

Federal State Budgetary Institution  
“National Accreditation Agency”  
(FSBI “NAA”)

## **Self-evaluation report**

Moscow  
2016

## Table of Contents

<b>I. Underlying rationale for undergoing self-evaluation</b> .....	3
<b>II. Federal State Budgetary Institution “National Accreditation Agency” in the system of higher education of Russia</b> .....	4
Changes occurred in NAA’s activity in 2015-2016 .....	7
SWOT-analysis of NAA’s activity in the current context.....	19
<b>III. Analysis of NAA’s activities against the criteria assessed as “partial compliance” and “non-compliance”</b> .....	27
<b>IV. Conclusion</b> .....	37

## **I. Underlying rationale for undergoing self-evaluation**

In accordance with the requirements of the Bologna Declaration organizations responsible for quality assurance of higher education should undergo periodic external evaluation of their own activities. The European Council conferred the responsibility for carrying out this procedure on the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

European requirements to national quality assurance systems of higher education are formulated in the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG) developed by ENQA.

In September 2014 the Federal State Budgetary Institution “National Accreditation Agency” (hereinafter - NAA) underwent a periodic external review to confirm its compliance with the ENQA full membership criteria.

On March 6, 2015 the ENQA Board made a decision to designate NAA as a full member “under review” for a period of two years with the need to undergo a new (partial) review procedure.

In June 2016 NAA decided to conduct self-evaluation and to undergo a partial external review of ENQA. This initiative was agreed upon with the founder - the Federal Service for Supervision in Education and Science (hereinafter - Rosobrnadzor).

The self-evaluation procedure is aimed at establishing the compliance of NAA’s activities with the ENQA criteria and ESG standards that are necessary for renewal of the ENQA full membership.

## **II. Federal State Budgetary Institution “National Accreditation Agency” in the system of higher education of Russia**

One of the quality assurance mechanisms in the Russian Federation is state accreditation of educational activities. According to the legislation state accreditation is aimed at confirming the compliance of educational activities on basic study programs and students’ training in educational organizations with the federal state educational standards. The Federal State Educational Standards (FSES) specify the requirements to fields of training, professional activity of graduates who have mastered the program, student learning outcomes, program structure, terms of the program delivery (system-wide requirements, staffing, logistical and methodological support of the program, financial provision of the program).

State accreditation is declarative in nature and serves to ensure the confidence of the consumer of educational services and the state in educational activities of the accredited educational institution. Moreover, with the help of state accreditation of educational institutions the state creates a single system for evaluation of conditions, content and results of their activities mandatory for both state and non-state educational institutions.

Successful completion of the state accreditation procedure indicates that the educational organization has reached an appropriate level of development and has well-established mechanisms to continuously enhance the quality of educational activities.

The main principles of state accreditation are:

- objectivity;
- responsibility of experts and (or) expert organizations for the conduct and quality of external review;
- competence and independence of experts and (or) representatives of expert organizations;
- information transparency and accessibility of state accreditation;

The subject-matter of external review is to determine the compliance of the content and quality of students’ training on the study programs declared by an educational organization for state accreditation with the federal state educational standards.

The model of state accreditation is presented in Annex 1.

In accordance with its Statutes, NAA is an organization authorized to carry out the procedure of state accreditation.

The main directions of NAA's activity are the following:

- organizational, technical, information and analytical support of the external review procedure in terms of the compliance of the content and quality of students' training on study programs declared for state accreditation with the federal state educational standards;

- organizational, technical, information and analytical support of the procedure of certification of experts and (or) expert organizations for conducting external review; certification of experts and (or) expert organizations for carrying out external review of educational activities;

- organizational and technical support of the collection, processing and accumulation of accounting and (or) other documented information in relation to educational organizations involved in licensing and state accreditation of educational activities;

- preparation of draft methodological and other documents on analysis of the content and quality of students' training in organizations engaged in educational activities;

- monitoring studies in the education system of the Russian Federation;

- organizational and technical support in forming and maintaining the information resources related to the execution of Rosobrnadzor's powers, including the maintenance of the complex information system of state accreditation;

- organizational and technical support in maintaining the registers and databases administered by Rosobrnadzor, including the Register of accredited educational and research organizations, the Register of certified experts and expert organizations;

- provision of the information support to educational and research organizations, certified experts and expert organizations on issues of state accreditation

of educational activities, content of study programs, organization of the educational process and management in the sphere of education;

- enhancement of the external review procedure of the quality of NAA's activities by way of:

- constant professional development of the staff as well as experts and representatives of expert organizations involved in external reviews;

- enhancement and development of the base complex for resources' provision of NAA's operation;

- study of other quality assurance agencies' practice;

- enhancement of the structure and corporate culture of NAA;

- participation in international cooperation in the sphere of education.

