

# ЯКІСТЬ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ ТА ЕКСПЕРТНИЙ СУПРОВІД ЇЇ ЗАБЕЗПЕЧЕННЯ: ДОСВІД ЄС

## QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND ITS EXPERT SUPPORT: THE EU EXPERIENCE

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## LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR MODULE JEAN MONNET: AN EXPERIENCE IN UKRAINE. STEPS TO IMPROVE QUALITY

*The article represents the diagnostic and analytical results of the research on learning outcomes for PhD level within the subject area «Higher education quality and its expert support: Ukraine's movement towards the European Union» at Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University (Ukraine). A generalised description of competences and learning outcomes for PhD students was developed. This paper made use of a small-scale research – a questioning of the PhD students. 40 PhD students have been questioned from different specialities. The results of the survey are described in knowledge and skills, which development level is determined by the descriptive scale. It was important to focus on the mastery of such knowledge by graduate students as: basic terms and definitions; theoretical issues of the subject under study; legal dimension quality assurance of higher education; laws and peculiarities on quality evaluation assessment; official regulations and mechanisms that ensure the quality of programs and certificates in the higher education institution; principles, the revised ESG are based on; the European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance in higher educational institutions; internal (External) monitoring of the quality of higher education in EU countries; the model and criteria for the evaluation of educational programmes. The content of the lessons from the module was aimed at the development of such skills: to identify and analyze the main trends in quality assurance in Europe; to evaluate European context for external quality assurance; to interpret the main principles for QA in Europe; to comment on principles of quality as integrated patterns of quality culture; differences between quality assurance and rankings; to apply different research methods and information technologies in practical situations; to participate in the work of multidisciplinary educational projects. A separate aspect of the survey is the assessment of the satisfaction level of classes content and organization by the PhD students. The training is considered as a tool for professional development, increasing the effectiveness of learning outcomes. The article gives an overview of the steps necessary to improve the quality of project implementation and module learning outcomes.*

**Keywords:** competences; learning outcomes; module; quality assurance; quality assurance in higher education.

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**Introduction.** Ukraine has adopted the National Education Development Strategy to 2021 (2013). The main priority is to identify the need for radical changes aimed at improving the quality and competitiveness of education in Ukraine in the new economic and socio-cultural environment. In particular, Ukraine's participation in the development of the European Higher Education Area highlights the need to modernize the national higher education system and its quality assurance.

The creation of quality assurance system in higher education was preceded by a number of legislative processes, including the adoption of new laws of Ukraine «On Higher Education» (2014), «On Education» (2017), the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine «On the Establishment of the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education» (2015). The Law «On Higher Education» defines the status and authority of the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education. It should be noted that in the countries of Europe, the first official quality assurance agencies began to emerge in the first half of the twentieth century, in particular in France (1934). More actively this process spread among European countries in the second half of the twentieth century (ENQA Agencies Members): in Great Britain (1984), Hungary (1993), Germany (1994), Lithuania (1995), Bulgaria, Spain and Finland (1996), Norway (1998).

Despite the fact that the Law of Ukraine «On Higher Education» envisaged the creation of the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in 2014, the agency started its actual activity only in 2018. According to the legislation, the National Agency took over certain regulatory and controlling functions from the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. The delay in its actual activities affected the development of the quality assurance system in higher education. Taking into account the social significance of the problem of quality assurance in higher education, as well as the efficiency of studying advanced European experience in providing quality assurance in higher education in order to implement it in Ukraine, the module «Higher Education Quality and Its Exercise Support: Ukraine's Movement towards the European Union» was developed. Since September 2017 the module has been implemented in Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University. Module is an action initiated under the Jean Monnet within the Erasmus+ Program (Project number – 587094-EPP-1-2017-1-UA-EPPJMO-MODULE).

The module is aimed at meeting several objectives: to promote excellence in teaching and research in EU studies; to equip students and young professionals with knowledge of European Union subjects relevant for their academic and professional lives and enhance their civic skills. The module is built in terms of European experience of teaching the course «Comparative Studies

in Education», in particular in Poland. It is based on the study and comparative analysis of the agencies for quality assurance, regulatory frameworks (documents of UNESCO, Council of Europe, the EU, the Organization for Economic cooperation and development (OECD), the ministries of education, etc.), concepts and strategies for quality assurance in the leading European countries, educational research and foreign scientists, statistical sources.

