

## SUMMARY

### **of the Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance and Career Development expert's report on the institutional audit results conducted in Volzhsky University named after V.N. Tatischev.**

1. The mission of AQA is to support independently on a regular basis Russian public and non-public higher education institutions in the development of educational quality to meet the best national and international quality assurance practices and standards. The Agency contributes to the increase of quality awareness among higher education stakeholders and stimulates the competitiveness of Russian higher education institutions on the international scale. To this end, the Agency carries out audits of the academic performance of higher educational institutions.

2. The audit procedure is worked out by the AQA in accordance with the standards set up by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). The procedure complies with the requirements applied to the complex evaluation of a HEI<sup>1</sup>. The objectives of the AQA academic audit are:

- to contribute to the promotion of high quality in education;
- to ensure that students, employers and other interested parties can have readily access to easily understood, reliable and meaningful information about the extent to which the programs of study, awards and qualifications offered by the institution meet national expectations in respect of academic standards and quality;
- to ensure that if the quality of programs or the standards of awards are found not to be in compliance with the norms set, the Agency immediately forms recommendations to the HEI for ensuring rapid action to improve the programs and standards and supervises the improvement process;
- to secure accountability for the use of funds gathered from different sources and received by institutions.

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<sup>1</sup> Guidance materials on academic audit of higher educational institutions to assure educational quality and its implementation.- M.: AQA, 2006. – 34p;

Higher educational quality assurance standards and guidance. - M.: AQA, 2006. - 25 p.;

Rules and regulations on higher education quality assurance and standards. - M.: AQA, 2006. - 11 p.

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3. The academic audit is carried out by a group of experts of equal status who assess methods used by a HEI to assure the quality of education and the level of standards. Due to the fact that the quality of education shows the effectiveness of educational opportunities available for students to help the latter in doing a full course of studies and getting a degree, the approval of the quality of education means that the teaching process, academic support, student academic performance assessment and other educational opportunities fully comply with the anticipated aims.

4. The academic audit consists of the following stages: AQA representatives' and experts' fact finding, preliminary visit to an HEI; AQA experts' analysis of the HEI documentation on internal quality assurance; AQA experts' working visit to carry out the academic audit; reporting and the publication of a final statement containing the received information and data, experts' decisions and recommendations.

5. On the academic audit completion experts:

- make a statement on the HEI's effective management of the quality of academic programs, the level of the awarded qualifications and the HEI's ability to keep the tendency in the near future;
- make a statement on the level of accuracy, integrity, completeness, and openness of the data published by the HEI regarding the quality of academic programs and the level of standards of the awarded qualifications;
- ensure that the HEI provides the anticipated quality of higher education and the level of standards of the awarded qualifications;
- confirm that the HEI implements its Mission;
- confirms that the HEI leads its academic activity and implements programs in accordance with the current legislation;
- confirm that the HEI carries out its obligations properly and issues educational documentation of the appropriate type;
- give the Supreme Advisory Council of the Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance and Career Development recommendations on issuing the HEI an AQA Education Quality Assurance Certificate.

6. The academic audit was carried out by the Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance and Career Development (AQA) at an autonomous non-profit higher educational institution (ANPHEI): Volzhskiy Tatishchev University (institute) (hereinafter referred to as the institute, VTU) in December 2007. The aim of the audit was to provide the information about the extent to which the programs of study, awards and qualifications offered by the institution meet national expectations in respect to academic standards and quality.

7. ANPHEI: Volzhskiy Tatishchev University (institute) was founded on September 12, 1995 as a non-governmental educational institution Volzhskiy Tatishchev University and is an institute in its organizational and legal form. In 2002 the institute was renamed into Autonomous Non-Profit Institution (ANPI) Non-Profit Educational Institution (NPEI) Volzhskiy Tatishchev University (institute); in 2004 – ANPEI Volzhskiy Tatishchev University (institute); in 2008 – ANPHEI Volzhskiy Tatishchev University (institute). The address of the institute is: ul. Leningradskaya, Tolyatti, Samarskaya oblastj, 445020.