## **Changes occurred in NAA's activity in 2015-2016**

In 2015 - 2016 a number of normative and legal acts have been amended and updated, which resulted in a corresponding change of the state accreditation procedure.

The Federal Law of December 31, 2014 № 500-FL “On introducing the amendments to certain legislative acts of the Russian Federation”, which entered into force on 11.01.2015, brought forward the amendments into several provisions of the Federal Law “On Education in the Russian Federation” № 273-FL of 29.12.2012 regulating the issues of carrying out state accreditation of educational activities and the procedure of external review.

One of the amendments provides that during state accreditation of educational activities on basic professional study programs, an educational organization shall submit all currently delivered basic professional study programs that refer to the same integrated group of professions, specialties and fields of training (Part 8 of Article 92 of the Law “On Education in the Russian Federation”) regardless of the presence or absence of students completing their studies in the current academic year.

The Federal Law on introducing the amendments made it possible for an accreditation body to take the decision on state accreditation (or refusal of state accreditation), suspension of state accreditation, renewal of state accreditation or withdrawal of state accreditation with the participation of a collegial board of the accreditation body.

In 2015 the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of 06.07.2015 № 667 “On approval of the data forms on delivering study programs declared for state accreditation” approved the data forms on delivering study programs declared for state accreditation. In accordance with Paragraph 6 of the Regulations on State Accreditation of Educational Activities approved by the RF Government Decree of 18.11.2013 № 1039, state accreditation shall be carried out based on the application for state accreditation with the attached documents and the data on delivery of study programs under state accreditation submitted by an educational organization.

The data shall be submitted separately for each study program declared for state accreditation by educational and research organizations. The data are presented both on print and on electronic media for ease of use when organizing and conducting external review.

The head of an educational organization bears the responsibility for the accuracy of the information in the submitted data. The availability of inaccurate information in the documents submitted by the educational organization shall be the ground for refusal of state accreditation (Part 23 of Article 92 of the Federal Law of 29.12.2012 № 273-FL “On Education in the Russian Federation”).

Since 2015 NAA has been working on the analysis of the data provided by educational organizations for drawing up of an external review assignment: comparison of the data provided by educational organizations for state accreditation of educational activities with the information posted on official websites of organizations in order to draw up an expert’s assignment; verification of the information, contained in the documents submitted by an educational organization for state accreditation.

The verification procedure deals with the materials and documents submitted by educational organizations with the application on state accreditation. During 2016 NAA’s branch in Yoshkar-Ola prepared information and analytical materials for more than 1000 study programs of higher education (bachelor's, master's and specialist) and secondary vocational education and training.

Starting from September 2016 NAA has been engaged in preparation of the information and analytical materials based on the compliance of “the data on study programs, declared for state accreditation of educational activities” with the federal state educational standards.

On September 9, 2015 the Government of the Russian Federation issued the Decree № 953 “On introducing amendments to the Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of November 18, 2013 № 1039 “On state accreditation of educational activities” (entered into force on September 22, 2015). The amendments were made with due consideration of the provisions of the Federal Law on introducing amendments (500-FL).

This decree of the Government of the Russian Federation has changed the criteria for carrying out external review, identified the types of organizations engaged in educational activities for which the procedure of external review is conducted without a site visit to such an organization.

In addition, during external review of an educational organization or its branch conducted without a site visit, the documents and materials requested by the accreditation body are submitted in the form of an electronic document, certified by a digital signature under the stator procedure of the Russian Federation.

During external review with a site visit (without a site visit) to an educational organization or its branch the documents and materials requested by an expert panel (accreditation body) are submitted by the educational organization for the period corresponding to the duration of the studies on the program.