The priority target group of the Module has been defined as PhD students who do not automatically come into contact with European Union studies. One of the objectives of the Module is to create conditions for the PhD students to be able to gain: knowledge on the quality assurance in higher education and provide its expert support in the EU member-states, the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, technology of expert support of quality assurance in higher education. For this purpose, 20 lectures (40 hrs.), 20 seminars (40 hrs.), 11 trainings (44 hrs.) were held in April 2019. In addition, PhD students as qualified professionals who have gained higher education, have already had professional experience in various fields. This type of training allows professionals to use the acquired theoretical knowledge and practical skills in their professional education and promote the best EU practices among public.

**Research Problem and Focus.** The problem of quality assurance in higher education in the European scientific space is becoming increasingly relevant. In particular, special attention is paid to the following aspects: management and measurement of quality assurance in higher education institutions (T. Kahvecci, Ö. Uygün, U. Yurtsever, S. Ilyas, Ş. Rezić, V. Majstorović, D. Tomić, J. Kettunen, J. Welsh, S. Dey), assessing quality assurance in higher education (M. Seyfried, P. Pohlenz, G. Anderson), Internal Quality Assurance (M. Martin, J. Brennan, C. Ganseuer, P. Pistor), quality culture (L. Harvey, B. Stensaker, E. Kemenade, M. Pupius, T. Hardjono, O. Vettori, M. Yorke), quality of teaching (C. Teelken, W. Daguang, X. Zuoxu, W. Fan, Q. Yanjie), innovation and quality assurance in higher education (M. Horn, A. Dunagan).

According to the scientists' views (T. Kahvecci, Ö. Uygün, U. Yurtsever, S. Ilyas) quality assurance is an integrated approach covering all the processes in a higher education institution, in order to serve the students and other stakeholders in expected quality standards (2012).

In his research, T. Ryan (2015) determines quality assurance in higher education from two positions: 1) a broad definition that targets one central goal or outcome; 2) specific indicators that reflect desired inputs and outputs.

In «The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency» one of the most important essential prerequisites to quality assurance is that the characteristics of quality that are being sought need to be defined. «These may

be inputs (e.g. entry standards, staff qualifications), processes (cycle time for an enrolment process or time to get feedback from assignments), outputs (completion rates) or outcomes (knowledge and skills acquired, including life-long learning skills)» (Guidance Note: Academic Quality Assurance, 2017, p. 1).

On the other hand, M. Seyfried and P. Pohlenz (2018) state that while researching causal relationships between inputs and outcomes it is necessary to take into account several peculiarities, namely: students' achievement varies not only with the quality of the teaching but also with other sources of variance (the students' aptitude, extra-curricular activities, etc.); the quality assurance results vary according to the stakeholders that define their own understanding of quality; higher education is delivered in a dynamic and changing environment, that complicates the testing some hypotheses empirically.

We agree with the opinion M. Singh and J. Glennie (2000), that quality assurance system, in particular, the system of internal quality assurance, should be based only on the foundations of co-operation, the sharing of information and a common commitment to the best interests of learners and educators in higher education. The higher education institutions have the

main responsibility for the quality of education and its support. As a result, national quality assurance systems respond to organizational and procedural changes in institutional quality assurance policies; support the development of a culture of quality at all levels; focus on the needs of all stakeholders (Sokolova, 2020, p. 107). This opinion is supported by Ukrainian researchers (Aleksandrova, Vinnikova, Chuvassova, 2019), which emphasize that to establish an effective system of internal education quality assurance, it is necessary to involve external stakeholders and focus on their needs (employers, practitioners, scientists, university entrants, parents) (p. 154).

**Methodology of Research.** This paper made use of a small-scale research – a questioning of the PhD students which was aimed at appraisal of PhD students' knowledge level of the educational module and at the study of the degree of their satisfaction with the gained knowledge and skills.

A generalized description of competences and learning outcomes for PhD level within the subject area «Higher education quality and its expert support: Ukraine's movement towards the European Union» was developed. A generalized description of competences for PhD level\* is presented in the Table 1.

