and institutional/specialized accreditation through recognized agencies. (3) Focus on student-centered learning: Shifting the focus from formal administrative checks to actual learning outcomes, student needs, and faculty qualifications.
https://irrd.kz/old/sites/irrd.kz/uploads/docs/PRIKAZY/2022/prikaz292_ru_17102022.pdf (Available in Russian).

Almost every university in the country has created a department that is responsible for internal quality assurance. The department is responsible for compliance with the requirements of the national system of quality assurance, organisation of the procedures of licensing, attestation, and accreditation, as well as for development of internal quality assurance strategies and initiatives and monitoring of academic achievements. Evaluation of HEI operation also includes the opinion of students on the quality of the teaching.

Every higher education institution in Kazakhstan is required to develop and approve a set of local regulatory documents: The Quality Assurance Policy – an official document issued by the institution's administration that defines the strategy and principles of quality management. The Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) Manual – a basic set of regulations describing processes, tools, and responsibilities. Regulations on the Quality Assurance Committee – a document defining the objectives, composition, and operating procedures of the institutional Quality Assurance Committee.

Accrediting agencies develop their own quality criteria and standards of accreditation compatible with the requirements of international accrediting agencies. Standards for institutional and specialised accreditation must comply with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG2005).

As described above, rules of internal quality assurance are developed by HEIs. Standards of accrediting agencies include the requirement for presence of internal quality assurance systems at HEIs. The internal quality assurance results are the basis of the external quality assurance. The external quality assurance is based on evaluation of the current situation and compliance with pre-determined standards for accreditation.

National External Quality Assurance in Medical and Health Professions Education

Key Components of the Quality Assurance System in Medical and Health Professions Education:

Government Oversight: Regulation by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, including the establishment of mandatory state educational standards and the licensing of educational activities.

Independent Accreditation: Conducting institutional and specialized/program accreditation through recognized accrediting bodies (e.g., the ECAQA).

Professional certification: Aligning learning outcomes with an independent assessment of the knowledge and skills of graduates and practicing physicians (qualifying exams).

The establishment of the national accreditation system on medical education in Kazakhstan was defined as a high priority in 2005. WHO/Euro and WFME supported Kazakhstan Government and National Accreditation Centre of Ministry of Education and Sciences to introduce the WHO/WFME Guidelines for Accreditation of Basic Medical Education (Geneva/Copenhagen 2005) and the WFME Global Standards for Quality Improvement in Basic Medical Education at six Kazakhstan State Medical Universities. In this regard, the new regulation framework for national external quality assurance system in higher education was developed and approved by the Government of Republic of Kazakhstan.

National Accreditation Centre of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan (NAC) was established by the Decree of Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 405 dated April 29, 2005. The first cycle of institutional accreditation of Kazakhstan State Medical Universities was conducted by the National Accreditation Centre of the Ministry of Education and Sciences with the involvement of the WFME Advisers and AMSE. Since 2005, considerable progress has been made in national quality assurance and accreditation system in higher education, mainly after Kazakhstan joined the Bologna Process in 2010.

Given this changing context in 2012, according to the Law on Education (with amendments), accreditation in higher education has been conducted by non-governmental organisations which are authorized by the Ministry of Education and Sciences and registered on National Recognised Accrediting Agencies Register (Register 1). This information is now available on a new service - Unified Higher Education Platform https://epvo.kz/#/accredited-accepted-agency (ECAQA - 7th row of the table).

Since 2018, the ECAQA has developed and implemented accreditation standards based on the WFME Global Standards, taking into account the level of education. Since 2020, the WFME has developed updated versions of the standards: in 2020 - Standards for Quality Improvement in Basic Medical Education; in 2023 - Standards for for Quality Improvement in Postgraduate Education (residency programmes); in 2025 - Standards for Quality Improvement in Continuing Professional Development (physicians). Since 2016, the Standards for Master's Programmes in Medicine and Health Care - also developed by the WFME - have been in effect. The ECAQA based its accreditation standards for doctoral programmes on the International Standards for PhD Education in Biomedicine and Health Sciences in Europe developed by the Organization for PhD Education in Biomedicine and Health Sciences in the European System (ORPHEUS), the Association of Medical Schools in Europe (AMSE), WFME (2016). Each ECAQA accreditation standard takes into account national specifications as well as the needs and priorities of the Republic of Kazakhstan's healthcare system.

The reporting system for accreditation agencies to the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MSHE RK) is strictly regulated by normative legal acts (in particular, Order No. 629, which is regularly updated to include changes from the current year). It is designed to enable the government to monitor the quality and impartiality of the accrediting organizations themselves. The quality assurance agencies submit the annual report about their activities and accredited HEIs and educational programmes to the MSHE RK by January 30 every year.

The MSHE RK has included requirements such as compliance with global principles of quality assurance in higher education (the principle of independence (ESG Part 3.3)) in the report template for the accrediting body. Agencies must report that they are fully independent of third parties (ministries, higher education institutions, political forces) when making their decisions. Principle of Public Disclosure of Results (ESG Part 2.6): All expert reports and decisions of the agencies' accreditation councils must be made public. The agency is required to publish them on its website and submit copies to the government for inclusion in official registries. Principle of Internal Quality Assurance (ESG Part 3.6): Agencies are required to report on the existence of their own mechanisms for monitoring the quality of their experts' work (including the participation of foreign specialists). The principle of accountability (INQAAHE principal) is also reflected in the reporting: An accreditation agency must demonstrate the transparency of its procedures to the public and the government. The regular submission of annual reports to the MSHE RK confirms the legitimacy of the agency's status. For the ECAQA, as a specialized accreditation agency in medical education, the report should specify that the external evaluation of educational institutions and educational

programmes at medical universities is focused on the rigorous integration of clinical practice, the assessment of simulation technologies (WFME principals), and dual education.

5. History, profile and structure of the agency

ECAQA is a non-governmental non-profit organisation that aims to ensure the quality of higher education and quality of training of health professionals, promote the establishment and sustainable development of national and regional effective, reliable, transparent quality assurance system in higher education as well as medical and other healthcare professions education in Kazakhstan.

ECAQA was established and started its operation as quality assurance agency in higher education including medical and other healthcare professions education on February 3, 2017.

ECAQA is recognised by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan and included on the National Register of Recognised Accrediting Agencies (Register 1).

The agency carries out external evaluation of higher education institutions and their educational programmes on a regular cyclical basis that is five years.

Mission: Ensuring the introduction of international quality principles and standards for quality assurance and enhancement of quality of higher education, given the needs of the national education and healthcare systems and with the involvement of all stakeholders to maintain public confidence.

Vision: The leading accrediting agency that fosters regional quality assurance in higher education and healthcare professionals' training improvement to ensure their achievement of competencies and professionalism to meet the needs of community.

ECAQA operates on the basis of the following principles: independence, confidentiality, stakeholder involvement, public information, and its values: voluntariness/freedom, responsibility, integrity, transparency, efficiency, collaboration and partnership.

Principles:

Independence – the agency is independent in developing accreditation standards and quality criteria, the external evaluation and decision–making process based on the published standards and procedures taking into consideration of the outcomes both the institutional self–assessment and external evaluation, the reliable information and database. External evaluation report's conclusion and recommendations for improvement of higher education institution or educational programme cannot be changed by any third party.

Confidentiality – confidentiality principles regarding the received information and data on an educational organisation; providing a report on institutional self–evaluation and/or self–evaluation of an educational programme and other information or data about the university only to members of the External Evaluation Commission and the Accreditation Council of ECAQA.

Stakeholder involvement – the categories of principal stakeholders that are involved in the agency's external quality assurance processes and activities is clearly identified; the agency ensures engagement of relevant stakeholders in internal and external quality assurance as well as revision of accreditation standards and relevant procedures taking into account the results of feedback received from them;

Public information – the agency provides basic public information about accreditation standards and procedures and accreditation status of higher education institutions. Decisions on accreditation are announced and made public; they are posted on the QA agency's website and national authority entity in quality assurance in higher education.

Values:

Voluntariness/Freedom – institutional/programmatic accreditation is voluntary, peer–review process of quality assurance, and QAA recognizes the academic freedom and institutional autonomy of higher education institutions.

Responsibility – clearly defined responsibility of QAA and higher education institutions, and the involvement of principal stakeholders, provision of appropriate resources for innovation and training reviewers/experts.

Integrity – the agency maintains and encourages relationship with higher education institutions and/or programmes they accredit and respects their institutional autonomy and integrity.

Its operations and judgements are based on the ethical principles and values, external and internal quality assurance expertise and practice, acting within published standards and procedures.

Transparency – self–assessment and external evaluation process are carried out fairly and transparently, providing access to relevant information that is available for principal stakeholders

Efficiency – external evaluation is based on international quality principles and established standards that are focused on process, content, and outcomes that allowed improving internal quality assurance mechanisms, support the development of a quality culture and ensure the link between IQA and EQA

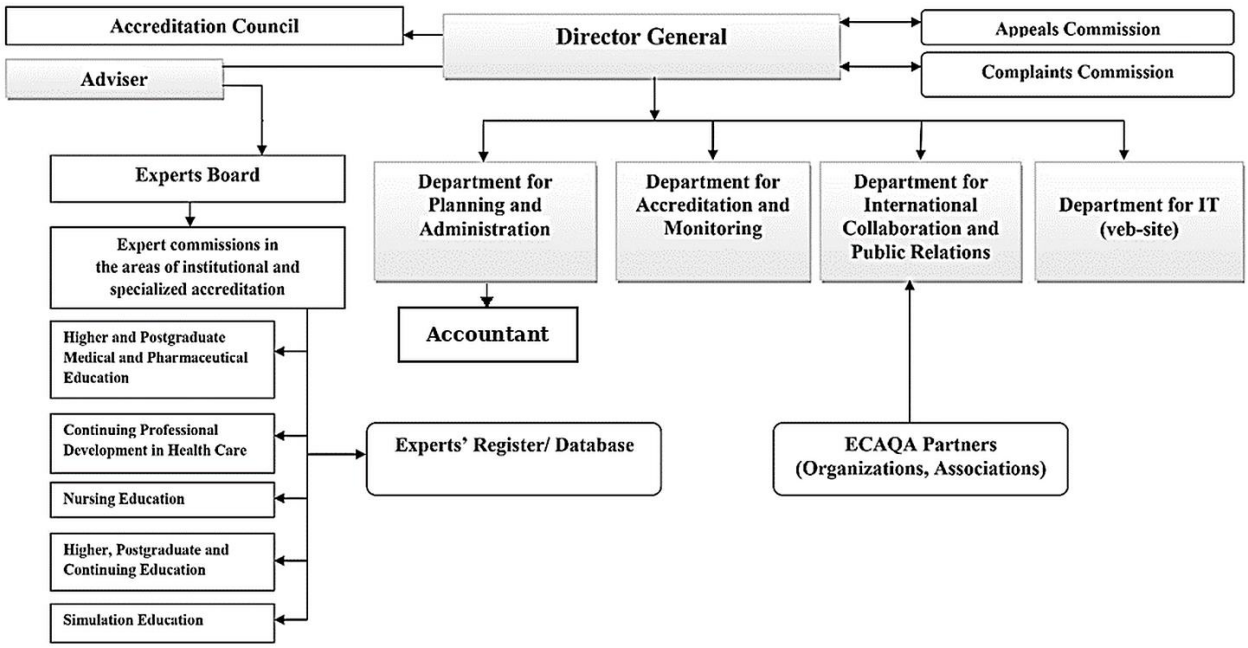
Cooperation and Partnership – the agency recognizes that the primary goal is to enhance the institutional quality assurance and academic quality. This is encouraged by strong relationship with higher education institutions and effective collaboration with partnerships organisations, international/ regional associations in quality assurance in higher education.

The main priorities of the ECAQA are:

- academic quality assurance and improvement;
- support of higher education institutions in their capacity building process;
- introduction of the quality culture in institutions;
- provision of the educational expertise in higher education, health professions education and public health;
- provision of all stakeholders with the relevant information about the quality of the higher education institutions and programme seeking accreditation.
- making a contribution towards the harmonisation and integration of national education system into the European Higher Education and Research Area.

ECAQA Organisational Chart

Figure 2. ECAQA Organisational Chart (2025-26)



https://www.ecaqa.org/en/about-ecaqa/organizational-structure

The QA agency' staff profile. The ECAQA has its organisational structure of governance that is approved by the ECAQA Expert Board.

Accrediting agency staff and experts' (reviewers) responsibilities and scope of their work are defined by the ECAQA's internal regulations and annual arrangements plan. The staff and reviewers have appropriate background and competencies, relevant training, and the agency has a policy for their professional development and maintenance of their competencies.

Director General. The Director General is appointed by the Founder of ECAQA, INTERMED Company LLP, a private healthcare organisation that established and sponsored ECAQA at the initial stage of its operation. Since 2018, when ECAQA received national recognition and started its accreditation activities, the agency has been self-financing. The Director General was appointed by the Founder's decision No. 1 of 19 January 2017 and is employed under an individual employment contract.

The ECAQA's Management Office Team (7 full-time employees) is led by the Director General that consists of the Adviser, Chairs of the Department for Planning and Administration, Department for Accreditation and Monitoring, Department for International Collaboration, Department for IT and Public Relations and Chair of Expert Commissions.

The Chairs of the ECAQA's Departments are appointed by the Director General.

According to their responsibilities and work schedule, the staff and experts of ECAQA fulfil the scope of work and contribute to the achievement of the mission and strategic goals. Job descriptions and responsibilities of the staff were defined and developed.

The staff and Expert Commissions have developed the Concept for further development and improvement of national quality assurance system in health professions education, ECAQA Strategy for Development, Roadmap and Annual Plan for achievement of the mission and strategic goals, Programme for Quality assurance and all related documents and provisions, Standards for institutional and programmes' external evaluation and Guidelines for self-assessment of HEIs and Educational programmes relevant to specialties and level of education (Bachelor, Master's Degree programmes, PhD, Postgraduate Speciality Training (Residency).

The following bodies should be considered collegial bodies: Accreditation Council (link to the website), ECAQA Expert Board (link to the website), Complaints and Appeals Commission (link to the website).

Accreditation Council.

The Accreditation Council is responsible for making accreditation decisions on the basis of the applicable standards, the EEC Report and supporting evidence. Its members are required to act independently. In 2023, there were changes in the composition of the Accreditation Council. ECAQA Director General S.S. Sarsenbayeva proposed that her name be removed from the Accreditation Council to avoid a conflict of interest. This does not contradict the "Regulations on the ECAQA Accreditation Council," where Section 4.2 states that "Participation in the Council is voluntary, and a member may resign at their own discretion." This decision was recorded in the minutes, Minutes No. 4 dated June 21, 2023.

In January 2026, the composition of the Accreditation Council was updated following the completion of studies by the student members of the council and the voluntary resignation of two council members, in accordance with subparagraphs 3.6, 3.8, and 4.2 of the Regulations on the ECAQA Accreditation Council.

Since 2025, the ECAQA Accreditation Council has consisted of 13 members (Order No. 1 of January 5, 2026), who are highly respected and esteemed within the professional community and have an international reputation, as well as two students (PhD student and bachelor's student).

Members of the Accreditation Council participated in events held as part of the international external evaluation of the ECAQA for inclusion in EQAR on December 13–14, 2023, and on June 19, 2024, as part of the ENQA progress visit to ECAQA.

All main groups of stakeholders are represented in the Accreditation Council: the members are drawn from the academic staff, the management and full-time senior staff of the higher education institution (HEI) and nominated by the HEI for Healthcare Professions Education. There are members from the medical profession (pharmacist, dentists, public health professionals, academic and practicing nurses are nominated by relevant professional associations), representatives of professional associations; the other main stakeholders, including the WHO Executive Board Member, members with extensive experience working in authorized bodies in the fields of education and healthcare, and in the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan; representatives of professional associations, students.

All members have their educational background in Medicine and other Healthcare Professions Education (Public Health, Pharmacy, Dentistry, Nursing) and highly esteemed and respected within

the profession and international standing.

Composition of the ECAQA Accreditation Council (link to the website)

The Accreditation Council holds 9–11 meetings annually, depending on the number of educational institutions and programmes that have undergone external expert evaluation as part of the accreditation process. At the beginning of each half-year, the ECAQA draws up a tentative schedule of Accreditation Council meetings and sets a tentative date for the meeting. Meetings are conducted in accordance with the agenda, which is prepared by the secretary (staff member) of the Accreditation Council and sent to council members in advance.

Profile of the Reviewers. The ECAQA's experts (Reviewers) are selected and nominated by the Higher Education Institutions, National Medical Associations, Healthcare and Pharmaceutical Sector's Employers, Professional Associations, Medical Research Institutions, National and International Professional Associations relating to Specialities, International Association in Health Professions Education, the World Federation for Medical Education, Students Association.

ECAQA Expert Board. The expert commissions referred to here are standing methodological working groups and should not be confused with the EECs that conduct site visits. They develop ECAQA's accreditation standards, self-assessment guidelines, other methodological materials and internal regulations, under the coordination of the Expert Board (Regulations on the Expert Board, clauses 1.4 and 1.6). The commissions are formed from ECAQA's database of accreditation experts on a voluntary basis and consist of academic and research staff from different levels of education, as well as employers; each commission elects its own chair, and the chairs make up the Expert Board (clauses 3.2–3.4). ECAQA's Expert Board consists of the following Chairs of Expert Commissions for:

- Institutional accreditation of Higher Education Institutions, Higher and Postgraduate Medical and Pharmaceutical Education;
- Continuing Professional Development in Health Care (CPD providers);
- Nursing Education (Bachelor's degree Programme at the HEIs, Applied Bachelor Degree Programme, Technical Vocational Education and Training Programme at the Nursing colleges);
- Simulation Education in Healthcare;
- Higher, Postgraduate and Continuing Education (Accreditation of Educational Programmes: Bachelor's degree Programmes in Medicine, Dentistry, Public Health, Preventive Medicine, Pharmacy, Pharmaceutical Technology and Industry; Master's degree Programmes in Medicine and other Healthcare Professions Education; PhD Programmes in Biomedical and Health Sciences; Residency (Postgraduate Specialties Training Programmes; CPD Programmes).

The Chair of the Expert Board is elected by the Chairs of Expert Commissions according to their joint decision. https://www.ecaqa.org/en/about-ecaqa/ecaqa-board

On May 22, 2023, ECAQA amended the Regulations on the Expert Board, adding the following paragraphs 2.8-2.10 to Section 2, "Tasks of the Expert Board": (2.8) Developing and approving ECAQA internal regulations; (2.9) Review and approval of ECAQA Strategic and Operational Plans; (2.10) Development and approval of corrective action plans based on the results of external evaluations of the ECAQA activities.

The Expert Board responsibilities:

- to create the agency's experts' database on the basis of compliance with qualification requirements and nominated from the appropriate organisations, including international associations and organisations;
- to develop and review the Standards and Guidelines for Institutional/Specialised (Programme) Accreditation based on feedback from principal stakeholders;
- to contribute to the development and updating of internal regulations and instructions related to external and internal quality assurance;
- to conduct the training of experts (academic experts, employers, students);
- to review the external quality assurance activities and internal quality assurance mechanisms and internal regulations to propose the actions for improvement;
- to involve administrative and academic staff of HEIs, employers and researchers as ECAQA experts in the accreditation process and external evaluation of HEIs and/or educational programmes;

– to develop proposals for improving institutional processes and internal quality assurance mechanisms in HEIs and improving educational programmes on the basis of findings and recommendations of the external evaluation by the site-visit team.

Financing.

ECAQA has the status of a non-governmental non-profit organisation and conducts its activities including financing in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated January 16, 2001 No. 142 "On non-profit organisations", the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Civil Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan. https://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/Z010000142

Sources of funding: contracts for institutional and specialized accreditation.

Managing the ECAQA's financial resources is the responsibility of the Planning and Administration Department. Each year, a budget plan is prepared and a financial report is compiled, both of which are approved by the Director General and submitted to the ECAQA's founder.

An accountant who is accountable to the Director General conducts financial transactions. However, all financial documents (invoices, contracts, work completion certificates, etc.) are signed by the Director General (Order No. 1 dated January 19, 2017). Every December, by order of the ECAQA Director General, the ECAQA's organizational structure and staffing table are approved; these are coordinated with the ECAQA's founder, and the Director General retains the authority to sign the ECAQA's financial documents.

Once every three years, the ECAQA Strategic Development Plan is developed and approved by order of the Director General, which includes the planned financial costs for a number of activities, for example, participation of ECAQA employees in international and national events (registration fees, travel expenses, accommodation), payment of membership fees, publications, external evaluations, etc. In December 2025, a new Strategic Development Plan for the ECAQA for 2026–2028 was approved. The plan's activities included recommendations from international experts at ENQA and EQAR https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1fP3x-_-4tERIa6QS7qpMsuhcKIZTE1Od.

In accordance with the goals and objectives of the Strategic Development Plan, an annual ECAQA work plan is drawn up at the end of every calendar year, and ECAQA budget plan is formed on its basis.