When carrying out external review of the study programs delivered by the educational organizations, which have no students completing their studies in the current academic year, the documents and materials requested by the expert panel (accreditation body) are submitted by the educational organization for the period of the study program delivery.

The decree also enhances the grounds for renewal of the certificate:

- In case of the reorganization of an educational organization by joining another educational organization, a certificate on study programs previously delivered by both reorganized organizations accredited by the state is reissued for the period until the accreditation expiry date of the reorganized organization.

- In case of the establishment of an educational organization as a result of reorganization by virtue of merger, a certificate of state accreditation for state accredited study programs previously delivered by reorganized organizations is reissued for the period until the end of the validity period of the certificate of the reorganized educational organization which expires earlier.

- In case the codes and titles of the integrated groups of professions, specialties and fields of training of professional education specified in the annex to the state accreditation certificate are changed, and if it is identified by the Russian Ministry of Education and

Science that certain professions, specialties and fields of training correspond to the professions, specialties and fields of training referred to in the previous lists of professions, specialties and fields of training.

Starting from 2014 in order to bring the FSES in line with the provisions of the Federal Law of 29.12.2012, № 273-FL “On Education in the Russian Federation” the FSES were amended. In particular, educational organizations of higher education should provide conditions to ensure access to education for disabled persons, as well as, in its sole discretion, to include on-line modes of learning, e-learning and distance education technologies, fundamental departments in the educational process. Up-dated federal state educational standards give educational organizations more freedom in shaping the content of the basic study program and selection of the technologies to be applied. Now these standards include system-wide indicators that characterize the organization of the educational process in organizations engaged in educational activities.

In 2015 new FSES for basic professional study programs of higher education - programs for training highly qualified staff were gradually coming into force.

In accordance with the amendments introduced into the legislation methodological recommendations for external review have been finalized.

In order to develop mechanisms for independent evaluation of the quality of students’ training on basic study programs NAA worked out common external test materials for testing core competences. This technology was tried out in 2016.

The experiment was aimed at optimizing the criteria for evaluation of students’ training on general cultural competences when carrying out external review of study programs by using the common external test materials that have passed the review procedure.

Test materials on these competences were prepared based on the disciplines “Philosophy”, “History of Russia”, “Economics”, “Science of Law” and “the Russian Language”. These materials were designed to assess student learning outcomes “to know” (facts, concepts, methods, rules, laws, etc.) at a minimum (threshold) level of competences’ formation.

The experiment was conducted in 9 HEIs on 46 fields of bachelor's training. Testing was carried out in 133 student groups, 3545 results were obtained.

NAA is engaged in monitoring official websites of educational organizations in execution of the requirements of the Russian Government Decree of 10.07.2013 № 582 "On approval of the Rules for publishing and updating of the information about an educational organization on its official website in the information and telecommunication network "Internet" and of the order of Rosobrnadzor of 29.05.2014 № 785 "On approval of requirements to the structure of the official website of an educational organization in the information and telecommunication network "Internet" and to the format of the information posted on it". The monitoring is carried out in order to enhance the objectivity of the state accreditation procedure and to analyze the information transparency of educational organizations.

Comparison of the monitoring results in different periods allows for the conclusion that the role of official websites of educational organizations has increased and that educational organizations have exerted much efforts for ensuring their information transparency. At the time of the first monitoring in May-June 2014 the average completeness of the special section "Information about the educational organization" constituted 26.3%; the percentage of educational organizations that didn't have websites and/or a special section was 16.3%; in December 2015 the average content-richness of websites amounted to 91.0% and only 10.7% of educational organizations didn't have a special section, whereas in October 2016 - 96.0% and 4.5% respectively.

During the reporting period, NAA participated in two projects of the Federal Target Program on Education Development.

The project on the improvement of the models for review and consideration of the information on professional public and public accreditation during state accreditation was aimed at the development of the concept and model for review and consideration of the information on professional public and public accreditation during state accreditation. The model was tested, recommendations for its use were worked out including the proposals to be introduced in the legal framework.