Table 1

**Competences for PhD level within the subject «Higher education quality and its expert support: Ukraine's movement towards the European Union»**

<b>GENERIC COMPETENCES</b>	
<b>Competence code</b>	Competence
<b>GC 1</b>	Ability to analyze, evaluate and synthesize new and complex ideas to focus on quality
<b>GC 2</b>	Ability to apply knowledge in practical situations on the basis of critical understanding of the corresponding problems
<b>GC 3</b>	Capacity to generate new ideas (creativity)
<b>GC 4</b>	Ability to search for, process, analyze and use information from a variety of sources
<b>GC 5</b>	Ability to work in a team
<b>SUBJECT SPECIFIC COMPETENCES</b>	
<b>SSC 1</b>	A deep understanding of research paradigms, strategies and procedures in the Quality assurance of higher education
<b>SSC 2</b>	Ability to be involved in collaborative work and interpersonal communication in educational contexts
<b>SSC 3</b>	Ability to understand and apply educational theories and methodology as a basis for general and specific teaching and learning activities
<b>SSC 4</b>	Ability to undertake appropriate educational research in different contexts
<b>SSC 5</b>	Ability to develop, implement of a research project & reflect on the results of one's own work

Learning outcomes for PhD level within the subject area «Higher education quality and its expert support: Ukraine's movement towards the European Union» are described in knowledge and skills.

To fulfil the tasks of the module, we considered it important to focus on the mastery of such knowledge by graduate students:

- Basic terms and definitions: accreditation (institutional, Accreditation survey), assessment, certification, code of practice, criteria, descriptor (Dublin descriptors), indicators (performance), evaluation (external, internal, self-evaluation), licensure/licensing, monitoring, qualification (Qualification Framework), quality in higher education,

\* A generalized description of competences and learning outcomes was developed by project group of Module «Higher Education Quality and Its Expert Support: Ukraine's Movement towards the European Union» within the programme «Erasmus+: Jean Monnet» (Project number – 587094-EPP-1-2017-1-UA-EPPJMO-MODULE).

quality assurance, quality assessment, quality culture, standards, quality management.

- Theoretical issues of the subject under study.
- Legal dimension quality assurance of higher education; laws and peculiarities on quality evaluation assessment; official regulations and mechanisms that ensure the quality of programs and certificates in the higher education institution.
- Principles, the revised ESG are based on.
- The fundamental principles of the quality of the educational programs.
- The European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance in higher educational institutions.
- Internal (External) monitoring of the quality of higher education in EU countries.
- The model and criteria for the evaluation of educational programmes.
- Quality criteria: for assessment of higher education institutions, for assessment of institutions and programmes, for assessment of programmes.

The content of the lessons from the module is aimed at the development of such skills:

- To identify and analyze the main trends in quality assurance in Europe.
- To evaluate European context for external quality assurance.
- To interpret the main principles for QA in Europe.
- To comment on principles of quality as integrated patterns of quality culture; differences between quality assurance and rankings.
- To use knowledge of licensing for critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new complex ideas that are up to date.
- To apply different research methods and information technologies in practical situations.
- To participate in the work of multidisciplinary educational projects.

It should be noted that a generalized description of competences and learning outcomes for PhD level are presented on the official website of the project.

40 PhD students (22 women and 18 man) have been questioned from different specialties: Science Education; Pre-school education; Fine Arts, Decorative Arts, Restoration; Musical Art; Religion; History and Archeology; Philosophy; Philology; Social Work. The results of the survey are described in knowledge and skills, which development level is determined by the descriptive scale. A separate aspect of the survey is the assessment of the satisfaction level of classes' content and organization by the postgraduates.

Descriptors:

2 – the acquired knowledge corresponds to my expectations and professional interests, skills are formed on the basic level; completely satisfied with the classes content and organization.

1 – the knowledge acquired partly corresponds to my expectations and professional interests; some skills

are formed at the basic level; partially satisfied with the classes content and organization.

0 – it is difficult to estimate the level of the existing knowledge and skills. It is difficult to assess the classes' content and organization.

**Results and Discussion.** The study results show that 5% of postgraduates is difficult to assess the level of their skills; identifier and analyze main trends in quality assurance in Europe, and interpret the main principles for QA in Europe. Also they met difficulties in providing different research methods and information technologies in practical situations, and comment on principles of quality as integrated patterns of quality culture; differences between quality assurance and rankings. The general results of the survey are presented in Table 2.