Ensuring Financial Transparency and Integrity: Each year, the Planning and Administration Department prepares a budget plan and submits it to ECAQA's founder for review. The founder assesses ECAQA's financial sustainability and identifies opportunities for financial growth. The budget is approved by the final order issued in the respective year. At the end of each year, the accountant analyses income and expenditure and compares the actual figures with the approved budget plan.

The budget plan is approved by the order of the Director General.

The main receipt of funds occurs due to the fulfilment of obligations under contracts for institutional and specialised (programmatic) accreditation.

The pricing policy for accreditation services is governed by the Regulations on the Cost of the ECAQA Accreditation Procedure (approved on September 15, 2024; updated annually to reflect the country's pricing policy, exchange rates, and the MPR index). The cost of the accreditation process is competitive because post-accreditation monitoring of organizations and educational programs that have received full accreditation (for 5 years) is conducted without funding from the accredited educational organization. This condition is specified in the model Agreement on Institutional/Specialized Accreditation.

ECAQA Income and Expenditure for the Period from January 2023 to December 2025 included in the table at the link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/18JenMJBPqExZ-9x-HsiRk57XSu_m7r-B/view?usp=sharing.

The cost of accreditation services for higher education institutions and educational programmes is determined in the document on Regulations on the cost of the accreditation procedure (date of approval: September 15, 2024), which describes the procedure and conditions for the provision of paid accreditation services, determining the cost of accreditation services, calculating the cost of the organisation of services and conducting accreditation. Upon receipt of an application for accreditation from a HEI (an employee of the Department for Accreditation and

Monitoring registers the application with the incoming document log), ECAQA sends a fee proposal signed by the Director General to the organisation seeking accreditation (an employee of the Department for Accreditation and Monitoring registers the with the outgoing document log). The cost of accreditation services includes the following: training of the organisation's employees, consulting on the self-evaluation procedure and writing a self-evaluation report, organising and conducting the site visit, the procedure for the Accreditation Council decision-making).

Annually, at the end of the calendar year, the accountant prepares a financial report using 1C: Enterprise business application platform. The paper copy of the report is signed by the Director General of ECAQA. The financial report together with the annual report on the activities of ECAQA is delivered to the ECAQA founder for review.

6. Functions and activities of the agency

ECAQA's external quality assurance activities focus on medical and health professions education, which defines the agency's profile. ECAQA's accreditation standards are based on the WFME Global Standards for Quality Improvement (current editions: basic medical education (2020), postgraduate medical education (2023), CPD (2024)) and on ESG Part 1. Its activities within the scope of the ESG are institutional and programme accreditation of higher and postgraduate education in Kazakhstan and, through cross-border accreditation, in other countries.

6.1 Activities within the scope of the ESG

1. Institutional accreditation of higher education institutions

Institutional accreditation assesses whether a higher education institution as a whole meets ECAQA's institutional accreditation standards, which incorporate ESG Part 1. Its purpose is to evaluate the institution's mission, governance, internal quality assurance system, teaching, learning and assessment, academic staff, student support and resources, and to support continuous improvement. It applies to:

- higher education institutions;
- higher education institutions for health professions education;
- postgraduate medical education institutions.

2. Specialised (programme) accreditation

Specialised (programme) accreditation assesses whether an individual educational programme meets ECAQA's programme accreditation standards, which are based on the WFME Global Standards and incorporate ESG Part 1. Its purpose is to evaluate the programme's design, intended learning outcomes, teaching and learning, student assessment, staff, resources and management. Separate sets of standards apply to:

- Bachelor's degree programmes;
- Master's degree programmes;
- PhD programmes;
- postgraduate specialty training (residency) programmes.

3. Initial accreditation of educational programmes

Initial accreditation applies to new Bachelor's, Master's, PhD and residency programmes that do not yet have graduates. It assesses whether the programme is designed and resourced to achieve its intended learning outcomes before the first cohort graduates.

4. Accreditation of joint degree programmes

ECAQA accredits joint degree programmes delivered collaboratively by two or more higher education institutions.

5. Accreditation of clinical skills centres

ECAQA accredits clinical skills centres (simulation-based healthcare education) of medical higher education institutions. The purpose is to assess the contribution of simulation-based education to teaching, learning and assessment, as well as the learning environment, infrastructure and equipment. This activity reflects the central role of clinical skills training in medical education.

6. Cross-border institutional and programme accreditation

ECAQA carries out accreditation outside the Republic of Kazakhstan, in cooperation with the national authorities:

- cross-border institutional accreditation of higher education institutions;

- cross-border accreditation of basic medical and health care professions education.

The same standards, procedures and decision-making apply as in Kazakhstan, taking into account the national context of the country concerned.

6.2 Activities outside the scope of the ESG

ECAQA also carries out two activities outside the scope of the ESG:

- institutional and programme accreditation of colleges, including higher medical (nursing) colleges, where these relate to technical and vocational education and post-secondary non-tertiary education;
- external quality assurance of continuing professional development (CPD) provision that falls outside the higher education levels of the National Qualifications Framework of Kazakhstan and the QF-EHEA.

These activities follow the same procedures, governance and decision-making as ECAQA's ESG activities, with their own sets of standards.

Table 2 Higher Education Institutions and Educational programmes accredited by the ECAQA in 2022-2026 (1-2 Q)

Types of accreditations	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	
					Accredited (31.08.2026)	In progress (3-4 Q)
Institutional accreditation of higher education institutions						
Higher Education Institutions	-	1	1	3	3	-
National Clinical and Research Centres (postgraduate and CPD Providers)	4	2	3	2	3	1
Total	**4**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**7**	**1**

Types of accreditations	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	
					Accredited (31.08.2026)	In progress (3-4 Q)
Programme Accreditation of Bachelor' Degree, Master's Degree Programmes, PhD programmes, Residency programmes						
Bachelor's degree programmes	7	5	13	16	2	1
Master's degree programmes	2	3	12	13	7	1
Residency programmes (postgraduate specialities training)	65	32	24	49	21	21
PhD programmes	3	4	1	2	2	-
Total	**77**	**44**	**50**	**80**	**32**	**23**

Types of accreditations	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	
					Accredited (31.08.2026)	In progress (3-4 Q)
Cross-Border Institutional Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions						
Higher Education Institutions	-	-	-	3	1	-
Total	**-**	**-**	**-**	3	1	**-**

Types of accreditations	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	
					Accredited (31.08.2026)	In progress (3-4 Q)
Cross-Border Accreditation of Basic Medical and Health Care Professions Education						
Bachelor's degree programmes	-	1	8	10	-	3
Master's (Clinical) degree programmes	-	-	-	8	5	-

Total	**-**	**1**	**8**	**18**	**5**	**3**

Types of accreditations	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	
					Accredited (31.08.2026)	**In progress (3-4 Q)**
Accreditation of the clinical skills centre (simulation-based healthcare education) of medical higher educational institutions						
Clinical skills centres (simulation-based healthcare education) of medical higher educational institutions	-	-	1	-	1	-
Total	**-**	**-**	**1**	**-**	**1**	**-**

The Ministry of Healthcare of the Republic of Kazakhstan endorsed the ECAQA Standards and Guidelines for Accreditation in Medical (Basic, Postgraduate Medical Education and CPD of Medical Doctors) and Healthcare Professions Education (Applied Bachelor, Bachelor, Master's Degree, PhD) by the Official Letter No.06-1-15/23395 dated October 1, 2018. By the decision of the Republican Accreditation Council (Minutes № 2 of 14.03.2023) Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Education and Health Care extended the period of registration in the Register of 1 recognised accreditation bodies of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 5 years until 14 March 2028.

ECAQA is listed on the Directory of Organisations that Recognize/Accredit Medical Schools (DORA) of the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER), USA. ECAQA, as a specialised/professional accreditation agency in medicine, biomedicine and health sciences, is included on the Council for Higher Education Accreditation International Quality Group (CHEA/CIQG) International Directory focused on accreditation and quality assurance.

Taking into consideration the Kazakhstan Ministry of Ministry of Science and Higher Education Policy in internationalization and enhancing the quality assurance in higher education, and in order to support the international students from Asian countries, studying at national public and private universities in the country, ECAQA was externally evaluated by APQR/APQN's Review Panel and registered on the APQR in December 2019. The process of re-listing in the APQR has begun, and an external evaluation is scheduled for February 2027.

ECAQA is a full member of the associations of accreditation bodies of OECD member states - European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), APQN, Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA) and a member of the International Quality Group of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation of the United States of America (CHEA CIQG).

ECAQA actively collaborates with a wide range of partners. The Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with the 20 organisation, incl.: Association of Medical Schools in Europe (AMSE), JAMK University of Applied Sciences, Finland, (Nursing Education and Science), Indian Medical Council and National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), ANQA (Armenia), NCPA and Russian Register (Russian Federation), EQAA (Germany), HAC (Hungary), NEAA (The National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency of the Republic of Bulgaria), the State Organisation "Testing Board for Professional Competence Assessment of Higher Education Trainees in Medicine and Pharmacy at the Ministry of Health of Ukraine", the Association of Medical Societies for Quality (ASMOK, Russian Federation), Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the ECAQA and the Agency for Supervision of Education and Science under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of the Republic of Tajikistan, and the professional associations in clinical specialties and healthcare professions, Kazakhstan Alliance of Hospitals and Healthcare Providers, National Centre for Independent Examination, and the Kazakhstan Medical Students Association (KazMSA) that is a full member of the International Federation of Medical Students Associations (IFMSA).

ECAQA has conducted accreditation in medical and healthcare professions education

according to the signed Agreement between ECAQA, the State Inspectorate for Supervision of Education Quality under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan (SISQE), and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and the SISQA Confirmation Letter to ECAQA that authorised the ECAQA to conduct specialised (programme) accreditation in the Republic of Uzbekistan.

In March 2026, ECAQA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Association for Quality Assurance in Pre-Tertiary & Higher Education (USA). International Association for Quality Assurance in Pre-Tertiary and Higher Education (QAHE), registered in the United States, is an independent, private and international organisation. https://www.ecaqa.org/en/ecaqa-partner

In March 2026, ECAQA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Accreditation Commission of Schools and Colleges (NACSC), which was established as an independent national agency for accreditation and regulation in India and is responsible for evaluating educational standards throughout the country. https://www.ecaqa.org/en/ecaqa-partner

Since March 2018, ECAQA has established collaboration and signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the Local Professional Associations for Healthcare Professionals: Kazakh Cancer Society, Kazakh Society of Nephrologists, the United Kazakhstan Association of Dentists, Kazakhstan Association of Medical Laboratory Diagnostics, Kazakhstan Association of Urology, Professional Association of Clinical Pharmacologists and Pharmacists of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Associations of Cardiologists of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan Union of Nursing Colleges. These health care professionals' associations nominate the experts to ECAQA External Expert Commissions to be mostly involved in institutional accreditation of CPD Providers and Postgraduate Specialty Training Clinics as well as to provide the feedback concerning the Standards for Accreditation of CPD Providers/Programmes.

ECAQA external quality assurance activities are based on the fundamental principles of the World Health Organisation and World Federation for Medical Education (WHO/WFME) Guidelines for Accreditation of Basic Medical Education (2005) as well as the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015) and involvement of principal stakeholders in external and internal quality assurance.

ECAQA's Standards for Institutional and Specialised (Educational Programme) accreditation are harmonized with ESG2015, Part I and based on medical education and other healthcare professions education specific standards such as: the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) Global Standards for Quality Improvement in Basic, Postgraduate Medical Education and CPD, Master's Degree programmes (2015), Organisation for PhD Education in Biomedicine and Health Sciences in the European System (ORPHEUS), Association of Medical Schools in Europe (AMSE) and WFME (2015), WHO Global standards for the initial education of professional nurses and midwives (2009) that include the higher education institutions and National Health Care System' needs and priorities.

Starting in 2020, The World Federation for Medical Education has updated its trilogy of Standards for improving the quality of the three levels of medical education: basic medical education (2020), postgraduate education – residency (2023), and continuing professional development in healthcare (2024).

In this regard, the ECAQA has consistently updated its accreditation Standards:

1) Standards for Institutional Accreditation of Medical Institutions of Higher and Postgraduate Education, approved by the ECAQA Experts Board No. 1 on May 15, 2025.

2) Standards for the Accreditation of Basic Medical Education Programmes (Bachelor's Degree), approved by the ECAQA Experts Board No. 2 on June 18, 2021.

3) Standards for the Accreditation of Postgraduate Medical Education Programmes (Residency), approved by the ECAQA Experts Board No. 2 on October 10, 2024.

4) Standards for institutional accreditation of CPD organizations, approved by the ECAQA Experts Board No. 2 on April 16, 2026.

7. Compliance with Part 3 of the ESG

7.1. ESG Standard 3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

Standard: Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities as defined in Part 2 of the ESG on a regular basis. They should have clear and explicit goals and objectives that are part of their publicly available mission statement. These should translate into the daily work of the agency. Agencies should ensure the involvement of stakeholders in their governance and work. To ensure the meaningfulness of external quality assurance, it is important that institutions and the public trust agencies.

ECAQA's mission, vision, strategic goal and values provide the overall framework for its external quality assurance activities. Its publicly available mission focuses on the application of international principles and standards for quality assurance and enhancement in higher education, while taking account of the needs of the national education and healthcare systems, involving stakeholders and maintaining public confidence. The mission, vision, strategic goal and values are published on the ECAQA website.

The mission is translated into operational priorities through the ECAQA Strategic Development Plan for 2026 – 2028, which was approved by the ECAQA Expert Board and enacted by Order No. 36 of the Director General dated 23 December 2025. The Strategic Plan establishes objectives related to the quality and sustainability of ECAQA's activities, effective stakeholder engagement, the independence of accreditation decision-making, improvement of the Expert Board's work, regular analysis of the agency's performance, development of human and institutional capacity, and continuous improvement of accreditation standards, procedures and expert assessment.

The Strategic Plan is operationalised through Annual Work Plans developed on its basis. These plans specify the activities to be undertaken during the respective year. Implementation of each Annual Work Plan is reviewed annually, and the results are reflected in ECAQA's Annual Report. The Annual Work Plans are provided in the supporting evidence folder, while the Annual Reports are published on ECAQA's website. Feedback received from HEIs, EEC members, students, employers and international experts is analysed and used to improve accreditation procedures, methodological documents, expert training and ECAQA's internal processes.

ECAQA regularly carry out institutional and programme level external quality assurance activities in Kazakhstan and on a cross-border basis. The following activities are currently within the scope of the ESG and are included in ECAQA's EQAR profile:

1. Institutional accreditation of higher education institutions, including:
   - The higher education institutions;
   - The higher education institutions for health professions education;
   - The postgraduate medical education and institutions.
2. Specialised (Programme) accreditation, including:
   - Bachelor's degree programmes;
   - Master's degree programmes;
   - PhD programmes;
   - Postgraduate specialty training (residency) programmes;
3. Initial Programme Accreditation;
4. Joint Degree Programme Accreditation;
5. Accreditation of the clinical skills centre (simulation-based healthcare education) of medical higher educational institutions
6. Cross-Border Institutional Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions
7. Cross-Border Accreditation of Basic Medical and Health Care Professions Education;

These activities are conducted in accordance with published accreditation standards, procedures and supporting Guidelines that take account of the ESG, relevant WFME Global Standards, the ORPHEUS - AMSE - WFME standards where applicable, national legislation and the specific characteristics of the respective level and field of education.

Although the applicable standards vary according to the type of accreditation, the external quality assurance framework follows a consistent sequence: application and eligibility verification, conclusion of a Contract, institutional self-assessment, administrative review of the self-assessment report, external assessment by an independent EEC, preparation and publication of the EEC Report, an independent decision by the Accreditation Council, and post-accreditation monitoring. Accredited HEIs and educational programmes are monitored throughout the accreditation period. This includes

the preparation and implementation of an improvement plan based on the EEC recommendations, submission of follow-up reports and notification of substantive changes.

Cross-border accreditation includes institutional and programme accreditation conducted outside the Republic of Kazakhstan. ECAQA applies its established accreditation principles and procedures while taking account of the legal framework, qualifications structure and applicable requirements of the host country. Before accepting an application, ECAQA verifies the legal basis for conducting the accreditation and determines the applicable standards and country-specific requirements. The EEC includes experts with relevant subject, quality assurance and national or international experience. The EEC's findings and the accreditation decision remain independent of the HEI and the authorities of the host country. ECAQA has conducted cross-border accreditation in Armenia and Uzbekistan.

Cross-border accreditation activity in Uzbekistan has been carried out since 2021 under a trilateral Cooperation Agreement between ECAQA, the State Inspectorate for Quality Control in Education under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan (2022), established to support the target indicator for the development of medical and pharmaceutical education and science to 2025 (Indicator 21: 30% of educational programmes accredited to international standards by 2025) set out in the Presidential Decree "On Measures for the Further Development of the System of Medical and Pharmaceutical Education and Science" (6 May 2019). Following external review by international experts and a subsequent validation procedure, ECAQA obtained recognition status from the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) to conduct accreditation of medical education in the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Tajikistan (WFME Certificates of Recognition Status, 11 October 2022 and 24 April 2024; official letters from WFME President Professor Ricardo León-Bórquez confirming recognition status for Uzbekistan, 3 February 2023, and for Tajikistan, 24 April 2024 (Link).

ECAQA also facilitated an online exchange between student organisations of Uzbek medical universities and the Kazakhstan Medical Students' Association (KazMSA) on cooperation with the International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA) and the Association for Medical Education in Europe (AMEE), both WFME partners. The exchange was initiated by students from Uzbek medical universities, who approached ECAQA for help in organising a meeting with KazMSA. Their aim was to learn from KazMSA's experience in order to establish a similar national medical students' association in Uzbekistan and seek comparable international recognition, including through IFMSA. ECAQA facilitated the meeting under its Memorandum of Cooperation with KazMSA. ECAQA's role was limited to facilitation, in line with its commitment to strengthening student involvement in quality assurance in the countries where it operates, including Uzbekistan.

As a WFME-recognised accrediting body, ECAQA accredited the General Medicine and Paediatrics programmes at eight medical education institutions in Uzbekistan; this accreditation status was entered into the WFME Portal and the World Directory of Medical Schools (WDoMS), jointly maintained by WFME and the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER, USA). This satisfied, from 2024, the requirement of the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) applicable to the education of foreign and domestic medical students at these institutions, and secured eligibility for their graduates to sit the USMLE (Step 1, Step 2) in the United States for admission to postgraduate clinical residency programmes. Decisions of the ECAQA Accreditation Council and copies of accreditation certificates for 18 bachelor's and 13 master's programmes at Uzbek medical education institutions were submitted to the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Information on institutional and programme accreditation, together with the full EEC external evaluation reports for 18 bachelor's programmes at 9 medical education institutions in Uzbekistan, was entered into two international quality assurance databases: DEQAR, the Database of External Quality Assurance Results maintained by EQAR (the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education), and DAQAR, the Database and Register of Quality-Assured Higher Education Institutions and Programmes of the APQR.

The relationship between ESG 3.1 and ESG Part 2 lies in the requirement that the external quality assurance activities described under ESG 3.1 be designed and implemented in accordance with ESG Standards 2.1–2.7. The detailed implementation of ESG Standards 2.1–2.7 is analysed in

Section 8 of this Self-Assessment Report for each external quality assurance activity within the scope of the ESG.

ECAQA involves stakeholders through its Accreditation Council, Expert Board, Expert Commissions, EECs, consultations on standards and procedures, feedback mechanisms and internal quality assurance processes.

The Accreditation Council includes representatives of competent public authorities in higher and postgraduate education and healthcare; recognised academic and administrative professionals from educational, research and healthcare institutions in Kazakhstan; international experts representing professional organisations/associations in higher and postgraduate education, healthcare and research; and students with academic or research achievements. Its current composition is publicly available on the ECAQA website (Link).

The Accreditation Council is responsible for making accreditation decisions on the basis of the applicable standards, the EEC Report and supporting evidence.

The Expert Board is a permanent methodological body comprising its Chair and the Chairs of five Expert Commissions covering:

- higher and postgraduate medical and pharmaceutical education;
- continuing professional development in healthcare;
- nursing education;
- higher, postgraduate and continuing education
- simulation-based healthcare education;

The Expert Board and its Expert Commissions contribute to the development and review of accreditation standards and supporting Guidelines, the formation and updating of the expert database, the training of experts, and the preparation of proposals for improving ECAQA's external and internal quality assurance processes. In carrying out this work, they engage academic and administrative staff, representatives of public authorities and research institutions, employers, learners, professional associations and international organisations. The structure and functions of the Expert Board are publicly available - https://www.ecaqa.org/en/about-ecaqa/ecaqa-board.

Stakeholders also participate directly in external quality assurance activities.