Within the project initiated to enhance and introduce the models of external review and decision-making on state accreditation of educational activities based on the methodology for the analysis of documents and materials, including the data on professional public accreditation posted by the educational organization on its official website in the Internet, the model of external review and decision-making on state accreditation of educational activities was further developed and improved.

The amendments in the legislation, which made it possible for educational organizations to declare basic professional study programs for state accreditation at any stage of their delivery have led to an increase in the work volume.

During 2015, 1350 applications for state accreditation of educational activities, reissuance of state accreditation certificates, issuance of a temporary certificate of state accreditation were submitted by educational organizations, including 907 applications for state accreditation and accreditation of previously not accredited study programs delivered by organizations carrying out educational activities.

NAA was engaged in preparation and support of 751 external reviews. Among them 698 were conducted with a site visit to an educational organization and 53 - without a site visit. External reviews were carried out not only by certified experts, but also by the certified expert organization “The Medical League of Russia”, which conducted 12 external reviews on medical study programs.

According to the results of external reviews in 2015, 6235 reports and conclusions on 13656 (in 2014 – 9181) basic study programs delivered by 1059 educational organizations were processed, including 4703 Bachelor’s programs, 3369 Specialist programs, 1885 Masters’ programs, 1499 postgraduate programs, 814 internship programs, 1257 sVET programs and 129 basic programs of general education.

Within the framework of experts’ certification NAA organized 17 Accreditation Commission meetings, 2040 applications were reviewed, including the applications on the establishment of the powers as an expert – 1631 candidates, on refusal to grant the powers as an expert – 409 candidates and 58 experts applied for withdrawal of their expert authority.

Today the Register of certified experts includes 4 international experts.

Four applications submitted by the representatives from the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Armenia and the Great Britain are currently under review.

In 2016 two organizations were granted the powers as expert organizations in external review of educational activities:

- Association of communities and organizations engaged in the development and implementation of methodologies and standards for quality management and evaluation of study programs in business and management education “National Accreditation Council of Business and Management Education” (Association of communities and organizations “NASDOBR”);

- All-Russian non-governmental organization “Russian Union of Youth», it will allow involving students in the state accreditation procedure.

In order to perform the above mentioned activity on the support of state accreditation procedures NAA’s staff includes 112 employees. In 2016, NAA underwent the restructuring of the organization to optimize the efficiency of its operation. The newly established Expert Relations Department is responsible for the selection of expert candidates, organizational and technical support of the Accreditation Commission in establishing the powers of a natural person as an expert and legal entities as expert organizations for carrying out external reviews, educating about qualification requirements for experts and expert organizations as well as maintaining the Register of certified experts and expert organizations.

In 2015 following the plan for conducting training seminars and webinars, NAA held 7 training seminars and 9 webinars for Rosobrnadzor’s experts and educational organizations. 2519 people participated in training including 1132 experts of Rosobrnadzor. The seminars were organized in the regions of the Russian Federation (St. Petersburg, Rostov-on-Don, Moscow, Yakutsk, Magas, Novosibirsk).

In 2016 NAA conducted 20 seminars:

- 4 seminars on “State accreditation of educational activities” (in Irkutsk, Rostov-on-Don, Voronezh, Tomsk) devoted to the issues of design and external review of assessment materials, assessment of students’ professional competences, the role of employers in the development and implementation of study programs, the design and

operation of the electronic information educational environment of an educational organization.

- 4 seminars for the experts of the Medical League of Russia, representatives of educational organizations of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, experts of “NASDOBR”, certified experts of Rosobrnadzor in Grozny.

- 12 practice-oriented seminars in Moscow on the topics: “Publication of the information on official websites of the educational and research organizations. Personal Account of the organization”; “The requirements to a set of documents submitted by an educational organization for state accreditation”; “The requirements to the application for state accreditation and the attached documents”; “Preparation of educational and research organizations for state accreditation of programs on training of highly qualified staff”.

NAA conducted 7 webinars for representatives of educational and research organizations on the topics: “On undergoing state accreditation of educational activities on study programs of higher education - programs of training of highly qualified staff, implemented by scientific organizations under the Federal Agency for Scientific Organizations (FASO)”; “Publication of the information on official websites of the educational and research organizations. Personal Account of the organization”; “The requirements to a set of documents submitted by an educational organization for state accreditation”; “The requirements to the structure of the official website of an educational organization in the information and telecommunication network "Internet" and to the format of the information posted on it with due consideration of the statutory compliance in the field of education”; “How to become an expert”.