These gaps were taken into account during the series of trainings (44 hrs.) in 2018–2019.

The topics of trainings are presented in the Table 3. The trainings are held in order to consolidate the knowledge of future PhD on quality assurance in higher education and its expert support in the EU member-states, and for the acquiring technology of expert support of quality assurance in higher education by future PhDs.

We understand training as a tool for professional development, efficiency increase, and knowledge areas expansion. At the trainings, active methods and forms of training were used, among which: the verbal journal, PFEC formula, situational research, individual research, role-plays, the methodical theatre.

At the trainings we used various learning tools, including: graphics (drawings, charts, maps, presentations); technical (audio and video recordings); educational materials; PC, SMART-boards and the Internet. The use of different learning tools enables easier assimilation of theoretical and practical information by future PhDs and disseminates information outside the defined audience (Sysoieva, Osadcha, 2020, p. 272). Besides, a website of the project filled with such information, which in turn, opens unlimited opportunities to expand audience via the Internet, as well as to promote the EU experience for public.

#### **Conclusions and prospects for further research.**

In the process of research, we came to the following conclusions:

1. The effectiveness of the project implementation depends on the compliance of the chosen problem with the actual needs of the country in which such a project, in this case, Ukraine, will be implemented.
2. There is an urgent need for a constant expansion of the audience, which will promote the project issues and its results.
3. It is worth organizing periodic experience exchange meetings for participants from all EU countries of Erasmus+ Program (Jean Monnet Activities).
4. We consider it necessary to the implementation of practice-oriented forms of education. We are talking

Table 2

## Survey Results

№	A GENERALISED DESCRIPTION OF LEARNING OUTCOMES	DESCRIPTIONS		
		2	1	0
		% (number) of respondents		
1.	<b>To define:</b> basic terms and definitions	75% (30)	25% (10)	
	<b>To Know/Understand:</b>			
2.	Theoretical issues of the subject under study	70% (28)	30% (12)	
3.	Legal dimension quality assurance of higher education	85% (34)	15% (6)	
4.	Principles, the revised ESG are based on	75% (30)	25% (10)	
5.	The fundamental principles of the quality of the educational programs	85% (34)	15% (6)	
6.	The European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance in higher educational institutions	60% (24)	40% (16)	
7.	Internal (External) monitoring of the quality of higher education in EU countries	65% (26)	35% (14)	
8.	The model and criteria for the evaluation of educational programs	55% (22)	45% (18)	
9.	Quality criteria: for assessment of higher education institutions, for assessment of institutions and programs, for assessment of programs	65% (26)	35% (14)	
	<b>Be able to:</b>			
10	To identify and analyze the main trends in quality assurance in Europe	55% (22)	40% (16)	5% (2)
11	To evaluate European context for external quality assurance	70% (28)	30% (12)	
12	To interpret the main principles for QA in Europe	85% (34)	10% (4)	5% (2)
13	To comment on principles of quality as integrated patterns of quality culture; differences between quality assurance and rankings	50% (20)	50% (20)	
14	To use knowledge of licensing for critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new complex ideas that are up to date	60% (24)	40% (16)	
15	To apply different research methods and information technologies in practical situations	50% (20)	50% (20)	
16	To participate in the work of multidisciplinary educational projects	70% (28)	30% (12)	

Table 3

## Training Topics

№	Topics
1.	Guidelines for quality assurance in higher education: the experience of the EU
2.	Criteria and performance efficiency indicators of the education experts on quality assurance in the EU
3.	Methods and technologies of expert support to higher education quality assurance in the EU
4.	Accreditation procedure: the EU experience
5.	Expert accreditation activities
6.	Education quality indicators in the EU
7.	Expertise of training programs
8.	Expertise of innovation to ensure the quality assurance in higher education in the EU
9.	Methodology of Comparative Studies. Settings examination of educational systems, phenomena and processes
10.	Code of Ethics expert in the field of education
11.	Activities of Quality Assurance Agencies of Higher Education in the EU countries

about the speeches of graduate students among students, teaching audience, etc. This will contribute to the dissemination of knowledge that graduate students have received.