The Guidelines for Effective Stakeholder Engagement and Interaction in the Quality Assurance System, approved by the Expert Board (Minutes No. 1 dated 8 February 2024), establish the main mechanisms for stakeholder participation. ECAQA also collects feedback from HEIs, experts, learners, employers and international participants following external assessments and other activities. The results are analysed within ECAQA's internal quality assurance system and lead, where necessary, to revisions of standards, procedures, training programmes and internal regulations.

ECAQA clearly distinguishes between external quality assurance activities within the scope of the ESG and activities that fall outside that scope. The following ECAQA activities are outside the scope of the ESG:

- institutional and programme accreditation of colleges, including higher medical and nursing colleges, insofar as these activities concern technical and vocational education and post-secondary non-tertiary education;
- external quality assurance activities relating to continuing professional development, where such provision is not classified as higher education for the purposes of the ESG.

These activities are governed by separate sector-specific standards and procedures. They are presented separately in ECAQA's public information and documentation. References to ECAQA's EQAR registration and compliance with the ESG are not used in connection with CPD, technical and vocational education or post-secondary non-tertiary education activities outside the scope of the ESG.

ECAQA additionally participates in international cooperation projects and undertakes expert-development and general capacity-building activities. These activities do not result in accreditation decisions and are communicated separately from ECAQA's external quality assurance activities.

Following the conclusion of an accreditation Contract, ECAQA conducts a seminar for the self-assessment group of the HEI. The seminar forms part of the predefined accreditation procedure and

is based on the published standards and requirements applicable to the relevant type of institutional or programme accreditation.

The seminar explains the structure and interpretation of the applicable standards, the self-assessment methodology, documentary and evidence requirements, the main stages of external assessment, and the respective responsibilities of the HEI and ECAQA.

An ECAQA staff member or expert who has delivered the seminar to an HEI is not appointed as a member of the EEC assessing the same institution or educational programme. The Accreditation Council subsequently takes the accreditation decision independently and in accordance with the published criteria.

A supplementary tables has been prepared to provide a cross-reference between the ESG Part 2 standards for external quality assurance and the corresponding ECAQA external quality assurance activities, procedures and supporting documents used in institutional (link) and programme (link) accreditation.

Considering these external quality assurance activities and functions, the agency clearly defines the range, scope of work that is focused on the quality assurance scheme to be applied, implementation of own methodology and related internal regulations and guidelines for the quality assurance process, managing the processes, publishing and informing about the outcome of the processes, and capacity building for quality assurance in the higher education system.

Response to previous recommendations (ENQA 2022 and 2023, EQAR 2024). ECAQA does not provide consultancy services. The only preparatory activity offered to institutions under an accreditation contract is a training seminar on the accreditation standards and the self-assessment procedure, which does not include advice on the content of the self-assessment report. To prevent any conflict of interest, ECAQA staff do not serve as EEC experts, a person who delivered the seminar is not included in the EEC for that institution, and the institution confirms that it has no conflict of interest with the proposed EEC members. Structured stakeholder engagement is ensured through the Expert Board and expert commissions, which include academic staff and employers and revise ECAQA's documents based on stakeholder feedback, and through regular surveys of experts, institutions and other stakeholders, the results of which are published on ECAQA's website. Stakeholders beyond HEIs are involved in governance through the Accreditation Council, whose members are nominated by external organisations. Its members include a member of the WHO Executive Board from the Ministry of Health of Tajikistan, a member of the Parliament of Uzbekistan, former members of the Parliament of Kazakhstan, the Vice-President of the National Academy of Sciences of Kazakhstan, representatives of professional associations and healthcare employers, and a student representative (full composition: [link]). To balance the role of the Director General, the Director General may not be a member of the Accreditation Council (Regulations on the Accreditation Council, clause 3.10), its Chair is elected by the members, and appeals against its decisions are considered by the Appeal Commission, whose decision is final.

3.1 Supporting documents
1. ECAQA Strategic Developmen Plan https://drive.google.com/file/d/12WvL1I1YLOHKKtDW-gJSG7PF4MBiilKL/view?usp=sharing
2. ECAQA Annual work Plans https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1_0Xr3MNtM2wFj59XEM_8ivDssBQiZS1k
3. ECAQA Quality Assurance Programme https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dGC9Mx5TvOWR8c5-E7pXQIn4L3V6dbMJ/view?usp=sharing Web-site: https://www.ecaqa.org/en/about-ecaqa/ecaqa-quality-assurance.
4. ECAQA Internal Quality Assurance System https://www.ecaqa.org/en/about-ecaqa/ecaqa-quality-assurance/internal-quality-assurance-system
5. Guidelines for effective engagement and interaction with stakeholders https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fU8qq326jnea9gZoo9_sA2PIXhZG6gvz/view?usp=sharing

7.2. ESG Standard 3.2 Official status

Standard: Agencies should have an established legal basis and should be formally recognised as quality assurance agencies by competent public authorities.

The Non-Profit Organisation “Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care” (ECAQA) was established on 12 November 2016 and registered as a legal entity on 3 February 2017 by the Department of Justice of Almaty under the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan. ECAQA’s legal personality and non-profit status are established by its state registration documents and Constitution. The Constitution defines the remit of ECAQA in external quality assurance, including institutional and specialised (programme) accreditation in higher and postgraduate education. The state registration documents and their notarised English translations are included in the supporting documentation. An excerpt from the ECAQA Constitution is publicly available on the agency’s website.

In Kazakhstan, the recognition of accrediting agencies in higher and postgraduate education is governed by Article 9-1 of the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Education” and Order No. 629 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated 1 November 2016, as amended, which establishes the requirements and procedure for the recognition of national and foreign accrediting agencies. Under this framework, agencies included in the National Register of Recognised Accrediting Agencies (Register 1) are formally authorised to conduct institutional and programme accreditation in Kazakhstan.

ECAQA was first recognised by the Republican Accreditation Council of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan and included in Register 1 by Order No. 95 of the Minister of Education and Science dated 13 March 2018. By the decision of the Republican Accreditation Council of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Minutes No. 2 dated 14 March 2023, ECAQA’s recognition was renewed for five years, until 14 March 2028. ECAQA is listed in the official Register of Recognised Accrediting Agencies. The outcomes of institutional and programme accreditation conducted by ECAQA within its recognised scope are formally acknowledged in Kazakhstan and entered in the relevant national registers of accredited HEIs and educational programmes.

In Uzbekistan, ECAQA received formal authorisation to conduct international programme accreditation through the tripartite Agreement between ECAQA, the State Inspectorate for Supervision of Quality in Education under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The authority of ECAQA to conduct international accreditation of medical educational programmes was confirmed by Letter No. 01-187 dated 15 April 2022 from the State Inspectorate, which was the competent public authority responsible for state policy and supervision of education quality at the time.

In Armenia, the regulatory framework expressly permits HEIs to apply to an agency registered on EQAR or holding full membership of ENQA for institutional and programme accreditation. This legal basis is established in Clauses 10 and 19 of the Statute on State Accreditation of Institutions and their Academic Programmes in the Republic of Armenia.

Before the accreditation process commenced, Progress University of Gyumri informed the National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation (ANQA) by letter dated 29 May 2025 that it had selected ECAQA for institutional and programme accreditation. The University attached documentary evidence confirming ECAQA’s registration on EQAR and full membership of ENQA. Following the accreditation decisions taken by ECAQA on 11 July 2025, the results were entered in the Armenian State Accreditation Register on 28 August 2025. The institutional accreditation is recorded as a mandatory accreditation requirement, while the accreditation of the General Medicine programme is recorded as voluntary. Thus, ECAQA’s eligibility to conduct external quality assurance in Armenia derives from its EQAR registration and ENQA membership, and the outcomes of its 2025 accreditation procedures have been formally registered by the competent national quality assurance authority.

ECAQA has received official authorisation to conduct accreditation in the Republic of Tajikistan. By Letter No. 06/94-1 dated 26 April 2022, the Agency for Supervision in the Field of Education and Science under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan gave its consent for ECAQA to conduct accreditation of educational institutions and educational programmes in Tajikistan. The Tajik authority subsequently confirmed ECAQA’s mandate in its letter dated 19 February 2024 addressed to the President of WFME. As of the date of this SAR, ECAQA has not conducted accreditation activities in Tajikistan.

3.2 Supporting documents
1. ECAQA Constitution https://www.ecaqa.org/en/about-ecaqa/documentation/constitution
2. ECAQA's Certificate of Registration with the Ministry of Justice of the RK No. 10100204761572, 23.05.2017 https://drive.google.com/file/d/17uGk86q-dUaaMM-QM5Yq0kYfuAziygZ8/view?usp=sharing
3. ECAQA's Certificate of Registration with the Justice Department of Almaty City No. 10100189338881, 07/02/2017 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Im5PHPAYvdCDzx98PjPZAusk17Q5ZKxs?usp=sharing
4. ECAQA's Certificate of Registration with the Ministry of Justice of the RK No. 10100376692519, as of January 12, 2020 (Russian version) https://drive.google.com/file/d/16S7W_XwJ-tzgV3BGOPxzqX1edIYyYozI/view?usp=drive_link
5. Registration of ECAQA in the Register of 1 recognised accreditation bodies of Kazakhstan,14.03.2023 https://drive.google.com/file/d/18Ym2Wh0FYnwqZJ-YZDv_VoP8nYFQSA2w/view?usp=sharing
6. WFME Recognition Certificate ECAQA new territory https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XfC0jthzfj54Whm3-L-rbk4SMvX-HWId/view?usp=sharing
7. WFME Recognition status letter https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jwL7eIFWKhevgUkX8Um1ZAVQ1jhlemE_/view?usp=sharing

7.3. ESG Standard 3.3 Independence

Standard: Agencies should be independent and act autonomously. They should have full responsibility for their operations and the outcomes of those operations without third party influence.

Organisational independence: ECAQA's independence is supported by its legal status as an independent non-governmental, non-profit legal entity registered in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The agency's independence is further reinforced by national legislation governing recognised accrediting agencies. According to the Requirements for Accreditation Bodies approved by Order No. 629 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan (as amended), an accreditation body must have legal entity status (Requirement 1), its own accreditation standards and regulations (Requirement 5), and its own development programme and/or strategy (Requirement 7). In addition, affiliation between an accreditation body and an accredited higher education institution constitutes grounds for exclusion from the Register of Recognised Accrediting agencies (Rule 11(7)). These provisions support the organisational and operational independence of accreditation agencies recognised in Kazakhstan.

The organisational independence of ECAQA's decision-making is further ensured by the separation of its collegial bodies from the agency's management. Appeals are considered by the Appeal Commission, whose members may not sit on the Accreditation Council and must have no conflict of interest with the appellant. Its decision is final and is not subject to further appeal within ECAQA (Regulations on the Appeal Commission, as amended on 9 January 2026). Complaints are considered by the Complaints Commission, which meets in closed session, takes decisions by majority vote and may request documents and explanations from ECAQA staff and EEC members. ECAQA's accreditation standards and methodological documents are developed by expert commissions formed on a voluntary basis from ECAQA's database of accreditation experts. Each commission elects its own chair, and the chairs make up the Expert Board, which elects its Chair by open vote; the ECAQA staff member acting as Secretary of the Board does not take part in its decisions (Regulations on the Expert Board, clauses 3.1–3.7). External evaluations are carried out by External Expert Commissions, whose members are selected from ECAQA's Experts' Database. ECAQA staff do not serve as EEC experts, and the institution under review confirms that it has no conflict of interest with the proposed EEC members.

The ECAQA Constitution expressly establishes that the agency has independent status, assumes full responsibility for its activities, and does not permit HEIs, ministries or other third parties to influence the findings and recommendations of EEC or accreditation decisions.

The composition of the Accreditation Council is based on nominations received from professional associations, unions, international networks, quality assurance agencies and other relevant stakeholder organisations. Its formation takes into account of the national requirements

applicable to accrediting agencies under Order No. 629 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated 1 November 2016, as amended, as well as the WHO/WFME guidelines concerning the involvement of stakeholders and the independence of accreditation decisions.

The Accreditation Council currently comprises 13 members with professional backgrounds in higher education, healthcare, professional associations, public service and international organisations, as well as student members; its current composition is published on the ECAQA website (https://www.ecaqa.org/en/the-ecaqa-accreditation-council/). The resulting composition is brought into effect by an order of the Director General; the order formalises the outcome of the nomination process and does not constitute selection of Council members by the Director General. The Chair of the Accreditation Council is elected from among its members by open vote of the Council members. Membership of the Council is voluntary, and members may withdraw at their own request. The Regulation on the Accreditation Council establishes predetermined grounds for removal from membership, failure to comply with ethical standards in interactions with other Council members, HEI representatives or ECAQA staff; unexcused absence from more than three consecutive meetings; or absence from more than five meetings during a member's term, including videoconference meetings.

The Expert Board is a permanent expert and methodological body comprising its Chair and the Chairs of five Expert Commissions covering different fields and levels of education; its current structure and membership are published on the ECAQA website (https://www.ecaqa.org/en/about-ecaqa/ecaqa-board). As with the Accreditation Council, the Chair of the Expert Board is elected by open vote of its members, and not appointed by the Director General. The current structure and composition of the Expert Board were brought into effect by Order No. 36/1 of 23 December 2025, following proposals made in accordance with the Regulation on the Expert Board.

Strategic and methodological responsibilities are carried out collectively. ECAQA's Strategic Plan, internal regulatory documents and corrective action plans arising from external reviews of ECAQA are considered and approved by the Expert Board; the subsequent order of the Director General gives administrative effect to that collegial decision. ECAQA has operated on a self-financing basis since commencing accreditation activities in 2018; its financial plan is approved through the same governance structure as its other founding documents, its income is generated primarily through accreditation activities, and it does not depend on direct financing from the public authorities responsible for regulating higher education or healthcare, supporting organisational independence both from the state and from individual stakeholder bodies.

Operational independence: ECAQA independently manages its personnel. Under the Constitution, the Director General is responsible for employment relations, concludes individual employment contracts with staff and determines working arrangements in accordance with the labour legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Staff responsibilities are distributed through the organisational structure, departmental Regulations and job descriptions. ECAQA independently defines its own accreditation standards, procedures and methodologies, principally through the Expert Board, which develops and reviews accreditation standards and Guidelines, forms and maintains the Experts Database on the basis of established qualification requirements, supports the training of experts, and develops proposals for improving ECAQA's accreditation methodologies. This autonomy in standard-setting is also recognised in national regulation: Order No. 629 requires a recognised accreditation body to have its own accreditation standards (Requirement 5), rather than apply standards set by the state.

Accreditation experts are selected in accordance with established qualification requirements and conflict-of-interest provisions. Candidates are included in the Experts Database on the basis of their professional qualifications, accreditation or quality assurance experience, and relevant training. EECs include academic experts and, as applicable, representatives of students and employers, as well as an international experts. An HEI may raise a reasoned objection concerning an actual or potential conflict of interest but cannot select the experts who will conduct its external assessment.

Independence of formal outcomes: Before the site visit, every EEC member independently reviews the Self-assessment Report and supporting documents and submits comments and preliminary conclusions to the Chair of the EEC. The Chair consolidates the contributions and prepares an analytical conclusion, which is submitted to the ECAQA observer and subsequently

forwarded to the HEI coordinator. The ECAQA observer is a member of ECAQA staff who does not conduct or take part in the evaluation itself, but independently monitors the accreditation process: compliance with the accreditation procedure, implementation of the EEC site-visit programme and time management (Guidelines for External Evaluation of an Education Institutions and Educational Programmes, Section 10 Functions of an accrediting agency observer during external evaluation). During the external assessment, EEC members independently collect and triangulate evidence through interviews, document review and infrastructure observation. Each member contributes to the analysis and prepares their assigned sections of the EEC Report. The Chair coordinates and consolidates these contributions. The ECAQA observer monitors compliance with the approved procedure and provides organisational and methodological support but does not determine or change the EEC's conclusions.

EEC members sign the Code of Conduct and declarations of confidentiality and absence of conflict of interest. The conclusions, judgements and recommendations contained in an EEC Report cannot be changed by any other third party. The HEI is given an opportunity to identify factual or technical errors.

The EEC's report constitutes an independent professional record of its findings and recommendations. Accreditation Council members are required to act independently. Before each Accreditation Council meeting, members disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest relating to the HEIs or educational programmes included in the agenda. A member who declares a conflict of interest does not participate in voting on the relevant agenda item. The formal accreditation decision – whether to accredit, the term of accreditation, or any conditions attached to it – is a separate act, taken by the Accreditation Council on the basis of the EEC Report; the Council's decision is recorded in the minutes of the Council and the resulting accreditation certificate, and references but does not alter the findings contained in the EEC Report.

3.3 Supporting documents
1. The ECAQA's Constitution (Charter) (available on the web-site) https://www.ecaqa.org/en/about-ecaqa/documentation/constitution
2. ECAQA's Certificate of Registration with the Ministry of Justice of the RK No. 10100204761572, 23.05.2017 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1EJmhLTswN2XoAE-pYiQ9XMWnytmC85WJ
3. Regulation on Expert Board https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ej4Ja0NsbEhMstaMtzIxW5ApvpDkjJYo/view?usp=sharing
4. Budget Plans 2022-2026 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1xmR6duxKo751N0QGQBVKXFRnQkMcb0ST
5. Regulations on the External Expert Commission https://drive.google.com/file/d/11wjOUr11npkMLKyBSoc-AoO2sbRWzADm/view?usp=drive_link
6. Regulations on the Accreditation Council https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EbuiFrCOVGM1ruWiuR1v2QRmoyw2-VSz/view?usp=sharing
7. Code of Ethics and Rules of Conduct for a Member of the Accreditation Council https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Y9mS1-E-y4O4lLipHRDvshh8oAuvsiwQ/view?usp=drive_link
8. ECAQA Code of Conduct for External Review Experts https://drive.google.com/file/d/102pQWji92656IY6j9gh9wTCIPMNkrIrK/view?usp=drive_link

7.4. ESG Standard 3.4 Thematic analysis

Standard: Agencies should regularly publish reports that describe and analyse the general findings of their external quality assurance activities.

Most recently, this practice produced two further thematic analyses covering the 2024–2026 period: an analysis of stakeholder feedback (accreditation experts and employees of accredited institutions) on the organisation and outcomes of external evaluation, based on surveys of 107 respondents in 2024 and 189 respondents in 2025 (Expert Commission Member Surveys 2024/2025 and the Educational Institution Employee Survey 2024, published on the same webpage); and an analysis of the quality of residency training in the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Uzbekistan, based on a review of 207 EEC final reports for residency and Master's (clinical) programmes evaluated in 2022–2026.

All of these reports draw on data generated through ECAQA's core quality assurance activities EEC final reports, post-visit and post-training questionnaires, and structured surveys of experts, employers, students and staff of accredited educational institutions.

ECAQA ensures that thematic analyses are conducted regularly by embedding them in the agency's institutional planning and quality assurance cycle, rather than treating them as ad hoc exercises. Both the current Strategic Development Plan for 2026–2028 (Section 3.5) and its predecessor for 2023–2025 commit ECAQA to "conducting thematic analyses to support the continuous improvement of accreditation processes and publishing the results to inform stakeholders"; this is reinforced by Direction 1 of the same Plan ("Ensuring the quality of the accrediting agency's activities and the sustainability of its development"), Section 1.8 of which requires "regular analysis of the results of ECAQA's activities." In practice, the collection of primary data (EEC final reports, post-visit questionnaires, and stakeholder surveys) runs on an annual cycle aligned with the calendar year of accreditation activity; the resulting analysis is reviewed by the relevant ECAQA Expert Commissions (Institutional and Programme accreditation (Bachelor, Master's, PhD, Postgraduate Specialities Training/Residency, Simulation Training, Cross Border Accreditation)) and discussed and approved by the Expert Board prior to publication. Findings also feed into ECAQA's Annual Report, submitted to the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MES RK) by July each year, which documents the agency's quality assurance activity and resulting good practice.

In line with interpretation 22 of EQAR's Use and Interpretation of the ESG on ESG 3.4, all thematic analyses are openly accessible: they are published in full, without restriction, on ECAQA's public website under "Internal Quality Assurance System", categorised by level and type of education (higher and postgraduate education, postgraduate medical education, CPD, and nursing education) and by respondent group (students, experts, and employees of accredited institutions). Thematic analyses are carried out by ECAQA's own expert commissions and Expert Board using data generated through its accreditation activities. To date, ECAQA has conducted these analyses using its own resources and has not subcontracted them to a third party, as permitted under interpretation 23; however, international experts and partner organisations contribute to related activities, such as training seminars and conferences, at which the findings are disseminated.

The full methodology, findings and resulting improvement actions of the two most recent thematic analyses: Thematic Analysis of Stakeholder Feedback on ECAQA's External Quality Assurance Activities and Thematic Analysis: Quality of Residency Training Implementation in the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Based on the results of the analysis of EEC Reports and recommendations, questionnaires, and interviews with faculty, students, and graduates conducted during the site visits at the Higher Institutes of Medical and Healthcare education in the Republic of Uzbekistan, guidelines and recommendations for improving undergraduate medical education programmes have been developed by the ECAQA experts and staff in the following areas: 1) academic integrity policy and evaluation its implementation (link); 2) organisation and implementation of the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) (link); and 3) Competency-based medical education, integrated curriculum responsive to the needs of the healthcare system (link).