8. The institute is a non-governmental educational institution of higher professional education. It provides academic programs for secondary, higher, and additional professional education in accordance with the current legislation:

The Law of the RF “On Education” amended on July 6, 2006 № 104-FL; The Law of the RF “On Higher and Post-Graduate Professional Education” amended on July 18, 2006 № 113-FL; Model regulations on a higher professional educational institution (higher educational institution) confirmed by the resolution of the RF Government on June 26, 1993; The Institute Charter with the amendments registered by the inspectorate of the Federal Tax Service of the Russian Federation of the Tolyatti Central district; The License (registration number № 5171, series A 169275, valid up to October 6, 2010) issued by the Federal Service for Supervision in Education and Science of the Russian Federation on July 6, 2005 giving the right to provide educational services in higher, secondary, postgraduate, and additional education; Certificates on the state accreditation of the Federal Service for Supervision in Education and Science of the Russian Federation of July 20, 2005, registration number № 2048, valid up to July 20, 2008; specialty state educational standards for higher professional education stated in the license.

9. In accordance with the current license VTU runs 14 educational programs of higher professional education: 16 – educational programs of secondary professional education, 8 programs of additional professional education, 9 programs of postgraduate education. The institute has the right to issue educational documentation of the state type to graduates who have proved the completion of an academic program at the final state examination.

10. There are 313 lecturers in the institute that run the educational programs for higher professional education. 206 teachers (65,81%) have an academic degree or title, 45 lecturers (14,38%) are Doctors of Science or Professors, 161 members of staff (51,44%) are PhDs and/or associate professors. There were 5761 students on October 1, 2007: basic educational programs of higher professional education – 5275 students (2916 full time students, 150 people doing full time – correspondence studies, 2209 students at correspondence courses); educational programs

of postgraduate professional education – 85 students (52 full time students and 33 students at correspondence courses); educational programs for additional education – 311 students.

11. Currently VTU has 1 college and 7 departments (Law Department<sup>2</sup> (4); Economics Department (6); Humanitarian Department (5); Informatics and Telecommunication Department (4); Ecology Department (3); The Department of Social Technologies (1) and Continuous Education). The institute does not have any branches. The structure of the HEI assures effective organization and realization of the educational and pedagogical process, scientific and methodological work.

12. The institute together with lecturers, its students and staff carry out research in 16 directions. The institute has prepared 4615 specialists in various areas since its foundation.

13. The Mission of VTU, as the institution states, is to provide the necessary conditions for the realization of one of the basic rights of Russian citizens – the right to education, to prepare highly qualified specialists meeting the requirements of the society. The institution considers education as a means for personal development and emphasizes the close connection of the aims of education with the requirements of the labor market. The strategic aims of VTU are:

- to assure its growth as a federal and district educational, scientific, cultural, and new technologies center;
- to meet an individual's needs in intellectual, cultural, and moral development by means of higher education;
- to meet the needs of the society and the state in qualified specialists with higher education and in highly qualified staff leading scientific and pedagogical activity;
- to train, retrain and provide advanced training for specialists, highly qualified staff involved into management, scientific and pedagogical activity;
- to carry out fundamental and applied scientific research, consulting activity;
- to develop creative activity of the teaching staff and students, to carry out fundamental and applied scientific research, to apply the received results in the educational process;
- to establish, maintain, and actively develop mutually beneficial contacts with foreign educational institutions and international organizations;
- to educate the society and increase its educational and cultural level;
- to form a sense of pride in citizenship in students, to accumulate, keep, and increase moral, cultural, and scientific values;
- to guarantee thorough care of students' health, physical education and development.

14. The Mission of the institute is based on the idea of providing and maintaining high quality of teaching and learning; widening national and international scientific cooperation; improving the

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<sup>2</sup> The figure given in the brackets corresponds to the number of chairs at the department.

institute infrastructure; diversification and profit increase including investment attraction; increasing the role and recognition of the institute in the region; widening international contacts; improving the management system of the HEI.