5. Among the forms of work within the framework of the project, more attention should be paid to distant forms (webinars, online conferences, online counseling, etc.), since, due to professional and other types of

employment, project participants are not always able to attend on-the-spot events.

6. It is worth noting that non-systematic attendance by participants significantly complicates the diagnosis and evaluation of their modulus learning outcomes.

In the context of the identified problem, it is necessary to further study the issue of new forms of work within the framework of the project.

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## РЕЗУЛЬТАТИ НАВЧАННЯ МОДУЛЮ JEAN MONNET: ДОСВІД В УКРАЇНІ. КРОКИ ДЛЯ ПОЛІПШЕННЯ ЯКОСТІ

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У статті представлені діагностичні та аналітичні результати дослідження результатів навчання на рівні кандидата наук (PhD) у рамках модулю «Якість вищої освіти та її експертна підтримка: рух України до Європейського Союзу» в Київському університеті імені Бориса Грінченка. Розроблено узагальнений опис компетентностей та результатів навчання для аспірантів. Результати опитування описуються в знаннях та навичках, рівень розвитку яких визначається описовою шкалою. Важливо було зосередитись на оволодінні аспірантами такими знаннями, як: основні терміни та визначення; теоретичні питання досліджуваного предмета; правовий вимір забезпечення якості вищої освіти; закони та особливості оцінки якості освіти; офіційні положення та механізми, що забезпечують якість програм у закладі вищої освіти; принципи, на яких базується ESG; європейські стандарти та керівні принципи внутрішнього забезпечення якості в закладах вищої освіти; внутрішній і зовнішній моніторинг якості вищої освіти в країнах ЄС; модель та критерії оцінювання освітніх програм. Зміст занять модуля був спрямований на розвиток таких навичок: виявити та проаналізувати основні тенденції забезпечення якості в Європі; оцінити європейський контекст зовнішнього забезпечення якості; інтерпретувати основні принципи забезпечення якості в Європі; коментувати принципи якості як інтегровані зразки культури якості; пояснити відмінність між забезпеченням якості та рейтингами; застосовувати різні методи дослідження та інформаційні технології в практичних ситуаціях; брати участь у роботі міждисциплінарних освітніх проєктів. Окремим аспектом опитування є оцінка аспірантами рівня задоволеності змістом та організацією занять.

**Ключові слова:** забезпечення якості; забезпечення якості вищої освіти; компетентності; модуль; результати навчання.

## РЕЗУЛЬТАТЫ ОБУЧЕНИЯ МОДУЛЯ JEAN MONNET: ОПЫТ В УКРАИНЕ. ШАГИ ДЛЯ УЛУЧШЕНИЯ КАЧЕСТВА

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*В статье представлены диагностические и аналитические результаты исследования результатов обучения на уровне кандидата наук (PhD) в рамках модуля «Качество высшего образования и ее экспертная поддержка: движение Украины в Европейский Союз» в Киевском университете имени Бориса Гринченко. Разработано обобщенное описание компетенций и результатов обучения для аспирантов. Результаты опроса описываются в знаниях и навыках, уровень развития которых определяется описательной шкалой. Важно было сосредоточиться на овладении аспирантами такими знаниями, как: основные термины и определения; теоретические вопросы изучаемого предмета; правовое измерение качества высшего образования; законы и особенности оценки качества образования; официальные положения и механизмы, обеспечивающие качество программ в высшем учебном заведении; принципы, на которых базируется ESG; европейские стандарты и руководящие принципы внутреннего обеспечения качества в высшем учебном заведении; внутренний и внешний мониторинг качества высшего образования в странах ЕС; модель и критерии оценки образовательных программ. Содержание занятий модуля было направлено на развитие таких навыков: выявить и проанализировать основные тенденции качества образования в Европе; оценить европейский контекст обеспечения качества; интерпретировать основные принципы обеспечения качества образования в Европе, комментировать принципы качества как интегрированные образцы культуры качества; объяснить различие между обеспечением качества и рейтингами; применять различные методы исследования и информационные технологии в практических ситуациях; участвовать в работе междисциплинарных образовательных проектов. Отдельным аспектом опроса является оценка аспирантами уровня удовлетворенности содержанием и организацией занятий.*

**Ключевые слова:** компетентности; модуль; обеспечение качества; обеспечение качества высшего образования; результаты обучения.

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