Response to previous recommendation (ENQA 2022, ESG 3.4). ECAQA has introduced a systematic approach to thematic analysis. Conducting thematic analyses with the participation of stakeholders is an objective in both the Strategic Development Plan for 2023–2025 and the Strategic Development Plan for 2026–2028 (item 3.5 in each). Topics are planned annually in the Expert Board's work plan. Based on surveys of students and graduates, surveys of accreditation experts and of staff of medical education institutions on improving the accreditation standards and procedures, and an analysis of feedback from institutions accredited in 2024. Stakeholders contribute to identifying topics and provide input through feedback from institutions after EEC visits, surveys of students and teaching staff during site visits, discussions at expert training seminars, and the feedback section of ECAQA's website.

7.5. ESG Standard 3.5 Resources

Standard: Agencies should have adequate and appropriate resources, both human and financial, to carry out their work.

Human resources. ECAQA maintains a permanent organisational structure appropriate to the scope and volume of its external quality assurance activities. As of 01.09.2026, the agency employs 7 staff members, including 6 full-time and 1 part-time employees. Information on the management and staff, their positions, qualifications and contact details is publicly available on the ECAQA Director General and Staff webpage.

The Founder of ECAQA entrusted the management of ECAQA and the renewal of the physical resources on the basis of current needs to S.S. Sarsenbayeva, Director General, by the decision of No. 1 dated January 19, 2017. Every December, the Director General's authority to sign ECAQA financial and strategic documents is renewed. This is formalized by an order and approved by the ECAQA's founder.

The Organisational Structure and Staff Schedule are reviewed annually and approved by order of the Director General. The Staff Schedule specifies the structural units, positions, number of staff units, employment rates and vacancies. Staff responsibilities are distributed across the management of accreditation activities, post-accreditation monitoring, administrative and financial planning, international cooperation, public relations, legal support and accounting. Technical maintenance and administration of the ECAQA website are outsourced under a service contract; this arrangement is limited to technical support and does not replace the substantive functions of ECAQA staff.

Staff members perform their duties in accordance with the Job Descriptions approved by the Director General on 5 February 2026. These documents define the qualification requirements, objectives, duties, authority and responsibilities applicable to each position. Records are maintained to confirm that employees have familiarised themselves with their respective Job Descriptions and subsequent amendments. Staff members are supported through the Staff Development Programme, and resources for their participation in relevant national and international professional development activities are incorporated into the annual planning and budgeting process. During period 2022-2026 (Q 1-2), ECAQA staff participated in 27 professional development activities, including 21 international events (offline, online).

The ECAQA Expert Database currently includes 651 experts across the different fields and levels of education covered by the agency. External experts are not employees of ECAQA. They are engaged on a case-by-case basis under civil law contracts for specific external assessments. The expert database enables ECAQA to establish EEC with the appropriate expertise, professional background and stakeholder representation required for each assessment, while avoiding dependence on a limited pool of experts.

Financial resources and sustainability. ECAQA received financial support from its Founder during the initial stage of its establishment. Since beginning its accreditation activities in 2018, the agency has operated on a self-financing basis and covers the costs of its external quality assurance activities from its own income. Information on the agency’s income and expenditure for January 2023 – December 2025 (link). The annual financial results are taken into account when planning the agency’s subsequent activities and resource requirements. Financial expenditure plan (budget) for 2026.

The annual budget is incorporated into the ECAQA Annual Work Plan, which is developed in accordance with the Strategic Plan for 2026 – 2028. The Annual Work Plan translates the agency’s strategic objectives into specific activities, implementation periods, responsible staff members and the financial resources required for their implementation. Budget performance is monitored against the approved activities, the accreditation workload and actual income and expenditure. Where necessary, resources may be reallocated during the year to ensure the timely completion of planned external quality assurance activities.

The annual budget is prepared in accordance with the ECAQA Strategic Plan for 2026 – 2028 and the Annual Action Plan. It provides for staff remuneration, office rental and maintenance, technical and administrative support, expert remuneration, site visits, meetings of the Accreditation Council and Expert Board, staff and expert development, information resources, and national and international activities. The implementation of the budget is monitored against the approved plans, accreditation workload and actual income and expenditure. Necessary adjustments may be made during the year to ensure that planned external quality assurance activities can be completed.

The Strategic Plan for 2026–2028 provides the medium-term framework for resource planning and includes objectives relating to financial sustainability, optimisation of the organisational structure, staff development, expert training and further digitalisation of the agency's processes. The combination of annual financial planning, self-financing, a permanent staff structure, contracted external expertise and outsourced technical support enables ECAQA to adjust its resources to changes in workload while maintaining the continuity of its EQA activities.

Physical and technical resources. ECAQA occupies leased office premises with an area of 72 square metres at Office 310, 165B Shevchenko Street, Almaty, under Lease Agreement No. 79 dated 27 May 2025. The premises provide equipped workplaces for staff and facilities for routine meetings. Each workplace is provided with the necessary furniture, computers or laptops, printing and copying facilities, telephone services and software used for document and database management. Technical maintenance of the website is provided by an external IT specialist under a service contract.

When meetings, seminars or training activities involve 30 or more participants, ECAQA rents additional conference facilities with an area of approximately 80 square metres. This arrangement allows the agency to obtain additional facilities when required without maintaining underused permanent premises.

Resources for local and international travel, accommodation and other necessary expenses of ECAQA staff, external experts and members of the Accreditation Council are included in the annual Report. These expenses are administered in accordance with the ECAQA Regulation on Business Trips, approved by Order No. 7 dated 5 February 2026.

Autonomous and effective resource management. ECAQA is operationally independent in the management of its activities. The Director General was appointed by decision of the Founder in 2017, formalised by an order, in accordance with the ECAQA Constitution. The Director General is employed under an open-ended employment contract concluded in accordance with the Labour Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, following a three-month probationary period. The Director General's objectives, responsibilities and powers are set out in the job description. The appointment is not subject to a fixed term; the Director General may be dismissed by decision of the Founder on the grounds provided for in the employment contract and the Labour Code, including a breach of the employment contract or the job description, or may resign at their own request. The Director General is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the agency.

Defined responsibilities, annual planning, financial reporting, internal regulations and the use of current service contracts allow the agency to manage its resources in a controlled and flexible manner. ECAQA considers its current human, financial, physical and technical resources adequate for its activities within the scope of the ESG and sustainable for the period covered by the Strategic Plan for 2026 – 2028.

ECAQA concludes contracts with legal entities (suppliers) for the goods and services required for its day-to-day operations, such as office rental, internet, drinking water, office supplies, transport services and air travel. All contracts are concluded in writing in accordance with the Civil Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan and recorded in the contract registration log. Payments are made by bank transfer to the suppliers' registered bank accounts, with all applicable taxes paid in accordance with the Tax Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan. None of the suppliers is an organisation accredited by ECAQA or applying for accreditation, and supplier contracts are unrelated to ECAQA's external quality assurance activities.

3.5 Supporting documents
1. ECAQA Strategic Plan for 2026 – 2028 https://drive.google.com/file/d/12WvL1I1YLOHKKtDW-gJSG7PF4MBiilKL/view?usp=drive_link
2. Documents on office rental https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1K_mJj8NbNmZb1CWtdh2U3IWr8p3gKJKI
3. Contracts with legal entities (suppliers) in Russian https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1267L7Nic1I5eACfbCH348IX5syi4yy2s
4. Registration log of Contracts with legal entities (suppliers) in Russian https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1aHWRg8QPzQsQz72whq_1zIxd47EJqHZo
5. Civil-law Contract form with EEC Members

	https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1z2E0bt47vxBIZJCecyMqyLz-HUcmrzfI?usp=sharing
6.	ECAQA Regulations on the Departments https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ns8i8ROYDcXUA_YNHMGQRXny18oggKbn?usp=sharing
7.	Job Descriptions of ECAQA employees https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1k14J13aeIsniWEuj5guzL-QymOJzTeA5

7.6. ESG Standard 3.6 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct

Standard: Agencies should have in place processes for internal quality assurance related to defining, assuring and enhancing the quality and integrity of their activities. Agencies need to be accountable to their stakeholders. Therefore, high professional standards and integrity in the agency's work are indispensable. The review and improvement of their activities are on-going so as to ensure that their services to institutions and society are optimal.

ECAQA has established an agency-wide internal quality assurance system designed to define, assure and continuously enhance the quality, consistency and integrity of its activities. The system is based on the ECAQA Quality Assurance Policy, Internal Quality Assurance Framework and Quality Assurance Programme. The current edition of the Quality Assurance Programme was developed and approved by the Expert Board (Minutes No. 1 of 9 January 2026).

The Quality Assurance Policy is integrated into ECAQA's regulations, procedures, guidelines and operational documents. The publicly available description of the system, together with feedback analyses and supporting documents, is provided in the Internal Quality Assurance System section of the ECAQA website.

The Director General provides leadership and ensures that the resources required for the operation and improvement of the internal quality assurance system are available. Heads of Departments are responsible for implementing and monitoring quality assurance arrangements within their respective areas. The Department for Accreditation and Monitoring coordinates procedural controls relating to accreditation, verifies the completeness of accreditation files and ensures that all documents and mandatory declarations have been duly completed and signed.

The Expert Board considers the results of internal monitoring, stakeholder feedback and analyses of external quality assurance activities and, within its remit, approves or recommends amendments to ECAQA's methodological and internal regulatory documents. External Expert Commissions are responsible for the professional findings, conclusions and recommendations contained in EEC Reports. The Accreditation Council considers the final EEC Reports and adopts formal accreditation decisions in accordance with the predetermined accreditation standards and decision-making criteria.

The annual ECAQA activity report is used not only to meet national reporting requirements but also as an internal diagnostic instrument. It summarises the implementation of planned activities, analyses results and identifies shortcomings, risks and areas for further development. A broader SWOT analysis is conducted when the Strategic Development Plan is prepared every three years. The findings are discussed internally and are reflected, where relevant, in subsequent strategic and annual planning.

Professional conduct by ECAQA staff is governed by their Job Descriptions, Regulations on Departments and Internal Labour Regulations. These documents require employees to maintain respectful and collegial working relationships, comply with professional ethical standards, prevent ethical misconduct, protect confidential and official information and take responsibility for the accuracy of reports, information and data prepared in the course of their duties.

The work of the Expert Board is governed by the Regulations on the Expert Board. Its consideration of analytical findings, methodological documents and proposed improvement measures is documented in the minutes of its meetings.

Members of the Accreditation Council are required to comply with the Code of Ethics and Rules of Conduct for a Member of the Accreditation Council and the Regulation on Conflict of Interest. Any actual or potential conflict of interest must be declared, and the member concerned does not participate in the consideration of the relevant institution or programme. Such declarations and recusals are recorded in the minutes of Accreditation Council meetings. The Regulations on the Accreditation Council also provide for the exclusion of a member who fails to comply with ethical

requirements in relations with other Council members, representatives of an HEI undergoing accreditation or ECAQA staff.

The quality and integrity of external assessment are supported through the selection and training of experts, the use of accreditation standards and assessment criteria, procedural coordination by ECAQA and formal safeguards concerning ethics, conflicts of interest and confidentiality.

Candidates nominated by HEIs, professional associations, partner organisations or other stakeholders are not appointed automatically. ECAQA independently verifies their qualifications and supporting documents against its established qualification requirements before including them in the expert database and appointing them to a particular EEC.

Before an external assessment begins, every EEC member signs two mandatory documents:

- the Code of Conduct for External Review Experts; and
- a Statement of Absence of Conflict of Interest and Commitment to Confidentiality relating to the specific HEI and educational programme under assessment.

The statement requires the expert to disclose current or recent employment, study, consultancy, academic supervision and other relationships with the HEI concerned, as well as any other circumstances that could affect impartiality. Experts undertake not to accept payments, gifts or other benefits from the HEI, not to exceed their authority and not to disclose or use confidential information for any purpose unrelated to the accreditation process. The Department for Accreditation and Monitoring verifies the completeness of each expert's file and obtains all signed declarations before the external assessment. An expert with an actual or potential conflict of interest is not appointed to the relevant EEC or is required to withdraw from the affected part of the process. In addition, to avoid conflicts of interest, an ECAQA representative (or expert) who was involved in conducting a training seminar on accreditation standards and preparing a self-assessment report for education institution staff cannot be included as an expert in the EEC on accreditation of this institution (Regulations on the External Expert Commission, clause 4.2).

During the site visit, EEC members are guided by the Regulations on the External Expert Commission, the Code of Conduct for External Review Experts, the Guidelines for External Assessment and the applicable Standards for Accreditation. These documents require the EEC to base its findings on verified evidence, apply the accreditation standards consistently, act impartially, respect confidentiality and professional ethics and reach conclusions through collegial discussion.

The ECAQA observer, a member of ECAQA staff (see ESG 3,3), monitors compliance with the approved accreditation procedure, the site-visit programme and timetable, the accreditation standards and confidentiality requirements, and provides organisational support to the EEC. The observer does not act as an external expert and does not determine or alter the EEC's professional findings, conclusions or recommendations. The integrity of the EEC final report is protected through a clearly defined factual accuracy procedure. The draft final EEC final report, including its recommendations, is sent to the HEI solely for the identification of factual errors. It may not amend the EEC's findings, conclusions or recommendations or supplement the report with new evidence at this stage. The comments received are forwarded to the EEC, whose members retain responsibility for determining whether a factual correction should be accepted and for finalising the report. The final EEC report is submitted to the Accreditation Council.

Neither the HEI nor the Accreditation Council rewrites the EEC final report. The Accreditation Council adopts a separate accreditation decision based on the final report and the predetermined decision-making criteria. This separation preserves the professional responsibility of the EEC for its assessment and the responsibility of the Accreditation Council for the formal accreditation outcome.

ECAQA does not subcontract substantive external quality assurance activities within the scope of the ESG and does not base its accreditation decisions on assessments or reports prepared by another agency. Cooperation agreements and partnerships may be used to identify or nominate potential national and international experts; however, ECAQA retains full responsibility for verifying their qualifications, checking conflicts of interest, appointing EEC members, implementing the external assessment and adopting accreditation decisions.

Certain technical and administrative services, including technical maintenance of the ECAQA website, may be provided by external service providers under contract. These providers have no

role in external assessment, the preparation or approval of EEC findings, or accreditation decision-making.

ECAQA collects feedback from EEC members, and students of HEIs undergoing accreditation, training participants and other stakeholders. Information is also obtained through ECAQA coordinators, correspondence, the feedback facility on the website, complaints and appeals, post-accreditation monitoring and discussions within the Expert Board and the Accreditation Council.

Survey results are analysed by level and type of education and by stakeholder group. Aggregated analytical reports are published on ECAQA's Internal Quality Assurance System webpage. Findings are discussed by the relevant staff and the Expert Board and are used to determine improvement actions, revise internal documents and enhance expert training and external assessment arrangements.

For example, the analysis of feedback received from EEC members in 2024 identified a need to strengthen experts' competencies in collecting and evaluating evidence, conducting interviews and preparing final EEC Reports. Experts also commented on the allocation of time within site-visit programmes. In response, the relevant measures were included in ECAQA's plans for 2025–2026, and dedicated training seminars for experts in postgraduate medical education were conducted on 6 March and 8 June 2025. A further training seminar on quality assurance in higher and postgraduate medical education and the role of experts in accreditation was conducted on 23 June 2026. Subsequent expert feedback has been used to refine the content of training and procedural guidance.

Response to previous recommendations (ENQA 2022, ESG 3.6). In the 2022 ENQA external review, ECAQA was assessed as substantially compliant with ESG 3.6. The panel recommended that ECAQA strengthen its mechanisms for obtaining constructive external feedback, introduce a formal mechanism for collecting feedback from EEC members after each accreditation review and provide feedback to each EEC on its performance and the relevance of its recommendations. In response, ECAQA developed questionnaires for EEC members, staff of accredited institutions, students and graduates, administered on the WEBANKETA platform. The results are analysed in thematic reports, six of which are published on ECAQA's website (https://www.ecaqa.org/en/about-ecaqa/ecaqa-quality-assurance/internal-quality-assurance-system), and the resulting improvement measures are incorporated into ECAQA's internal documents, expert training and annual planning. After each accreditation review, all EEC members complete an online questionnaire; for example, between 2023 and May 2024, 235 of 270 experts (87%) responded. In January 2026, ECAQA introduced an Observer's Protocol (approved by the Expert Board, Minutes No. 1 of 9 January 2026), which the ECAQA observer completes after each visit to assess the EEC's compliance with ECAQA's requirements, the objectivity of its work, its adherence to the principles of ethics, independence, transparency, impartiality and confidentiality, and the consistent application of the accreditation standards. These measures were described in the ECAQA Follow-up Report 2024, which the ENQA Board approved on 13 September 2024, taking note of the progress made.

3.6 Supporting documents
1. Quality Assurance Programme https://drive.google.com/file/d/17M1ELK7dmHubjVbOUm5Nz3J8BGmgSdLu/view?usp=sharing
2. Internal Quality Assurance System https://www.ecaqa.org/en/about-ecaqa/ecaqa-quality-assurance/internal-quality-assurance-system
3. Employee Code of Conduct https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AuaGlYR1XB8e1SVgzp8D-YtqJUKyKDD2/view?usp=drive_link
4. Regulations governing the activities of the ECAQA https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1xJSV_OTPDu4s5eag9bRgvkrx4LLvTyQr?usp=sharing
5. Regulations on the ECAQA External Expert Commission https://drive.google.com/file/d/11wjOUr11npkMLKyBSoc-AoO2sbRWzADm/view?usp=drive_link
6. ECAQA Regulation on Conflict of Interest https://drive.google.com/file/d/1j4UJYYxnyXzfC5apMi4uO8-W5KLRcPZr/view?usp=drive_link

7.7. ESG Standard 3.7 Cyclical external review of agencies

ECAQA's own activities are subject to systematic external review by independent parties — international quality assurance networks and associations, and the national regulator — in order to verify continued compliance with international and national requirements, identify risks including potential conflicts of interest, and drive improvement of ECAQA's own accreditation procedures. This cyclical external review takes the following forms.

1) Peer review by international quality assurance associations and registers

ENQA membership: on 22 June 2022, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) confirmed ECAQA's membership for a period of 5 years (External Review of ECAQA).

EQAR/DEQAR: by decision of the EQAR Register Committee of 11 October 2023, ECAQA was included in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), for a registration period from 23.06.2023 to 30.06.2027. Information on higher and postgraduate education institutions and programmes accredited by ECAQA, together with EEC reports, is entered in the EQAR database — the Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR).

APQR/APQN: ECAQA was externally evaluated by the Review Panel of the APQN and registered on the APQR in December 2019. The process of re-listing on the APQR has begun, with the next external evaluation scheduled for February 2027. Consistent with its EQAR/DEQAR practice, information on programmes accredited by ECAQA is likewise entered into DAQAR, the APQN's regional database of external quality assurance results.

WFME recognition: as ECAQA specialises in the accreditation of medical education, its cyclical external review also includes the WFME recognition procedure. From 18–22 April 2022, ECAQA underwent external evaluation by an international team as part of the WFME accreditation process in the area of quality assurance in basic medical education. ECAQA was granted WFME Recognition Status on 10 October 2022, valid until 31 October 2032 and applicable to the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Tajikistan (www.ecaqa.org/en/wfme).

2) Stakeholder feedback

ECAQA systematically collects external feedback from accredited organisations and accreditation experts to inform the improvement of its standards and external evaluation procedures (see Standard 3.4, Thematic Analysis).

3) Periodic state oversight

The Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MSHE RK) conducts an external assessment of ECAQA's performance once every five years, as a condition for the renewal of ECAQA's registration in the national Register of Recognised Accreditation Bodies. By decision of the Republican Accreditation Council (Minutes No. 2 of 14.03.2023), ECAQA's registration was extended for 5 years, until 14 March 2028.

Regulatory framework for cyclical external review

ECAQA's cyclical external review is governed by documents at three levels:

International standards and guidelines – 1the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG); Part 3 of the ESG ("Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance Agencies") directly requires agencies to undergo regular external review and to implement cyclical improvement (Standards 3.1–3.7); and the WFME Global Standards for Quality Improvement in Medical Education.

National legislation – Order of the Minister of Science and Higher Education No. 629 (as amended, including the 2026 amendments), which sets out the requirements for accreditation bodies and establishes the periodicity of external assessment by the regulator.

ECAQA's internal strategic and procedural documents — the ECAQA Strategic Development Plan, the ECAQA Quality Assurance Programme, Accreditation Standards, Regulations, and the plans and reports on implementing the recommendations of previous external international reviews (Follow-up reports), which demonstrate that ECAQA acts on external feedback.