15. The institute submitted the following documentation to the AQA:

- documentation on the institute inner check (statement on VTU self-examination);
- documentation on the inner check of 5 educational programs selected for the academic audit (statements on the results of specialty self-examination).

16. During their preliminary and working visits to the institute the AQA experts were given access to the internal documentation. There was documentation on the structure of the institute management, its strategies and policies, staff selection and advanced training, student support. The experts also studied statements on the quality of teaching, educational services, information on the organization of the educational process, corporate publications, and were given additional documentation on the examination of separate disciplines.

17. The fact finding preliminary visit to the institute was in June 2007. Questions on the internal examination of the institute and student streaming were discussed. Documentation on internal evaluation at the preparation stage of the academic audit is the main source of information about the institute for the AQA and is the grounds for the evaluation of the methods applied by the HEI to assure program quality and standard level. The institute doesn't have to issue a separate document and can submit to the Agency any documentation on its recent inner examinations under the condition that this documentation contains all the information necessary for the academic audit. The AQA and the institute agreed that 5 educational programs of higher professional education were to be evaluated: 030501 Jurisprudence; 080109 Business Accounting, Analysis and Audit; 080507 Enterprise Management; 080111 Marketing; 230201 Information Systems and Technologies. In October 2007 the AQA got the documentation on the inner examination (see section 11), the description of the above mentioned programs, as well as the documentation which the institute considers to be important for better understanding of the actual state of affairs.

18. The preliminary visit took place in November 2007. During the visit questions that occurred when analyzing the documentation on the inner examination and other documentation submitted by the institute were discussed by the experts together with the institute administration, staff representatives, and students. The results of the discussions allowed the AQA and the institute to approve of the examined programs, evaluate the volume of the anticipated work, and to set the principles of cooperation between the AQA, its experts, and the HEI. The institute confirmed the

list of specialties and students chosen for the examination. The AQA representative met with students' representatives and gave instructions on the rules of providing information to the AQA. At the end of its visit the AQA submitted the program of the academic audit to the institute and asked for a number of additional documentation.

19. The working visit of experts to VTU took place in December 2007. During the visit the experts met lecturers and students within the framework of the academic audit as well as the academic audit of separate programs. The experts are thankful to everyone who found time to discuss questions connected with the quality of education management and the level of educational standards in the institute.

20. On the basis of the data and information received as a result of the academic audit carried out at Volzhskiy Tatishchev University (institute), the experts came to the conclusion that:

- the institute has the structure that allows it to provide the stated quality of education; it has worked out and applies the procedures that assure the quality of education, its stability and improvement, guarantee the compliance with the standards of diploma issuing and qualification awarding;
- the institute controls the quality of education on the HEI level as well as on the level of separate programs; the institute is capable of detecting any situations threatening the quality of a program, taking precautions, and making corrections;
- in the near future the institute can guarantee and maintain the quality of education, comply with the standards of awarding qualifications;
- the information published by the institute on the quality of the academic programs and the level of standards of the awarded qualifications is full, precise, and true.

21. On the basis of the above mentioned statement the experts are sure that:

- VTU successfully manages the quality of academic programs and the level of standards of the awarded qualifications and will be able to continue to do it in the near future;
- the information published by VTU on the quality of the academic programs and the level of standards of the awarded qualifications is full, precise, and true.

22. On the basis of the above mentioned statement the experts confirm that VTU provides the stated quality of higher education.

23. On the basis of the above mentioned statement the experts confirm that VTU provides the necessary conditions for the realization of one of the basic rights of Russian citizens – the right to education; considers education as a means for personal growth, an individual's self-realization in practical activities and studies; tightly connects the aims of education with the requirements of

the labor market; prepares highly qualified specialists capable of contributing to the economy and the life of the society, thus implementing its Mission.

24. On the basis of the above mentioned statement the experts confirm that VTU:

- leads its academic activity and implements programs of higher and additional professional education in accordance with the current legislation;
- carries out its obligations properly and issues educational documentation of the appropriate type.

25. On the basis of the above said the experts recommend the Advisory Council of the Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance and Career Development to issue Volzhskiy Tatishchev University (institute) an AQA certificate.