Response to the ENQA review cycle

The ENQA partial review of ECAQA against the ESG took place between March 2023 and March 2024, including a site visit to the agency on 12–14 December 2023. On 31 May 2024, ECAQA

prepared and submitted a Follow-Up Report to ENQA addressing the review's recommendations, and on 19 June 2024 a progress visit by ENQA experts took place.

3.7 Supporting documents
1. Certificates of international recognition of WFME https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_pxjU86kCjQ48vscC0otpqGsCh23evX6/view?usp=sharing
2. Membership certificates in international quality networks and associations https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YtbM-Z1-0Ari276bXtZFgPpnvR2VnRwB
3. Certificate of ECAQA membership in ENQA https://drive.google.com/file/d/1S14a3wKPdn6FzsC9F0NrekZLODOsAMgc/view?usp=drive_link
4. EQAR Approval Letter https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WXcSwEba_7h4rzvJ0KTkob_UFsjUZGoH/view?usp=drive_link
5. Action plans based on the recommendations of international expert commissions https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1NqIpTWDBXs8aXI26WIrgijCZ4UK2VM2n

8. Compliance with Part 2 of the ESG

8.1. ESG Standard 2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance

Standard: External quality assurance should address the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described in Part 1 of the ESG.

Under paragraph 34 of the Model Rules for the Activities of Organisations of Higher and/or Postgraduate Education, approved by Order No. 595 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated 30 October 2018, higher education institutions are required to maintain an internal quality assurance system based on international quality assurance standards and guidelines, based on the ESG.

The national quality assurance framework is also supported by the Guideline for Quality Assurance by Levels of Education, approved by Order No. 292 of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated 23 June 2022. The Guideline establishes common approaches to internal and external quality assurance for HEIs and accrediting agencies.

ECAQA's accreditation standards (available at website: Institutional accreditation and Specialized (Programme) Accreditation) require educational institutions and educational programmes to demonstrate how their internal quality assurance processes address the relevant areas of ESG Part 1. During accreditation, the External Expert Commission evaluates not only the availability of internal policies and procedures, but also their implementation and effectiveness. This is assessed through the self-assessment report, supporting documents, interviews with management, academic staff, students and employers, and evidence obtained during the site visit.

The same core accreditation procedure is applied to Basic Medical Education, Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes, PhD programmes, Postgraduate Speciality Training (Residency), and joint degree programmes. In cross-border accreditation, ECAQA additionally considers the legislation and regulatory context of the respective country. Mapping tables between ECAQA's accreditation standards and ESG Part 1 are available for the relevant types and levels of education. Link: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/17yLKgf5na4OEf_85CmzieTTk5m5Ku-9l?usp=sharing.

Summary tables showing the alignment of ECAQA's accreditation standards with ESG Part 1: institutional accreditation procedures and programme accreditation procedures.

ECAQA's accreditation standards are developed in accordance with ESG Part 1 and, where applicable, with the relevant WFME Global Standards. The Standards for Institutional Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions for Health Professions Education were developed with reference to the WFME Global Standards for Quality Improvement in Basic Medical Education, while also taking into account national legislation, the institutional context and the priorities of the national healthcare system. Their alignment with ESG Part 1 was reviewed and discussed by the ECAQA Expert Board and is presented in Appendix 1 to the Standards. Similar alignment tables are included in the relevant ECAQA accreditation standards for Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, PhD and Postgraduate Medical Education programmes, as well as joint degree programmes.

The Standards for Accreditation of Clinical Skills Centres have a specific scope focused on simulation-based education, clinical skills training and patient safety. Therefore, they are not structured to provide full alignment with all standards of ESG Part 1. Nevertheless, the relevant principles of internal quality assurance are incorporated into the Standards, particularly in Standard 7, which addresses the implementation, monitoring and improvement of quality assurance processes.

During the external evaluation, the EEC assesses compliance with all accreditation standards, paying particular attention to the organisation of simulation-based training, patient safety, simulation facilities and relevant clinical or practical training sites. The Commission also reviews the institution's internal quality assurance documents, and assesses their practical implementation.

Response to previous recommendation (ENQA 2022, ESG 2.1). Following the 2022 review, ECAQA cross-checked all its sets of accreditation standards against ESG Part 1 to ensure that the key elements of ESG 1.1–1.10 are addressed consistently, while taking into account the specificity of each accreditation process (institutional and programme accreditation; basic, postgraduate and continuing medical education; simulation centres). As a result, the standards and self-assessment guidelines were revised, and the revised editions were discussed and approved by the Expert Board. The revisions also reflect the new State Compulsory Educational Standards for healthcare education (Order of the Minister of Health No. RK MOH-63 of 4 July 2022) and the updated WFME Global Standards.

2.1 Supporting documents

1. Institutional accreditation of higher education institutions

- Standards For Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions for Health Professions Education https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PKwXurTKaJ8hA0an7GahY5sjoEjddTo4/view?usp=sharing
- Standards for Accreditation of Higher and Postgraduate Education Organisations https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NwqhZ1SqCXmWyAtf0O-MP-RAKb_fF4am/view?usp=sharing
- Standards for Institutional Accreditation of Postgraduate Medical Organisations and Continuing Professional Development https://drive.google.com/file/d/14Kr6XAL6mAqBa4VfLXthRO8z0wwURkul/view?usp=sharing

2. Specialised (Programme) and Initial Programme Accreditation

- Standards for Programme Accreditation of Basic Medical Education https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f5T7FyXRfCLEkoU_hOSYbQ4I0zmTsA75/view?usp=sharing
- Standards for Accreditation of Bachelor's Degrees Programme https://drive.google.com/file/d/14jD-kq-kEvap5ncvHO7iKlGDAvOEmx-k/view?usp=sharing
- Standards for Accreditation Master Degrees Programme in Medical and Health Professions Education https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CFkQ6Uf4-lLx2FkMYHOPZFWpMuCLWleR/view?usp=sharing
- Standards for Accreditation Phd Programme in Biomedical and Health Sciences https://drive.google.com/file/d/19oC-UwettuHXTfGjZlaTGaB0drOCS2-w/view?usp=sharing
- Standards for Programme Accreditation: Postgraduate Medical Education (Residency Specialties) https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VK4KQIqigMPudD9gnfW4I_vwd0ZKsycr/view?usp=sharing

3. Joint Degree Programme Accreditation

- Standards for Accreditation of Joint Degree Programme https://drive.google.com/file/d/10hfFzuA16skJ9BKIZjPaj_F0SItw2dbR/view?usp=sharing

4. Cross-Border Institutional Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions

- Standards for Institutional Accreditation of Higher and Postgraduate Medical Education Organisations (RUz) https://drive.google.com/file/d/1n5PnYUR1HOZtk1D4vWiLDWH3IMwGN6ks/view?usp=shar

ing
5. Cross-Border Accreditation of Basic Medical and Health Care Professions Education – Standards for Accreditation of Educational Programmes of Basic Medical Education (Bachelor's Specialties) https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rziB6EYS6Q2yOasnnG-__8SI8_f06KsW/view?usp=sharing – Standards for Programme Accreditation: Postgraduate Medical Education (Master's Degree) https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SkLIKArC4dIK9P3fFrlv_6Rw-JMqsLkk/view?usp=drive_link
6. Accreditation of the clinical skills centre (simulation-based healthcare education) of medical higher educational institutions – Standards for accreditation and procedures for self-assessment of simulation centres in medicine and healthcare https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SGNumbSaUvZCcG3eNwlMbKRC0pWjr5zT/view?usp=sharing
7. Mappings https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/17yLKgf5na4OEf_85CmzieTTk5m5Ku-9l?usp=sharing
8. ESG 3.1-2.1 WFME CBA ECAQA alignment 09.09.2026.pdf https://drive.google.com/file/d/17GttSFCAcXVAXLIFxHnHvhFOg3lBaumD/view?usp=sharing

8.2. ESG Standard 2.2 Designing methodologies fit for purpose

Standard: External quality assurance should be defined and designed specifically to ensure its fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for it, while taking into account relevant regulations. Stakeholders should be involved in its design and continuous improvement.
In order to ensure effectiveness and objectivity it is vital for external quality assurance to have clear aims agreed by stakeholders.

ECAQA defines and develops its external quality assurance methodology in line with its mission, strategic objectives and quality assurance principles. The methodology comprises accreditation standards, Guidelines for self-assessment and external evaluation, and a policy and adequate mechanisms preventing conflict of interests are in operation and apply to its staff, its decision-making body, and external reviewers. These mechanisms include clearance of the proposed EEC composition with the HEI, to confirm the absence of any conflict of interest, and signed declarations of ethics and confidentiality by ECAQA's accreditation experts. The methodology further comprises assessment criteria, requirements for EEC reports, a procedure for the HEI to identify factual errors in the draft EEC report, decision-making procedures, complaints and appeals procedures, publication of external evaluation reports, and post-accreditation monitoring. It also establishes requirements for the selection, training and conduct of experts, including the prevention of conflicts of interest, confidentiality and ethical behaviour, and provides for the allocation of the organisational and financial resources required for external evaluation.

ECAQA conducts specialised (programme) accreditation either for a single programme or for a cluster of related programmes assessed by one EEC during the same site visit. This is provided for in national legislation: Annex 1 to Order No. 629 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan of 1 November 2016 (as amended by Order No. 301 of 19.06.2026) requires an on-site visit of at least two days for specialised accreditation, with at least four experts per cluster of educational programmes, and requires experts to match the profile (cluster) of the programmes under review (Annex 1, paras 4 and 6). The EEC is formed in accordance with the Regulations on the External Expert Commission and ECAQA's Guidelines for the External Evaluation of Educational Institutions and Educational Programmes (Section 8).

The following principles apply when several programmes are assessed during the same visit: the EEC includes at least one expert with expertise in the profile of each programme; a separate EEC report is prepared for each programme; when presenting the EEC's findings to the Accreditation

Council, the EEC Chair presents the recommendations separately for each programme; the Accreditation Council takes a separate decision on each programme.

ECAQA applies the same principles in its cross-border accreditation.

The standards are designed according to the purpose and scope of each external quality assurance activity. They cover institutional accreditation, Basic Medical Education, Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes, PhD programmes, Postgraduate Medical Education, including Postgraduate Speciality Training (Residency), joint degree programmes, Clinical Skills Centres and Cross border accreditation. The Standards for Accreditation of Clinical Skills Centres have a specific focus on simulation-based education, clinical skills training, simulation facilities and patient safety. The methodology therefore enables ECAQA to apply common quality assurance principles while taking account of the particular features of each type and level of education.

ECAQA develops and reviews its accreditation methodologies within the national regulatory framework, including Order No. 629 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated 1 November 2016, which sets the general requirements for accrediting agencies and the rules for their recognition. Within this framework, ECAQA operates as an independent accrediting agency and independently designs, approves, implements and reviews its accreditation processes, standards, criteria and procedures.

National legal and regulatory requirements are reflected in the normative references and relevant criteria of each set of standards. The ESG and, where applicable, the WFME Global Standards are also taken into account. ECAQA reviews its standards and procedures in the light of changes in legislation, developments in education and healthcare, international quality assurance practice and experience gained from completed accreditation procedures. ECAQA's methodology is also updated in line with amendments to the regulations and guidelines of the international and regional quality assurance networks and frameworks of which it is a member including ENQA, EQAR, INQAAHE, APQR and WFME and in light of their recommendations and the outcomes of related training events and activities.

Feedback on the application of the methodology is collected from EEC members and educational institutions following external evaluation visits. The results are analysed and used to improve the accreditation process, standards, expert training and organisation of external evaluation. The questionnaires and feedback analyses are published on the ECAQA website under the Internal Quality Assurance System.

The accreditation process includes self-assessment by the educational institution, external evaluation by the EEC, preparation and publication of the external evaluation report, and independent decision-making by the Accreditation Council. The report presents the findings of the external evaluation and recommendations for further improvement. ECAQA submits an annual report on its activities to the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan in accordance with national requirements.

Post-accreditation monitoring is conducted throughout the validity of the accreditation certificate. It focuses on the implementation of the EEC's recommendations, evidenced through an annual report submitted by the HEI on the implementation of all recommendations.

Accredited educational institutions develop an improvement action plan, submit annual reports with supporting documents and inform ECAQA of substantive changes, including changes in leadership, governance structure and accredited educational programmes. For cross-border accreditation, ECAQA applies the same core principles and relevant standards while taking into account the legislation, regulatory requirements and qualifications framework of the jurisdiction in which the reviewed institution is based.

In response to the recommendation of the 2022 ENQA review, ECAQA formalised stakeholder involvement through the Guidelines for effective engagement and interaction with stakeholders in the quality assurance system, approved by the Expert Board on 8 February 2024 (Minutes No. 1). The Guideline identifies ECAQA's internal and external stakeholders, including ECAQA staff and governing bodies, accreditation experts, HEIs, students, professional and student associations, employers, public authorities, national and international partners, other quality assurance agencies and the media. It establishes a common framework for their involvement and interaction within ECAQA's quality assurance system.

Since the 2022 review, the accreditation procedure itself (its stages, the formation and work of the EEC, the site visit, reporting and decision-making) has not changed. However, ECAQA has updated its accreditation standards and related documents to reflect changes in the external regulatory framework:

National regulations: the standards were revised to align with the new State Compulsory Educational Standards (SCES), and with other changes in national regulations in education and healthcare.

WFME standards: the standards for medical education were revised to align with the new editions of the WFME Global Standards for Quality Improvement for basic medical education, postgraduate medical education and continuing professional development.

Based on the recommendations for improvement of the ENQA Panel Experts, a revision and updated of the following internal regulatory documents (Regulations, Guidelines) was carried out:

- ✓ **Quality Assurance Programme of the Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care;** *(Approved by the Expert Board, Minutes No.1, 09.01.2026)*
- ✓ **Regulations on the Accreditation council** (Revision of items 2.1.1, 2.2 (1), 2.2.1, 2.4 (2), 2.4.2, 2.5-2.7, 6 (organization of the activities of the Accreditation Council).) *(Approved by the Expert Board, Minutes No.1, 09.01.2026)*
- ✓ On May 22, 2023, ECAQA amended the **Regulations on the Expert Board**, adding the following paragraphs 2.8-2.10 to Section 2, "Tasks of the Expert Board": (2.8) Developing and approving ECAQA internal regulations; (2.9) Review and approval of ECAQA Strategic and Operational Plans; (2.10) Development and approval of corrective action plans based on the results of external evaluations of the ECAQA activities. *(Approved by the Expert Board, Minutes No.1, 22.05.2023)*
- ✓ **Regulations on the External Expert Commission** (Revision of item 4.1 Meetings of the Expert Council; Revision of items 4 (Main requirements to the EEC), 6.4 (Terms of Report submission), 8.1 (Conditions of participation of accreditation experts). Added item 9 (Feedback).). *(Approved by the Expert Board, Minutes No.1, 09.01.2026)*
- ✓ **Regulation on the Appeals Commission** (Revision of items 1.1., 2.3-2.12 (Commission members and terms of appointment), 3.1, 4.1 (Documents, Procedure), 4.3., 4.5, 4.7, 4.8, 4.11, 4.12.). We formed the permanent composition of the Commission, including the foreign expert as the member of the Commission and posted the information on the ECAQA website. *(Approved by the Expert Board, Minutes No.1, 09.01.2026)*
- ✓ **Regulations on the Complaints Commission** (Revision of items 2.3 (regular commissioners), 2.4.(term of office), 2.5 (non-regular commissioners). (Approved by the Expert Board, Minutes No.1, 09.01.2026)
- ✓ **Regulations on post-accreditation monitoring** (Revision of item 3.8 Withdrawal of the Certificate of Accreditation, Item 5 Decision making). *(Approved by the Expert Board, Minutes No.1, 09.01.2026)*
- ✓ **Recommendations for involving students in the accreditation process of Higher and Postgraduate Education** (Added and edited items 2.2 (Self-evaluation of educational institution), 2.3 (Independent student analysis), 2.5 Site-visit of External Expert Commission (EEC), 2.6 Preparation of EEC Report, 2.7 Decision making by Accreditation Council, 3.3 Organization of contacts, 4.2 Student members of Accreditation Council, 4.3 Feedback). (*Approved by the Expert Board, Minutes No.1, 09.01.2026)*
- ✓ **Guidelines for external evaluation of a Higher Education Institution and educational programmes** (a full revision of the document).
- ✓ **Guidelines for the preparation of the Report of the external expert commission** (EEC) on accreditation of educational organizations and educational programmes (Edited Sections 1.2.1, 1.2.4, p. 10 (“Recommendations on announcing the results of the external expert evaluation”), 4 (“Structure of the Report of the EEC”), 5.2 (“Conclusion”).). (*Approved by the Expert Board, Minutes No.1, 09.01.2026)*
- ✓ Following the external evaluation of ECAQA by the ENQA Panel and the recommendations for improvement provided, the ECAQA Expert Board revised and approved a new form of the

EEC External Evaluation Report (*Minutes of the Expert Board Meeting No. 1 of March 25, 2022, and Minutes No. 2 of July 11, 2022).*

- ✓ Guideline for the Preparation of the External Expert Commission Report on the Accreditation of Educational Institutions and Educational Programmes (*Approved by the Expert Board, Minutes No.1, 09.01.2026).*
- ✓ **Regulation on the coding of certificates** (Approved by: Order No. 7 of 5 February 2026).

New documents were developed:

- ✓ Recommendations for evaluation of the compliance of the organization and educational programme with standards for accreditation (Approved by the Expert Board, Minutes #2, 11.07.2022);
- ✓ Regulations on information security (developed: Information Technology Department, Order No. 4 dated February 8, 2024);
- ✓ Regulation on accreditation experts (developed by Expert Board, Order No. 4 dated February 8, 2024);
- ✓ Regulation on document storage (developed by: Planning and Administration Department. Approved by the Director General, March 16, 2025);
- ✓ Guidelines for effective engagement and interaction with stakeholders in the quality assurance system (Developed and Approved by: Expert Board, Minutes No. 1 dated February 8, 2024)

On the basis of thematic analysis based on the results of the survey of members of expert commissions, representatives of accredited educational institutions, the ECAQA Expert Board made changes and additions to 4 Standards for accreditation and Guidelines for self-evaluation in the framework of institutional and specialized accreditation by levels of education.

Updated the information on the ECAQA website, including the following sections of the website:

- About ECAQA (Link)
- ECAQA's process for Appeals and Complaints (Link)
- Institutional Accreditation for Continuing Education Institutions (Continuing Professional Development) (Link)
- All information is updated: Students - About Accreditation (Link)
- A new section has been added: Students and Quality Assurance Policy in Education (Link)
- A new section was created: «Faculty, staff and students training on the application of Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015)» (Link)
- The full version EEC Final reports in Russian and English are posted in the "Register of accredited education institutions and educational programmes"
- Internal Labour Regulations of Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Healthcare Non-profit Institution are developed and applied.

Response to previous recommendation (ENQA 2022, ESG 2.2). To ensure structured involvement of all stakeholder groups in the design of its accreditation processes, ECAQA adopted the Guidelines for Effective Engagement and Interaction with Stakeholders in the Quality Assurance System, approved by the Expert Board on 8 February 2024 (Minutes No. 1). The Guidelines set out the forms and procedures through which stakeholders are involved in the design, implementation and continuous improvement of ECAQA's accreditation processes, including its standards, procedures and methodological documents. Accreditation standards and procedures are developed by ECAQA's expert commissions, which include academic staff and employers, and are reviewed by the Expert Board. Members of expert commissions and other invited stakeholders may take part in Board meetings (Regulations on the Expert Board, clause 4.6), and the Board revises ECAQA's documents based on stakeholder feedback collected through surveys, questionnaires and official letters (clause 1.4).

2.2 Supporting documents
1. Regulations on the Post-accreditation Monitoring Procedure https://drive.google.com/file/d/1P4TDgS9j_6KpWHkDo6EgUfShi0Kcwfgd/view?usp=drive_link
2. Regulations on the expert board https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ej4Ja0NsbEhMstaMtzIxW5ApvpDkjJYo/view?usp=sharing
3. Internal Quality Assurance system https://www.ecaqa.org/en/about-ecaqa/ecaqa-quality-assurance/internal-quality-assurance-system
4. Quality Assurance Programme **https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qeIEjSieLi4fzhcPkP7QquQus8gokixz/view?usp=sharing**
5. Regulation on Conflict of Interest https://drive.google.com/file/d/17TSS0WNKPEfPIrU9EokOSyDdiqN1ORnR/view?usp=drive_link
6. Avoidance of Conflict of Interest https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hPOGr81m7qyuSUaETP7snQ45ica0aWCK/view?usp=drive_link

8.3. ESG Standard 2.3 Implementing processes

Standard: External quality assurance processes should be reliable, useful, pre-defined, implemented consistently and published. They include: - a self-assessment or equivalent; - an external assessment normally including a site visit; - a report resulting from the external assessment; - a consistent follow-up.

ECAQA's external quality assurance processes are pre-defined, approved and published on its website (https://www.ecaqa.org/en/accreditation-process-and-procedures). They are implemented in accordance with ECAQA's Policy and Procedures and the regulations governing each stage of accreditation.

The process includes the submission and review of an application, verification of eligibility, self-assessment by the HEI, external evaluation by the EEC, normally including a site visit, preparation of the EEC Report, its submission to the HEI for checking factual errors and correcting any technical errors, decision-making by the Accreditation Council, publication of the results, collection and analysis of feedback from the HEI and EEC members on the accreditation standards and the conduct of the accreditation process, and post-accreditation monitoring.

1) ECAQA provides methodological training to the HEI's internal quality assurance team on the accreditation standards, the structure of the Self-assessment Report and the procedural requirements http://www.ecaqa.org/en/workshops-for-qa-units-at-heis. Participants who complete the training receive the relevant certificate, and the HEI is provided with the applicable accreditation standards and Self-assessment Guideline.
2) The HEI conducts a self-assessment (institutional and/or programme) against the applicable ECAQA standards and prepares a Self-assessment Report with supporting documents (Guide for self-assessment provided by ECAQA https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1yAUBlHkpMBzmj5OWlvnbnnH6HWf2R2Jr). The report and a cover letter signed by the head of the HEI are submitted to ECAQA at least two months before the scheduled site visit.
3) ECAQA conducts a technical review of the report, checking its structure and completeness, its compliance with the submission requirements, and the availability of the required supporting documents. Where information or documents are missing, the HEI is requested to address the identified technical deficiencies and submit the corrected report to ECAQA.
4) Before the site visit, all EEC members review the Self-Assessment Report and supporting documents. Each expert prepares written comments on the desk review of the SAR, identifies areas requiring clarification, and notes evidence requiring further verification, and submits these to the EEC Chair. The Chair reviews the experts' submissions and forwards their individual queries and requests to the ECAQA Coordinator. The ECAQA Coordinator then sends these queries to the HEI Coordinator, so that the HEI can respond to them and prepare the relevant supporting documents, which will be reviewed by the experts during the site visit.
5) The EEC is formed in accordance with the principles and requirements set out in the Regulation on the External Expert Commission and includes experts whose qualifications, professional experience and areas of expertise correspond to the type, level and profile of the accreditation under review. EEC members are required to declare the absence of

conflicts of interest and comply with ECAQA's ethical and confidentiality requirements http://www.ecaqa.org/en/the-external-expert-commission.

6) External evaluation is conducted transparently during the site visit to the higher education institution in order to validate and verify the data of the self-assessment report and search for evidence of compliance with standards for accreditation (http://www.ecaqa.org/en/external-evaluation) (for example, schedule of the site visit http://www.ecaqa.org/en/the-external-expert-commision. The external evaluation includes interviews with the administrative and academic staff, students, graduates, employers and other stakeholders; review of documents; direct observation of the infrastructure, resources and learning environment; and visits to educational facilities, clinical and practical training sites, and other relevant premises. It is conducted according to an approved programme covering all standards under review. An ECAQA observer supports the organisation of the visit and monitors compliance with the approved procedure without influencing the experts' findings or conclusions.
   Information on the EEC visit is posted on the ECAQA website at http://www.ecaqa.org/en/news. This ensures transparency of the procedure and stakeholders' access to the information.
7) Following the visit, EEC members complete the Quality Profile and Criteria Evaluation Form and prepare an external evaluation report in accordance with the Guideline for External Evaluation. The Quality Profile is a structured form in which each EEC member, including the student and employer representatives, individually rates every criterion of the accreditation standards as "fully compliant", "partial compliant" or "non-compliance". The number of criteria differs by level of education. A comment is required for every criterion rated as partially compliant or non-compliant. A summary table at the end of the form shows the total number of criteria in each category, which forms the basis for the EEC's recommendation to the Accreditation Council on the accreditation status and period. Each completed profile is signed by the expert who filled it in. The report presents evidence-based findings against each standard, identifies strengths and areas for improvement, and includes recommendations to the HEI and a recommendation to the Accreditation Council. Completed Quality Profiles are kept at ECAQA.
8) The ECAQA Accreditation Council (AC) makes accreditation decisions on the basis of the applicable accreditation standards and the final EEC report (Accreditation Council). The decision-making process is transparent: decisions are taken by open vote and documented in the minutes of AC meetings. AC members act in accordance with the Code of Ethics. Before the EEC findings and recommendations are presented and considered, the AC Chair requests the disclosure of any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest related to the HEI or educational programme under review. The declared information is considered by the Chair prior to the discussion and decision-making process. Any AC member with an identified conflict of interest does not participate in voting on the relevant agenda item.
9) The data of Accreditation Council decisions and the status of accredited HEIs and educational programmes are published in the ECAQA Register (https://www.ecaqa.org/en/reestr-en). As of 2025, the previously mentioned registry of accredited educational institutions and educational programs (on the website of the National Center for Education Development under the Ministry of National Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan) ceased to be in effect, and the collection of information for the new registry of the Unified Higher Education Platform (UHEP) began. The ECAQA regularly submits information about accredited educational institutions and educational programmes in Kazakh and Russian to the UHEP Registry of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan through its official account. https://epvo.kz/#/, which ensures the transparency of the process and availability of information about the status of accreditation for all stakeholders. Information on accreditation outcomes, including the relevant EEC Reports and Accreditation Council decisions, is also made available through the Database of External Quality Assurance Results in the Asia-Pacific Region (DAQAR) (https://daqar.org/agencies/ECAQA) and the Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR) (https://www.eqar.eu/register/agencies/agency/?id=76). As an accrediting

agency holding WFME Recognition Status, ECAQA submits information on the accreditation status of basic medical education programmes for publication through the WFME Accredited Basic Medical Education Programmes Portal (https://wfme.org/recognition/bme-recognition/accrediting-agencies-status-bme/). For cross-border accreditation activities conducted in Uzbekistan, ECAQA formally notifies the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan of the Accreditation Council's decisions through official letter.

10) Post-accreditation monitoring (PAM) is carried out throughout the validity period of the accreditation certificate and focuses on the implementation of the EEC's recommendations. The HEI develops an improvement action plan based on the EEC's recommendations and submits annual progress reports together with supporting evidence. ECAQA reviews the submitted information and may request additional documents or clarification where the evidence provided is insufficient. HEIs are also required to inform ECAQA of substantive changes, including changes in leadership, governance structure or legal status, as well as significant changes to an accredited educational programme. The post-accreditation monitoring procedure is published on the ECAQA website. ECAQA revised the Regulation on Post-Accreditation Monitoring, approved by the Expert Board on 22 May 2023 (Minutes No. 1), and aligned the relevant provisions of its accreditation standards and self-assessment guidelines. PAM is conducted as a follow-up to the completed accreditation review and focuses on the progress made by HEIs and educational programmes in addressing the recommendations of the EEC. Accredited institutions submit action plans and periodic progress reports, which are analysed by ECAQA's Accreditation and Monitoring Department. PAM does not constitute a new accreditation review and does not result in a new accreditation decision altering the validity period established by the original decision of the Accreditation Council https://www.ecaqa.org/en/accreditation/post-accreditation-monitoring/post-accreditation-monitoring-schedule-and-planning#.

The reliability and consistency of ECAQA's external quality assurance processes are ensured through several complementary mechanisms:

1. Approved ECAQA Standards for Accreditation (Institutional Accreditation and Specialized (Programme) Accreditation), which are regularly analysed and updated on the basis of the results of questioning of stakeholders.
2. Planning of the external evaluation process, including the preparation of the site-visit programme and the use of multiple sources and methods of evidence collection and verification. These include review of institutional documentation, interviews with leadership, academic and administrative staff, students, graduates, employers and partners, observation of teaching and learning activities, visits to educational facilities, simulation centres, laboratories, clinical and practical training sites, assessment of learning resources and infrastructure, and stakeholder surveys.
3. Observance of ethics and absence of conflict of interests of the EEC members (https://www.ecaqa.org/en/code-of-expert), which is monitored by the Observer from ECAQA.

The effectiveness and quality of an external evaluation ensures by following:

I. Selection of members of EEC (https://www.ecaqa.org/en/ecaqa-s-expert-qualification-requirements) and the procedure of nominating experts for accreditation in collaboration with ECAQA's partners, higher education institutions, professional associations: 1) requirements for the level and professional training/experience in accreditation; 2) analysis of the situation and compliance; 3) requesting a candidacy; 4) selection of the candidacy; 5) request reply; 6) contacting the expert and providing the expert with relevant information and materials; 7) expert instruction; 8) including the expert in the External Expert Commission.
2. The level of training of accreditation experts (ECAQA conducts training for potential experts http://www.ecaqa.org/en/training/workshops-for-ecaqa-s-experts before the site visit to a higher education institution; experts are instructed, including expert-students http://www.ecaqa.org/en/about-accreditation-for-students, http://www.ecaqa.org/en/students/students-involvement; experts are provided with the

necessary guidance papers (standards, guidelines, quality profile and criteria evaluation forms).

Response to previous recommendation (ENQA 2022, ESG 2.3). ECAQA revised the Regulations on Post-Accreditation Monitoring (approved by the Expert Board, Minutes No. 1 of 22 May 2023) so that PAM is conducted as a follow-up to the accreditation review rather than as a new review. After an accreditation decision, the institution submits an action plan for implementing the EEC's recommendations, which ECAQA reviews and, if necessary, returns for revision (clauses 3.1–3.2). The institution then submits annual reports on the implementation of this plan, with supporting evidence (clause 3.5). The Accreditation Council may temporarily suspend the accreditation certificate, until the breach is remedied, only on the grounds listed in clause 3.7: failure to submit the action plan or the annual reports, failure to report substantial changes in the institution's activities, suspension or withdrawal of the institution's state licence, or breaches of anti-corruption policy that have become public (clauses 3.7–3.8).

2.3 Supporting documents
1. Applications for Accreditation and Application Form https://www.ecaqa.org/en/submit-an-application
2. Guides to Institutional Self-assessment https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13q722ECv1ALO2bw7Mgv6HrdKpvcdJa84?usp=sharing
3. Guides to Educational Programme Self-assessment https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ci0LZ3mUYZPf-Fz4OnHN3ehzAESL5I93?usp=sharing
4. ECAQA GUIDE Role of Students in Accreditation https://drive.google.com/file/d/10narxPhIYP7HFUDKyxls_IIT5fvS75Wl/view?usp=sharing
5. Guidelines for External Evaluation of a HEI and EP https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oqh4OSjs30to3-FTFnxTIardzN5jEp7c/view?usp=sharing
6. Code of Conduct for External Review Expert https://drive.google.com/file/d/102pQWji92656IY6j9gh9wTCIPMNkrIrK/view?usp=drive_link
7. Guidelines for Report Preparation of the EEC https://drive.google.com/file/d/198ggy2nwE7my22Xkvf8yh3ErIkwiqjwK/view?usp=drive_link
8. Regulations on the ECAQA Post-Accreditation Monitoring https://drive.google.com/file/d/1P4TDgS9j_6KpWHkDo6EgUfShi0Kcwfgd/view?usp=drive_link
9. Regulations on the ECAQA Complaints Commission https://drive.google.com/file/d/12eFS2uxq4Gphhf4JPYmPfjBNPPD9yM78/view?usp=drive_link
10. Regulations on the ECAQA Appeals Commission https://drive.google.com/file/d/105FWI2X6_3i2e0LsBIfHXtimabLJwS1V/view?usp=drive_link
11. Guidelines for effective engagement and interaction with stakeholders https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IuFnmGJ1QdJ0vPhh1usz8rxPKTVZ9_T1/view?usp=drive_link

8.4. ESG Standard 2.4 Peer-review experts

Standard: External quality assurance should be carried out by groups of external experts that include (a) student member(s).

The quality and effectiveness of ECAQA's accreditation process are supported by the professional competence, independence and balanced composition of the EEC. EEC consists of 5-6 Members and includes the Chair, National Academic Expert, International Expert, Employer and Student. This composition brings together knowledge of the relevant level and field of education, experience in quality assurance, an international perspective, the expectations of the profession and employers, and the student perspective. The Chair coordinates the work of the EEC, distributes responsibilities according to the members' expertise and ensures that the Commission reaches collective conclusions. All members participate in the review of evidence, interviews, assessment against the standards and preparation of the final report. Detailed requirements for the composition and formation of the EEC are set out in Section 5, "Procedure for the Formation of External Expert Commissions", of the Regulation on the External Expert Commission. The EEC conducts the review in accordance with this Regulation and the applicable accreditation standards and Guidelines.

The qualification requirements and core competencies for ECAQA experts are formally defined and published on the ECAQA website: http://www.ecaqa.org/en/ecaqa-s-expert-qualification-requirements

The agency's external evaluation procedures include the mechanisms for the prevention of conflicts of interest, and the experts have to complete the form of Statement and Obligation of Confidentiality and Absence of Conflict of Interest as well as the Expert's Code of Ethics and ensure that any judgements resulting from external evaluation are based on explicit and published criteria.

As ECAQA specialises in the accreditation of medical and health professions education, its Experts' Database is structured according to the national nomenclature of healthcare specialties (Order of the Minister of Health No. RK MOH-305/2020 of 21 December 2020) and the list of residency specialties (Order No. RK MOH-43 of 25 May 2021, as amended by Order No. 409 of 26 June 2025), so that it covers all levels of education and specialties, including the newly introduced paediatric residency specialties. In accordance with the Regulations on the External Expert Commission, ECAQA regularly expands the database by sending official letters to education institutions requesting nominations. Nominated candidates complete ECAQA's expert training, organised under its plan for developing expert competence; those who receive an expert certificate and submit copies of documents confirming their qualifications, professional development and place of work are included in the database. The database is maintained by level of education and by country, including international experts.

For each review, the Accreditation and Monitoring Department selects experts from the database according to the profile of the institution or programme, the type and level of accreditation, the required expertise and the absence of a conflict of interest. The proposed composition of the EEC is then sent to the institution under review, which confirms that there is no conflict of interest with any of the proposed experts. ECAQA then sends an official letter to each expert's employer so that the expert can be released from work to take part in the site visit, as required by labour legislation.

Nomination of national and international experts is carried out by sending an official request from ECAQA (registered in the journal of outgoing documents) to the higher education institutions, professional associations or partner organisations of ECAQA in accordance with the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding (http://www.ecaqa.org/en/ecaqa-partner) with a request to nominate the experts for inclusion in the ECAQA accreditation expert database, including employer representatives and students. In response to the request, the higher education institutions (universities, colleges), professional associations send a letter including the expert's details to be included into a database of accreditation experts who meet the requirements of ECAQA. Therefore, the procedure for selecting and nominating the experts is transparent, free from conflicts of interest and reliable. Candidates who meet the established requirements are included in the ECAQA Experts' Database and are selected for a particular review according to the type and level of accreditation, the field of study, the required professional expertise and the absence of a conflict of interest. ECAQA has cooperation agreements with 13 national professional associations and organisations and 15 international organisations and accrediting agencies. The database also includes graduates of the Bolashak International Scholarship Programme and currently comprises 651 nominated experts.

Between 2022 and the first half of 2026, ECAQA accredited 24 higher and postgraduate education institutions and 283 educational programmes. The institutional reviews involved 96 experts: 24 national academic experts, 24 international experts and 48 student and employer representatives. The programme reviews involved 389 experts, including academic and international experts, students at the relevant level of education and representatives of practical healthcare (employers). In total, 485 individual experts from ECAQA's Experts' Database took part in EECs during this period, as some experts served on both institutional and programme EECs.

An expert may serve on no more than two or three EECs per year, with an interval of four to six months between reviews. 297 experts served on two EECs per year and 59 on three. The latter applied to narrow specialties where the pool of qualified experts is limited, such as nuclear medicine, oncological chemotherapy, haematological oncology, cardiac surgery, vascular surgery, neurosurgery and phthisiology. In 2025–2026, 33 new experts, including 8 students, were added to the Experts' Database after completing ECAQA's training on accreditation processes and procedures.

Each EEC includes at least one student member. Student experts participate in the review of documents, interviews, assessment against the standards, EEC discussions and preparation of the final report. Their role is defined in clause 5.6 of the Regulation on the External Expert Commission, clause 11.5 of the ECAQA Guideline for External Evaluation of an Educational Institutions and Educational Programmes, and the ECAQA Guide to the Role of Students in the Accreditation of HEIs for Health Professions Education.

In this regard, ECAQA organises a database of students, who are nominated for the EEC, and repeatedly conducts training for the students on the evaluation of educational programmes.

All necessary information is provided for students – potential experts – in the "Students" section on the ECAQA's website https://www.ecaqa.org/en/students/about-accreditation, https://www.ecaqa.org/en/students/students-involvement

The nomination and preparation of student experts include the following stages:

1) ECAQA sends official letters to one or more HEIs other than the HEI undergoing accreditation, requesting the nomination of a student expert for a specific external evaluation. The nominating HEIs are selected according to the level and field of the educational programme under review, and ECAQA selects the student expert from among the nominees.The student should demonstrate good academic performance, have sufficient knowledge of the relevant programme and level of education, participate actively in academic, research or student activities, and have no conflict of interest with the HEI undergoing accreditation.

2) The HEI submits an official response confirming the nomination and providing the student's name, level of study, educational programme, year of study and contact details. ECAQA reviews the information provided to ensure that the nominee is suitable for the specific external evaluation.

3) The ECAQA coordinator contacts the nominated student and provides information on the purpose and scope of the accreditation, the HEI and programme under review, the dates and format of the site visit, the composition of the EEC and the expected role of the student expert. The coordinator also confirms the student's availability and explains their responsibilities before, during and after the visit.

4) Before receiving confidential accreditation, materials and commencing work as an EEC member, the student signs the Expert's Code of Ethics and the Statement and Obligation of Confidentiality and Avoidance of Conflict of Interest.

5) The student expert receives the complete set of documents required for participation in the external evaluation, including:

- the applicable Standards for Accreditation;
- the Self-assessment Guideline;
- the Self-assessment Report of the HEI or educational programme and the relevant supporting documents;
- the programme of the EEC site visit;
- the Quality Profile and Criteria Evaluation Form;
- Code of Ethics and the Statement and Obligation of Confidentiality
- Avoidance of Conflict of Interest

6) The student expert reviews the Self-assessment Report and supporting documents in advance, identifies matters requiring clarification and prepares questions for meetings with students, teaching staff, HEI management and other stakeholders. The student's preliminary observations are discussed with the EEC Chair and other Commission members when preparing for the visit.

7) During the site visit, the student acts as a full member of the EEC. The student participates in interviews, document review, visits to educational and other relevant facilities, assessment against the accreditation standards and EEC discussions. Particular attention is given to student-centred learning, assessment, academic support, learning resources, student representation, feedback mechanisms and the involvement of learners in internal quality assurance.

8) The student also participates in discussion findings and conclusion, completing the evaluation criteria and preparing the EEC report and recommendations.

9) Student experts participate in the work of the EEC on the same basis as other members of the Commission and contribute to the evaluation from the student perspective. In accordance with

ECAQA's established procedures, student experts receive remuneration for their participation in external evaluation activities.

Between December 2021 and June 2023, ECAQA delivered three five-day training seminars (Almaty, December 2021; Samarkand, September 2022; Tashkent, June 2023), preparing 60 academic experts in the accreditation of educational programmes and in innovative and simulation technologies in medical education, and establishing a database of 37 certified national academic experts from 11 state medical education institutions in Uzbekistan. Fifteen (15) of these experts have since been engaged as international experts in institutional and programme accreditation of educational organisations in the Republic of Kazakhstan (Link). In addition, ECAQA has involved trained experts in its cross-border accreditation activities in Uzbekistan. To date, eleven (11) national academic experts from Uzbekistan have participated as members of External Expert Commissions in institutional and programme accreditation procedures (Link), twelve (12) employer representatives as employer experts (Link) and eight (8) students from different higher education institutions as student experts (Link), ensuring the participation of key stakeholder groups in external quality assurance processes.

ECAQA regularly organises training on accreditation in medical and health professions education for experts included in its accreditation expert database. The training covers the ECAQA accreditation standards and procedures, the role and responsibilities of EEC members, analysis of the Self-assessment Report, validation of evidence, conducting interviews, preparation of the EEC report, ethical conduct, confidentiality and the prevention of conflicts of interest. Before each external evaluation, all EEC members also receive a briefing on the specific HEI or programme under review, the applicable standards, the site-visit programme and their assigned responsibilities.

ECAQA trains experts in accordance with its Expert Training Programme, published on its website (https://www.ecaqa.org/en/training/workshops-for-ecaqa-s-experts; https://www.ecaqa.org/en/faculty-staff-and-students-training-on-the-application-of-standards-and-guidelines-for-quality-assurance-in-the-european-higher-education-area-esg-2015). Training seminars are held at least twice a year: separately for experts in the accreditation of basic medical education programmes and for experts in the accreditation of postgraduate medical education programmes. The programme covers ECAQA's accreditation standards and procedures as well as the ESG, and includes content for both new and experienced experts; experienced experts also help ECAQA run interactive sessions during the seminars. Successful participants receive an expert certificate, which is a prerequisite for inclusion in the Experts' Database.

Seminars are planned at least two to three months in advance. They are often hosted by an education institution chosen solely for the convenience of its location for participants and only if it has no conflict of interest with ECAQA at that time. ECAQA is responsible for all organisational arrangements, including the invitations, materials and logistics.

Informations on expert training:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1pfakrzhKk8kMnpSsy8yCdq-cg3ilq48Zm30eULhc7Wj6bY-waf8N7vV2agg-k9xhv_0HnULq (presentations for training seminars).

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13U02siDJ_hSZxmqF-EEz7rtdJ0adDnJf (presentations for training seminars).

Between 2022 and 2026 (June 30), 11 training seminars were held for experts included in the ECAQA accreditation expert database. Detailed information on the training activities conducted is provided on page 33 of this Report.

Response to previous recommendations (ENQA 2022, EQAR 2024, ESG 2.4). (1) ECAQA revised its Recommendations for student involvement in the accreditation process of educational institutions and educational programmes (approved by the Expert Board, Minutes No. 1 dated 9 January 2026), which now define the role of student experts at every stage of accreditation, from self-assessment and the site visit to the preparation of the EEC report and decision-making by the Accreditation Council. ECAQA cooperates with two student associations, KazMSA and the Kazakhstan Association of Dental Youth, under memoranda of cooperation. (2) ECAQA's expert training programme covers both the WFME Global Standards and ESG Part 1 as the quality assurance framework for agencies and institutions in the EHEA, and ECAQA offers 6-hour and 36-hour seminars on the interpretation and application of the ESG, link).

2.4 Supporting documents
1. Regulations on the ECAQA External Expert Commission https://drive.google.com/file/d/11wjOUr11npkMLKyBSoc-AoO2sbRWzADm/view?usp=drive_link
2. ECAQA Regulation on Conflict of Interest https://drive.google.com/file/d/17TSS0WNKPEfPIrU9EokOSyDdiqN1ORnR/view?usp=drive_link
3. Code of Conduct for External Review Experts - ECAQA (template) https://drive.google.com/file/d/102pQWji92656IY6j9gh9wTClPMNkrIrK/view?usp=drive_link
4. Avoidance of Conflict of Interest https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hPOGr81m7qyuSUaETP7snQ45ica0aWCK/view?usp=drive_link
5. Regulations on the external expert commission https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YRRzRonXPiezIzhkZvD1U5EHrGn5Murq/view?usp=drive_link

8.5. ESG Standard 2.5 Criteria for outcomes

Standard: Any outcomes or judgements made as the result of external quality assurance should be based on explicit and published criteria that are applied consistently, irrespective of whether the process leads to a formal decision.

ECAQA's external quality assurance activities are based on the HEI's self-assessment and an independent external evaluation. During the site visit, the EEC verifies the information presented in the Self-assessment Report through the review of institutional documents, reports, statistical data and other supporting evidence. The EEC conducts individual and group interviews with the HEI's management, administrative and academic staff, students, graduates, employers and other relevant stakeholders. It also observes teaching and assessment activities, visits educational facilities, clinical and practical training sites, and evaluates the learning resources and infrastructure available to support the educational programme. Surveys of students and teaching staff are conducted as a standard part of every external evaluation and provide an additional source of evidence on the implementation and effectiveness of the educational programme. The EEC compares information obtained from documents, interviews, observations, site visits and surveys in order to verify its reliability and assess the HEI or educational programme against the published accreditation criteria.

ECAQA's conclusions and accreditation decisions are based on explicit and published standards, criteria and procedures. For each type and level of accreditation, EEC members use the relevant ECAQA Quality Profile and Criteria Evaluation Form. The forms are derived directly from the applicable ECAQA Standards for Accreditation and enable experts to record the evidence reviewed, assess compliance with each criterion and provide a clear rationale for their conclusions. EEC members complete the forms during the external evaluation and use them as the basis for the collective discussion and preparation of the external evaluation report.

The EEC assesses compliance with each accreditation standard using the following published ratings:

– *Fully compliant* – the requirements of the standard are fully met. The information presented in the Self-assessment Report is confirmed by the evidence reviewed and the findings of the external evaluation.

– *Partially compliant* – the requirements of the standard are met only in part. This may relate to insufficient quantitative results, incomplete implementation of a requirement, limitations in the supporting documents provided by the HEI, or partial confirmation of the information in the Self-assessment Report during interviews and other external evaluation activities.

– *Non-compliant* – the requirements of the standard are not met, and the identified deficiency represents a significant problem for the HEI or educational programme.

Each EEC member completes the Quality Profile and Criteria Evaluation Form individually. Any rating other than "fully compliant" must be supported by a written comment referring to the evidence reviewed, and each completed form is signed by the expert who completed it. The detailed interpretation of the ratings, the requirements for completing the Quality Profile and Criteria Evaluation Form, and the structure and content of the final EEC report are set out in the ECAQA Guidelines for the External Evaluation of Educational Institutions and Educational Programmes and preparation of the EEC report.

The completed Quality Profile and Criteria Evaluation Form and the final EEC report are submitted to the Accreditation Council. In reaching its decision, the Council considers the HEI's Self-

assessment Report, the EEC's findings and conclusions, recommendations for improvement and recommendation on accreditation. The final decision is therefore directly linked to the published criteria and the level of compliance established for each standard.

The Accreditation Council may grant accreditation for five years, grant accreditation for three years, grant conditional accreditation for one year, deny accreditation or withdraw an accreditation certificate. Accreditation for five years may be granted both through initial accreditation and re-accreditation where the applicable requirements are met. A three-year decision may be taken for a new educational programme in the circumstances defined in the Regulation on the Accreditation Council.

Conditional accreditation for one year is granted where most standards are partially compliant or at least one core standard is non-compliant. The HEI is then required to take corrective action and undergo a repeat external evaluation within one year.

Denial of accreditation applies where most standards are non-compliant and the identified deficiencies require a longer period to address. The detailed criteria for each type of decision are set out in Sections 2.2 and 2.3 of the Regulation on the ECAQA Accreditation Council.

2.5 Supporting documents
1. Quality Profile and Criteria for External Institutional Evaluation of Higher and Postgraduate Education Organization https://docs.google.com/document/d/1JaYJId_AVPItGIHiz-cSdUk0U7OKDdza/edit?usp=drive_link&ouid=102700088434215940652&rtpof=true&sd=true
2. QUALITY PROFILE AND CRITERIA FOR EXTERNAL INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION OF HIGHER AND POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION ORGANISATION RUz https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YpkC5DtcwALacC1FFS6j2q2FNOlGDVx5/view?usp=sharing
3. ECAQA QUALITY PROFILE AND CRITERIA EVALUATION FORM FOR SIMULATION CENTRES IN MEDICINE AND HEALTHCARE https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UnWaI8sJaJ5Nt4wUvSLXrqrdY_nr7qf2/view?usp=sharing
4. QUALITY PROFILE AND CRITERIA EVALUATION FORM FOR THE BACHELOR DEGREE PROGRAMME https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DDdmpYDfC39huOw08vXj8I37wxn3KLi5/view?usp=sharing
5. QUALITY PROFILE AND CRITERIA EVALUATION FORM FOR THE BACHELOR DEGREE PROGRAMME RUz https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MJH7vQevDD7U2AKL_EPSZqxxEz0DbBvd/view?usp=sharing
6. QUALITY PROFILE AND CRITERIA EVALUATION FORM FOR MASTER'S DEGREES PROGRAMME IN MEDICAL AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS EDUCATION https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ehj3kB2QXqTKZ25IQmnMEh0mnOgi4Lbw/view?usp=sharing
7. Quality Profile and External Evaluation Criteria for PhD Doctoral Educational Programmes of Medical Education Organisations https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yaHWq9qh2XmEmAS9w1lpLjJWoKBiXQop/view?usp=sharing
8. Quality Profile and External Evaluation Criteria for the Residency Programme **https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xb1ljiLf3d6N--pEWbr-Q3C_uneo58sT/view?usp=sharing**
9. Examples of filled out Quality Profile and Evaluation Criteria Forms https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/145KiqXKLKfQoOPKGmXqLRNTFpNIFgCRT?usp=drive_link
10. Guidline for the preparation of EEC report https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mg-SXonMw1mTph35ut6FMdA1GtUBttU2/view?usp=drive_link
11. Regulations on the Accreditation Council https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EbuiFrCOVGM1ruWiuR1v2QRmoyw2-VSz/view?usp=sharing

8.6. ESG Standard 2.6 Reporting

Standard: Full reports by the experts should be published, clear and accessible to the academic community, external partners and other interested individuals. If the agency takes any formal decision based on the reports, the decision should be published together with the report.

The external evaluation of the quality of a higher education institution/educational programme is followed by the preparation of the final report of the EEC including attachments (copies of supporting documents, the results of the survey of students and educators, materials of photo and video filming of a site visit), which is compiled in accordance with the ECAQA Standards for

Accreditation and the following requirements of Guidelines for external evaluation of a Higher Education Institution and Educational Programmes.

The requirements and structure of the report of the external expert commission are presented in the Guidelines for preparing the report of the external expert commission on the accreditation of an educational organization and educational programmes (Prepared and approved by the Expert Board, Minutes No.1 dated 09.01.2026).

Each external evaluation results in a full report prepared by the EEC in accordance with the applicable ECAQA Standards for Accreditation and the Guideline for External Evaluation of HEIs and Educational Programmes. The report describes the HEI or educational programme under review, the composition of the EEC, the external evaluation process and the evidence considered. It presents findings against each accreditation standard, the corresponding ratings, strengths, areas for improvement, recommendations to the HEI and the EEC's recommendation to the Accreditation Council. The report also includes the relevant annexes, such as the site-visit programme, the Quality Profile and Criteria Evaluation Form, and the list of documents reviewed. Aggregated results of the surveys of students and teaching staff are also reflected in the report.

Preparation to the external evaluation begins with the EEC's review of the Self-assessment Report and continues throughout the site visit. The findings are based on the review of documents and statistical data, interviews with the leadership, administrative and academic staff, students, graduates and employers, surveys of students and academic staff, observation of teaching and assessment, and visits to educational, clinical and practical training facilities. EEC members discuss the evidence collected at the end of each day and compare information from different sources. By the end of the visit, they reach collective conclusions on compliance with the standards and agree on recommendations for improvement and a recommendation to the Accreditation Council.

The EEC Chair coordinates the preparation of the report with the other Commission members and compiles the final version in accordance with the ECAQA Guideline for Preparation the External Expert Commission Report. Within 14 calendar days after completion of the external evaluation, the Chair submits the draft report to ECAQA with substantiated conclusions, recommendations for improving the HEI or educational programme, and the EEC's recommendation on the accreditation status and period.

ECAQA sends the report to the HEI to check the factual accuracy of the report before it is finalised. The HEI is given seven calendar days to identify factual errors or provide clarifications but may not influence the EEC's content, conclusions or recommendations. The EEC Chair considers the comments received and, together with the other Commission members, prepares and approves the final version. The final version of the report is submitted to the Accreditation Council. The EEC retains responsibility for all findings, judgements and recommendations contained in the report.

The final EEC report, the decision of the Accreditation Council and the accreditation certificate are published together in the relevant entry of the ECAQA Register to inform all stakeholders: https://www.ecaqa.org/en/reestr-en. The full report and decision are made publicly available for all completed ESG-related institutional and programme accreditation procedures, including cross-border accreditation. Information on accreditation outcomes is also submitted to the Unified Higher Education Platform of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan and made available through the DAQAR and DEQAR databases. ECAQA's WFME Recognition Status and its geographical scope, covering Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, are also published by WFME in its list of countries served by agencies with Basic Medical Education Recognition Status.

Response to previous recommendations (ENQA 2022, ENQA 2023, EQAR 2024, ESG 2.6). (1) (2) Following the 2022 review, the Expert Board approved a revised EEC report template (Minutes No. 1 of 25 March 2022 and No. 2 of 11 July 2022) and updated the Guidelines for the preparation of the EEC report (9 January 2026). In Section 5 of the report, experts now set out the evidence for each sub-standard of the accreditation standards, which incorporate the ESG Part 1. The EEC Chair is responsible for the quality of the report and for ensuring that all judgements are based on evidence; any rating other than full compliance must be supported by a written comment in the Quality Profile. The draft report is sent to the institution, which may identify factual errors or provide clarifications but cannot influence the EEC's content, conclusions or recommendations. Expert training has been strengthened with a focus on report writing. (3) All EEC reports, including

those leading to a negative decision, are published on ECAQA's website. (4) To ensure timely publication, ECAQA concludes translation contracts and monitors their fulfilment; reports are published in Kazakh, Russian and English languages.

2.6 Supporting documents
1. Guidelines for the preparation of the EEC report https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mg-SXonMw1mTph35ut6FMdA1GtUBttU2/view?usp=drive_link

8.7. ESG Standard 2.7 Complaints and appeals

Standard: Complaints and appeals processes should be clearly defined as part of the design of external quality assurance processes and communicated to the institutions.

ECAQA has established separate internal procedures for complaints and appeals. A complaint concerns the conduct of the accreditation process or the actions or inaction of ECAQA staff, experts or members of the EEC. An appeal concerns a formal accreditation outcome and may be submitted where an HEI disagrees with a decision of the Accreditation Council and considers that the outcome was not supported by sufficient evidence, the published criteria were applied incorrectly or the accreditation procedure was not implemented consistently.

Complaints are considered under the Regulation on the Complaints Review Commission, approved by Order No. 1 dated 9 January 2026. A complaint may be submitted in writing by email or regular mail, including while an external evaluation is in progress. It must identify the applicant, describe the matter concerned and be signed by the head of the HEI or by the individual applicant. The complaint is registered, submitted to the ECAQA Director General and then forwarded confidentially to the Chair of the Complaints Commission.

The Complaints Review Commission is a collegiate body consisting of three to five permanent and non-permanent members, depending on the nature of the complaint and the type of applicant. It is supported by a secretary, who is a member of ECAQA staff, is responsible for organisational support and the minutes, and does not take part in the Commission's decisions. The Chair and Deputy Chair are appointed for five years on the basis of nominations from professional associations, employer organisations and HEIs. The secretary provides organisational and technical support and records the proceedings but does not participate in the consideration of the complaint or decision-making. All members and the secretary are checked for conflicts of interest, and any person whose independence may be affected is replaced. The Complaints Commission may request relevant documents and explanations from ECAQA, the EEC Chair, EEC members and other persons involved in the procedure. Its meetings are closed and may be held in person or online. Decisions are taken by open majority vote and recorded in minutes signed by the Chair and participating members. Within 30 calendar days of receiving the complaint, the Commission prepares a decision and recommendations for submission to the ECAQA Director General. The Commission's decision is final and binding on ECAQA. The Director General is responsible for implementing the Commission's decision and recommendations and may not amend them. An extract from the minutes containing the outcome is communicated to the applicant. The composition, responsibilities and consideration procedure are described in detail in the Regulation on the Complaints Commission. To date, no complaints have been submitted under this procedure.

Appeals are considered by a separate Appeal Commission under the Regulation on the Appeal Commission. The Commission consists of six members: four permanent members, including the Chair, an international expert serving as Deputy Chair, a secretary and a lawyer, and two non-permanent members, including a student representative. Permanent and non-permanent members may not be members of the Accreditation Council and must have no conflict of interest with the applicant. This separation ensures that an appeal is not considered by the body that made the contested accreditation decision.

An HEI receives written notification of the Accreditation Council’s decision within 14 working days of the Council meeting. If the HEI disagrees with a decision on accreditation, denial of accreditation or withdrawal of an accreditation certificate, it may submit an appeal within seven working days of receiving the notification. The appeal is submitted on the HEI’s official letterhead,

addressed to the ECAQA Director General and signed by the head of the HEI. It must identify the HEI or educational programme concerned, specify the contested outcome, provide the grounds for appeal and include documentary evidence supporting the applicant's position. The appeal is registered in ECAQA's incoming document log.

Consideration of an appeal does not constitute a repeated institutional or programme accreditation procedure. The Appeal Commission reviews the grounds and documentary evidence submitted by the HEI and the relevant accreditation materials. Its secretary arranges the meeting, ensures the timely circulation of documents and prepares the minutes and decision. The decision is taken by open majority vote; where votes are equal, the Chair has the casting vote. The Commission issues a reasoned decision and recommendations within 30 calendar days of receiving the appeal, the Appeal Commission issues a reasoned decision, which is final in accordance with the Regulation on the Appeal Commission.

In the past five years, ECAQA has received no appeals against its accreditation decisions.

The complaints and appeals procedures are published on the ECAQA website (https://www.ecaqa.org/en/accreditation/ecaqa-s-process-for-appeals-and-complaints) and communicated to HEIs through the relevant Regulations and accreditation documents. The same procedures apply to ECAQA's cross-border external quality assurance activities, ensuring that HEIs reviewed outside Kazakhstan have access to ECAQA's internal mechanisms for raising concerns about the conduct of the process or challenging a formal accreditation outcome.

Response to previous recommendation (ENQA 2022, ESG 2.7). ECAQA revised the Regulations on the Appeal Commission (new edition approved by the Expert Board, Minutes No. 1 of 9 January 2026), which now set out the Commission's composition and the appointment procedure for its members. The Commission includes permanent members, appointed for a three-year term to ensure consistency in the handling of appeals, and non-permanent members, including a student representative. Its members may not sit on the Accreditation Council and must have no conflict of interest with the appellant, which separates the accreditation and appeals processes. The Commission's decision is final and is not subject to further appeal within ECAQA.

2.7 Supporting documents
1. Regulations on the ECAQA Complaints Review Commission https://drive.google.com/file/d/12eFS2uxq4Gphhf4JPYmPfjBNPPD9yM78/view?usp=drive_link
2. Regulations on the ECAQA Appeals Commission https://drive.google.com/file/d/105FWI2X6_3i2e0LsBIfHXtimabLJwS1V/view?usp=drive_link
3. ECAQA's process for Appeals and Complaints https://www.ecaqa.org/en/accreditation/ecaqa-s-process-for-appeals-and-complaints

9. SWOT analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Recognition by the national competent authority: National Accrediting Agency in Higher Education including Medical and Healthcare Professions Education that authorized and recognized by the Kazakhstan Ministry of Sciences and Higher Education. ECAQA is listed on 1) EQAR; 2) Directory of Organisations that Recognize/Accredit Medical Schools (DORA) of the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER), USA and 3) the Council for Higher Education Accreditation International Quality Group (CHEA/CIQG) International Directory, USA and 4) APQR. ECAQA is a member of the associations of accreditation bodies of OECD member states - European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN), Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA). ECAQA was granted World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) Recognition Status on October 10, 2022, that is valid until October 31, 2032 and applicable to the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Tajikistan. Active Involvement of ECAQA Staff and contributing to international events of WHO and WFME as well as International and Regional Quality Assurance Networks conference and trainings (ENQA, WFME, INQAAHE, APQN, CEENQA, CHEA IQG). Involvement and engagement of all relevant stakeholders to external and internal quality assurance and institutional and subject-specific professional accreditation process. Using Standards and procedures that are predetermined and specific to Medical Education and other Healthcare Professions and based on the WFME Global Standards (BME (2020), PGME (2023), CPD (2024), Master's Degree Programmes (2016), ORPHEUS/AMSE/WFME Standards on PhD (2015), ESG (2015); International Experts and EEC Members (Reviewers) are highly qualified as professionals and educators, competent and well trained.	Limited implementation of staff exchange programmes and mobility opportunities. Need for advanced training in the preparation and development of external evaluation reports.

Independent Decision making by ECAQA Accreditation Council that based on specific WFME Global Standards (BME, PGME, CPD) and fundamental principles of WHO/WFME Guidelines, ESG (2015), APQN-Chiba Principles.

Internal Quality Assurance Mechanisms and its Regular Review for Improvement.

International Collaboration and Partnership (20) that is beneficial for both agency and Higher Education Institutions.

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Obtaining international recognition of the WFME for continuing professional development (CPD) of physicians in the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Tajikistan. Obtaining international recognition of the WFME for postgraduate education (residency). Systematic application of ESG principles and approaches in ECAQA's external and internal quality assurance activities, including the transition to the revised ESG 2027. Developing an online database for post-accreditation procedures and subsequent monitoring in line with ongoing digitalisation.	Regular changes in legislation and regulatory legal acts in education and healthcare in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan including changes affecting the national recognition and authorisation of accrediting agencies. Inflation increasing the cost of accreditation services.

10. Key challenges and areas for future development

The key elements of an EQA and IQA are in place and what is needed now is the improvement in the system that includes the agency's activities for further development and improvement focused on the following areas:

– Further development of expert capacity and leadership. ECAQA plans to strengthen the advanced training of experts, particularly in the preparation and leadership of External Expert Commissions, including the development of team leader competencies. Particular attention will be given to the external assessment of residency programmes (postgraduate specialty training). Expert development will also address the increasing use of digital technologies and artificial intelligence in higher education and quality assurance, including their implications for assessment, evidence-based review and the work of external experts.

– Strengthening the involvement of employers in external quality assurance. ECAQA intends to place greater emphasis on the preparation and development of employer experts and on strengthening their meaningful participation in the assessment of educational programmes and further cooperation with employer communities and professional organisations.

– Development of staff and expert capacity through international and partner cooperation. ECAQA will further develop opportunities for staff and expert exchange with partner organisations, including joint activities, professional development, peer learning and exchange of experience.

– ECAQA plans to strengthen its involvement in research related to postgraduate medical education, including residency training and quality assurance.

ECAQA aims to be actively involved in international events and establish effective collaboration with partners to build its capacity and, as a national quality assurance agency,

contribute to the enhancement of quality and the development of a quality culture in higher education, including the health professions education institutions.

Glossary of Terms

APQR	Asia-Pacific Quality Register
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AC	Accreditation Council
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
ECAQA	Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care
EEC	External Expert Commission
EB	Expert Board
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
EQA	External Quality Assurance
EQAR	European Quality Assurance Register
ESG	Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
HEI(s)	Higher Education Institution(s)
KZT	Kazakhstan tenge
LLP	Limited Liability Partnership
MSHE RK	Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan
MES RK	Ministry Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan
MH RK	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan
PAM	Post-accreditation monitoring
WFME	World Federation for Medical Education

ECAQA
Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care

Overview of documents referenced with hyperlinks in the self-assessment report

№	List of supporting documents
1. Introduction	
	Register of 1 recognized accreditation bodies (Link)
	Membership (Link to website)
	External Review of ECAQA on the ENQA website (Link)
	ENQA Board decision letter on ECAQA membership (Link)
	Agencies with WFME Recognition Status (Link to WFME website)
2. Development of the self-assessment report (SAR)	
	ENQA Policy on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in ENQA Agency Reviews (Link)
	Order on the formation of the Self-Assessment Commission in Preparation for the ENQA International Evaluation (Link)
	ECAQA Follow-Up Report (Link)
	Work Plan for Preparing ECAQA for the ENQA International Review in 2026 (Link)
3. Higher education in the context of the agency	
	Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Link)
	On Amendments to the Order of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. ҚР ДСМ-63 dated 4 July 2022 “On Approval of the State Compulsory Educational Standards for the Levels of Education in Healthcare” (Link)
	Insider Monkey Global Education Index (Link)
	Unified Higher Education Platform (Link)
	Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Public Health and Healthcare System" (Link)
	Law "On introducing amendments to some legislative acts on the expansion of academic and managerial independence of higher educational institutions" (Link)
	Concept for the Development of Higher Education and Science for 2023–2029 (Link)
	Order on the Approval of Model Rules for the Activities of Educational Organizations of the Respective Types (Link)
	Order on Approving the Requirements for Accreditation Bodies and the Rules for Recognizing Accreditation Bodies, Including Foreign Ones (Link)
	Students’ enrolment rate and academic year (Link)
	Order No. 629: Legal Framework and Amendments (Link)
4. Quality assurance of higher education in the context of the agency	
	On Approval of the Guidelines for Quality Assurance by Levels of Education (Link)
5. History, profile and structure of the agency	
	Organisational structure of ECAQA (Link)
	ECAQA Accreditation Council (link to website)
	ECAQA Expert Board (link to the website)
	Complaints and Appeals Commission (link to the website)
	Composition of the ECAQA Accreditation Council (link to the website)
	Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Non-commercial Organizations" № 142 (Link)
	ECAQA Strategic Development Plan (Link)
	Table – ECAQA Income and Expenditure for the Period from January 2023 to December 2025 (Link)
6. Functions and activities of the agency	
	ECAQA Partners (Link to the website)
7. Compliance with Part 3 of the ESG	
7.1 ESG Standard 3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance	
3.1-1	ECAQA Strategic Developmen Plan (Link)
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3.1-3	ECAQA Quality Assurance Programme (Link) Web-site: Link.

3.1-4	ECAQA Internal Quality Assurance System (Link to the website)
3.1-5	Guidelines for effective engagement and interaction with stakeholders (Link)
	Mission statement (ECAQA website)
	Annual Reports (Link to the website)
	WFME Certificate of Recognition Status (Link)
	ECAQA Accreditation Council composition (Link to the website)
	Table 3 – The agency's external quality assurance activities as defined in Part 2 of the ESG Institutional Accreditation (Link)
	Table 4 – The agency's external quality assurance activities as defined in Part 2 of the ESG Programmatic Accreditation (Link)
7.2 ESG Standard 3.2 Official status	
3.2-1	ECAQA Constitution (Link to the website)
3.2-2	ECAQA's Certificate of Registration with the Ministry of Justice of the RK No. 10100204761572, 23.05.2017 (Link)
3.2-3	ECAQA's Certificate of Registration with the Justice Department of Almaty City No. 10100189338881, 07/02/2017 (Link)
3.2-4	ECAQA's Certificate of Registration with the Ministry of Justice of the RK No. 10100376692519, as of January 12, 2020 (Russian version) (Link)
3.2-5	Registration of ECAQA in the Register of 1 recognised accreditation bodies of Kazakhstan,14.03.2023 (Link)
3.2-6	WFME Recognition Certificate ECAQA new territory (Link)
3.2-7	WFME Recognition status letter (Link)
	Statute on State Accreditation of Institutions and their Academic Programmes in the Republic of Armenia (Link)
7.3 ESG Standard 3.3 Independence	
3.3-1	The ECAQA's Constitution (Charter) (Link to the website)
3.3-2	ECAQA's Certificate of Registration with the Ministry of Justice of the RK No. 10100204761572, 23.05.2017 (Link)
3.3-3	Regulation on Expert Board (Link)
3.3-4	Budget Plans 2022-2026 (Link)
3.3-5	Regulations on the External Expert Commission (Link)
3.3-6	Regulations on the Accreditation Council (Link)
3.3-7	Code of Ethics and Rules of Conduct for a Member of the Accreditation Council (Link)
3.3-8	ECAQA Code of Conduct for External Review Experts (Link)
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7.4 ESG Standard 3.4 Thematic analysis	
3.4-1	Internal Quality Assurance system (Link to the website)
3.4-2	Thematic Analysis of Stakeholder Feedback on ECAQA's External Quality Assurance Activities (Link)
3.4-3	Thematic Analysis: Quality of Residency Training Implementation in the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Uzbekistan (Link)
3.4-5	Guide for Academic Integrity Policy Framework and Practice (Link)
3.4-6	Guide: Objective Structured Clinical Examination (available in Russian) https://drive.google.com/file/d/1px-ZoJYB8CZXxkJXpzELFjk0TrACwOTf/view?usp=sharing
3.4-7	Modernization of Basic Medical Education and Implementation of an Educational Programme Based on Competency, Integration, and Healthcare needs https://drive.google.com/file/d/159fNo-4sXIve3FpkF3wZqE5jRtpTBdKY/view?usp=sharing
7.5 ESG Standard 3.5 Resources	
3.5-1	ECAQA Strategic Plan for 2026 – 2028 https://drive.google.com/file/d/12WvL1I1YLOHKKtDW-gJSG7PF4MBiilKL/view?usp=drive_link
3.5-2	Documents on office rental https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1K_mJj8NbNmZb1CWtdh2U3IWr8p3gKJKI
3.5-3	Contracts with legal entities (suppliers) in Russian https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1267L7Nic1I5eACfbCH348IX5syi4yy2s
3.5-4	Registration log of Contracts with legal entities (suppliers) in Russian https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1aHWRg8QPzQsQz72whq_1zIxd47EJqHZo
3.5-5	Civil-law Contract form with EEC Members

	https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1z2E0bt47vxBIZJCecyMqyLz-HUcmrzfI?usp=sharing
3.5-6	ECAQA Regulations on the Departments https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ns8i8ROYDcXUA_YNHMGQRXny18oggKbn?usp=sharing
3.5-7	Job Descriptions of ECAQA employees https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1k14J13aeIsniWEuj5guzL-QymOJzTeA5
	ECAQA Director General and Staff webpage (Link)
	Table – ECAQA Income and Expenditure for the Period from January 2023 to December 2025 (Link)
	Financial expenditure plan (budget) for 2026 (Link)
7.6 ESG Standard 3.6 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct	
3.6-1	Quality Assurance Programme https://drive.google.com/file/d/17M1ELK7dmHubjVbOUm5Nz3J8BGmgSdLu/view?usp=sharing
3.6-2	Internal Quality Assurance System https://www.ecaqa.org/en/about-ecaqa/ecaqa-quality-assurance/internal-quality-assurance-system
3.6-3	Employee Code of Conduct https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AuaGIYR1XB8e1SVgzp8D-YtqJUKyKDD2/view?usp=drive_link
3.6-4	Regulations governing the activities of the ECAQA https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1xJSV_OTPDu4s5eag9bRgvkrx4LLvTyQr?usp=sharing
3.6-5	Regulations on the ECAQA External Expert Commission https://drive.google.com/file/d/11wjOUr11npkMLKyBSoc-AoO2sbRWzADm/view?usp=drive_link
3.6-6	ECAQA Regulation on Conflict of Interest https://drive.google.com/file/d/1j4UJYYxnyXzfC5apMi4uO8-W5KLRcPZr/view?usp=drive_link
7.7 ESG Standard 3.7 Cyclical external review of agencies	
3.7-1	Certificates of international recognition of WFME https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_pxjU86kCjQ48vscC0otpqGsCh23evX6/view?usp=sharing
3.7-2	Membership certificates in international quality networks and associations https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YtbM-Z1-0Ari276bXtZFgPpnvR2VnRwB
3.7-3	Certificate of ECAQA membership in ENQA https://drive.google.com/file/d/1S14a3wKPdn6FzsC9F0NrekZLODOsAMgc/view?usp=drive_link
3.7-4	EQAR Approval Letter https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WXcSwEba_7h4rzvJ0KTkob_UFsjUZGoH/view?usp=drive_link
3.7-5	Action plans based on the recommendations of international expert commissions https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1NqIpTWDBXs8aXI26WIrgijCZ4UK2VM2n
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8. Compliance with Part 2 of the ESG **8.1 ESG Standard 2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance**	
2.1-1	Institutional accreditation of higher education institutions – Standards For Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions for Health Professions Education https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PKwXurTKaJ8hA0an7GahY5sjoEjddTo4/view?usp=sharing – Standards for Accreditation of Higher and Postgraduate Education Organisations https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NwqhZ1SqCXmWyAtf0O-MP-RAKb_fF4am/view?usp=sharing – Standards for Institutional Accreditation of Postgraduate Medical Organisations and Continuing Professional Development https://drive.google.com/file/d/14Kr6XAL6mAqBa4VfLXthRO8z0wwURkul/view?usp=sharing
2.1-2	Specialised (Programme) and Initial Programme Accreditation – Standards for Programme Accreditation of Basic Medical Education https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f5T7FyXRfCLEkoU_hOSYbQ4I0zmTsA75/view?usp=sharing – Standards for Accreditation of Bachelor's Degrees Programme https://drive.google.com/file/d/14jD-kq-kEvap5ncvHO7iKIGDAvOEmx-k/view?usp=sharing – Standards for Accreditation Master Degrees Programme in Medical and Health Professions

	Education https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CFkQ6Uf4-lLx2FkMYHOPZFWpMuCLWIeR/view?usp=sharing – Standards for Accreditation Phd Programme in Biomedical and Health Sciences https://drive.google.com/file/d/19oC-UwettuHXTfGjZlaTGaB0drOCS2-w/view?usp=sharing Standards for Programme Accreditation: Postgraduate Medical Education (Residency Specialties) https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VK4KQIqigMPudD9gnfW4l_vwd0ZKsycr/view?usp=sharing
2.1-3	Joint Degree Programme Accreditation Standards for Accreditation of Joint Degree Programme https://drive.google.com/file/d/10hfFzuA16skJ9BKIZjPaj_F0SItw2dbR/view?usp=sharing
2.1-4	Cross-Border Institutional Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions Standards for Institutional Accreditation of Higher and Postgraduate Medical Education Organisations (RUz) https://drive.google.com/file/d/1n5PnYUR1HOZtk1D4vWiLDWH3lMwGN6ks/view?usp=sharing
2.1-5	Cross-Border Accreditation of Basic Medical and Health Care Professions Education – Standards for Accreditation of Educational Programmes of Basic Medical Education (Bachelor's Specialties) https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rziB6EYS6Q2yOasnnG-__8Sl8_f06KsW/view?usp=sharing Standards for Programme Accreditation: Postgraduate Medical Education (Master's Degree) https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SkLlKArC4dlK9P3fFrIv_6Rw-JMqsLkk/view?usp=drive_link
2.1-6	Accreditation of the clinical skills centre (simulation-based healthcare education) of medical higher educational institutions Standards for accreditation and procedures for self-assessment of simulation centres in medicine and healthcare https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SGNumbSaUvZCcG3eNwlMbKRC0pWjr5zT/view?usp=sharing
2.1-7	Mappings https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/17yLKqf5na4OEf_85CmzieTTk5m5Ku-9l?usp=sharing
2.1-8	ESG 3.1-2.1 WFME CBA ECAQA alignment 09.09.2026.pdf https://drive.google.com/file/d/17GttSFCAcXVAXLIFxHnHvhFOg3IBaumD/view?usp=sharing
2.1-9	Summary tables showing the alignment of ECAQA's accreditation standards with ESG Part 1: institutional accreditation procedures and programme accreditation procedures
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8.2 ESG Standard 2.2 Designing methodologies fit for purpose	
2.2-1	Regulations on the Post-accreditation Monitoring Procedure https://drive.google.com/file/d/1P4TDgS9j_6KpWHkDo6EgUfShi0Kcwfgd/view?usp=drive_link
2.2-2	Regulations on the expert board https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ej4Ja0NsbEhMstaMtzIxW5ApvpDkjJYo/view?usp=sharing
2.2-3	Internal Quality Assurance system https://www.ecaqa.org/en/about-ecaqa/ecaqa-quality-assurance/internal-quality-assurance-system
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2.2-5	Regulation on Conflict of Interest https://drive.google.com/file/d/17TSS0WNKPEfPIrU9EokOSyDdiqN1ORnR/view?usp=drive_link
2.2-6	Avoidance of Conflict of Interest https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hPOGr81m7qyuSUaETP7snQ45ica0aWCK/view?usp=drive_link
	Order No. 629 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan of 1 November 2016 (as amended by Order No. 301 of 19.06.2026) On approval of the requirements for the accreditation body in higher and postgraduate education and the rules for

	recognition of accreditation bodies in higher and postgraduate education, including foreign bodies № 629 (Link)
	Guidelines for effective engagement and interaction with stakeholders in the quality assurance system https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JUqoFoEtnuIYachVkHMjkF8lDozbLkKi/view?usp=sharing
8.3 ESG Standard 2.3 Implementing processes	
2.3-1	Applications for Accreditation and Application Form https://www.ecaqa.org/en/submit-an-application
2.3-2	Guides to Institutional Self-assessment https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13q722ECv1ALO2bw7Mgv6HrdKpvcdJa84?usp=sharing
2.3-3	Guides to Educational Programme Self-assessment https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ci0LZ3mUYZPf-Fz4OnHN3ehzAESL5I93?usp=sharing
2.3-4	ECAQA GUIDE Role of Students in Accreditation https://drive.google.com/file/d/10narxPhIYP7HFUDKyxIs_IIT5fvS75WI/view?usp=sharing
2.3-5	Guidelines for External Evaluation of a HEI and EP https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oqh4OSjs30to3-FTFnxTIardzN5jEp7c/view?usp=sharing
2.3-6	Code of Conduct for External Review Expert https://drive.google.com/file/d/102pQWji92656IY6j9gh9wTCIPMNkrIrK/view?usp=drive_link
2.3-7	Guidelines for Report Preparation of the EEC https://drive.google.com/file/d/198qgy2nwE7my22Xkvf8yh3ErIkwiqjwK/view?usp=drive_link
2.3-8	Regulations on the ECAQA Post-Accreditation Monitoring https://drive.google.com/file/d/1P4TDgS9j_6KpWHkDo6EgUfShi0Kcwfgd/view?usp=drive_link
2.3-9	Regulations on the ECAQA Complaints Commission https://drive.google.com/file/d/12eFS2uxq4Gphhf4JPYmPfjBNPPD9yM78/view?usp=drive_link
2.3-10	Regulations on the ECAQA Appeals Commission https://drive.google.com/file/d/105FWI2X6_3i2e0LsBlfHXtimabLJwS1V/view?usp=drive_link
2.3-11	Guidelines for effective engagement and interaction with stakeholders https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IuFnmGJ1QdJ0vPhh1usz8rxPKTVZ9_T1/view?usp=drive_link
	ECAQA news (Link to the website)
	Registry of Accredited Educational Institutions and Educational Programmes by ECAQA (Link)
	DAQAR database (Link)
	EQAR registred agencies (Link)
	WFME Countries served by agencies with BME Recognition Status (Link)
	Post-accreditation monitoring procedure is published on the ECAQA website (Link)
	Post-accreditation monitoring schedule and planning (Link to the website)
	Code of Expert (Link to the website)
	ECAQA's Expert Qualification Requirements (Link)
	Workshops for ECAQA's Experts (Link to the website)
	Information about Accreditation for Students (Link to the website)
	Students Involvement (Link to the website)
8.4 ESG Standard 2.4 Peer-review experts	
2.4-1	Regulations on the ECAQA External Expert Commission (Link)
2.4-2	ECAQA Regulation on Conflict of Interest (Link)
2.4-3	Code of Conduct for External Review Experts - ECAQA (template) (Link)
2.4-4	Avoidance of Conflict of Interest (Link)
2.4-5	Regulations on the external expert commission (Link)
	ECAQA Partners (Link to the website)
	About Accreditation (Link to the website)
	Students Involvement (Link to the website)
	List of Staff of Medical Educational and Healthcare Institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan Included in the EEC of ECAQA within the Framework of Programme and Specialised Accreditation of Educational Institutions of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Link)
	List of Staff of Medical Educational and Healthcare Institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan Included in the EEC of ECAQA within the Framework of Institutional and Specialised Accreditation of Educational Institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Link)
	List of Employer Experts from the Republic of Uzbekistan Included in the ECAQA EECs within

	the Framework of Institutional and Specialised Accreditation of Educational Institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Link)
	List of Student Experts from the Republic of Uzbekistan Included in the ECAQA EECs within the Framework of Institutional and Specialised Accreditation of Educational Institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Link)
	Workshops for ECAQA's Experts (Link to the website)
	Faculty, staff and students training on the application of Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015) (Link to the website)
	Informations on expert trainings. Presentations for training seminars: - Link - Link
	Recommendations for student involvement in the accreditation process of educational institutions and educational programmes (Link)
8.5 ESG Standard 2.5 Criteria for outcomes	
2.5-1	Quality Profile and Criteria for External Institutional Evaluation of Higher and Postgraduate Education Organization (Link)
2.5-2	QUALITY PROFILE AND CRITERIA FOR EXTERNAL INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION OF HIGHER AND POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION ORGANISATION RUz (Link)
2.5-3	ECAQA QUALITY PROFILE AND CRITERIA EVALUATION FORM FOR SIMULATION CENTRES IN MEDICINE AND HEALTHCARE (Link)
2.5-4	QUALITY PROFILE AND CRITERIA EVALUATION FORM FOR THE BACHELOR DEGREE PROGRAMME (Link)
2.5-5	QUALITY PROFILE AND CRITERIA EVALUATION FORM FOR THE BACHELOR DEGREE PROGRAMME RUz (Link)
2.5-6	QUALITY PROFILE AND CRITERIA EVALUATION FORM FOR MASTER'S DEGREES PROGRAMME IN MEDICAL AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS EDUCATION (Link)
2.5-7	Quality Profile and External Evaluation Criteria for PhD Doctoral Educational Programmes of Medical Education Organisations (Link)
2.5-8	Quality Profile and External Evaluation Criteria for the Residency Programme (Link)
2.5-9	Examples of filled out Quality Profile and Evaluation Criteria Forms (Link)
2.5-10	Guidline for the preparation of EEC report (Link)
2.5-11	Regulations on the Accreditation Council (Link)
8.6 ESG Standard 2.6 Reporting	
2.6-1	Guidelines for the preparation of the EEC report (Link)
	Registry of Accredited Educational Institutions and Educational Programmes by ECAQA (Link)
	Unified Higher Education Platform of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Link)
	DAQAR database (Link)
	EQAR registered agencies (Link)
	WFME Countries served by agencies with BME Recognition Status (Link)
8.7 ESG Standard 2.7 Complaints and appeals	
2.7-1	Regulations on the ECAQA Complaints Review Commission (Link)
2.7-2	Regulations on the ECAQA Appeals Commission (Link)
2.7-3	ECAQA's process for Appeals and Complaints (Link to the website)