Every week on Fridays NAA organized webinars (Skype-meetings) for the experts going to external reviews.

NAA’s staff members are actively involved in the events held by various executive authorities: the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, the Federal Agency for Scientific Organizations (FASO) and others.

In order to enhance the quality of its operation NAA organizes training events for its staff members on a regular basis.

In the framework of NAA's international activity in April 2015 NAA organized an International scientific and practical conference "Quality assurance of professional education: national and international best practices" dedicated to the 20th anniversary of NAA's activity. The conference was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, Federal Service for Supervision in Education and Science, accreditation agencies from Austria, Armenia, Spain, China, Kazakhstan, Norway, Estonia, as well as representatives of the Ministry of Education of Belorussia, representatives of the universities of Russia, Belorussia and Armenia, over 130 participants in total.

In June 2015 NAA's staff participated in the BRICS working group on education and made a presentation devoted to the issues of quality assurance of higher education across the countries of BRICS. One of the outcomes of the working group activities was a recommendation on the development of common standards for quality assurance of higher education on the territory of the countries - members of BRICS.

On September 21, 2015 NAA together with the Main State Center for Education Evaluation held a meeting with the representatives of national agencies for quality assurance and recognition of education from the Baltic States. The round table discussion focused on the issues of NAA's work and the procedure of state accreditation of educational activities in Russia.

In October 2015 NAA's staff took part in the annual international conference "Justice for recognition: best practices and innovative approaches" held in Moscow; and its panel discussion was devoted to the topic "On the way to automatic recognition".

In April 2016 NAA took part in the 2016 Moscow International Education Fair (MIEF). MIEF is an annual open platform for exchange of experience on challenging issues in the Russian education system. NAA's representatives were involved in the round table "Russia- Council of Europe: 20 Years of cooperation" organized in the framework of MIEF.

In April 2016, the Director of NAA, Ms Lemka Izmaylova, participated in the 2016 ENQA Members' Forum in Budapest (Hungary).

Following the dialogue devoted to the issues of quality evaluation and assurance of higher education organizations initiated in Budapest at the 2016 ENQA Members' Forum, NAA took part in the EQUIP workshop on the ESG 2015 as a tool for change which was held in Vienna (Austria) on 9-10 May.

On 13-14 May 2016 NAA participated in the annual workshop and General Assembly of CEENQA held at the Collegium Maius of the Jagellonian University in Krakow, Poland. NAA signed two agreements on cooperation with the Independent Kazakh Quality Assurance Agency in Education (IQAA), the Republic of Kazakhstan, and the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR), the Republic of Kazakhstan.

In June 2016 NAA and the Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation with support of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation held a meeting devoted to the issues of evaluation and quality assurance of education. The meeting was attended by Dr. Iring Wasser (the President of the Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education – CEENQA; Managing Director of the Accreditation Agency specialized in reviewing degree programs in engineering, informatics, mathematics and the natural sciences – ASIIN), Nora Saburskiene, Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education, SKVC (Lithuania), heads of international quality assurance agencies of Armenia, Germany, Latvia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic. The representatives of Russian educational organizations were also involved in the round table discussion. As a result of the meeting, NAA signed up agreements on cooperation and interaction with the Accreditation Agency specialized in reviewing degree programs in Engineering, Informatics, Mathematics and the Natural Sciences (ASIIN, Germany), the Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA, Germany), the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC, Lithuania), the National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance (ANQA, Armenia) and the Agency for Quality Assurance in the Field of Education (EdNet, Kyrgyz Republic).

In September 2016, NAA organized an international seminar “Russian and European Quality Assurance Standards of Higher Education: on the way to integration” hosted by the Chechen State University in Grozny. The seminar brought together over 400 participants from 8 federal districts of Russia (Central Federal District, Northwestern Federal District, North Caucasus Federal District, Urals Federal District, Volga Federal District, Siberian Federal District, Far Eastern Federal District, Southern Federal District) - representatives of educational and research organizations. The seminar was also attended by the certified experts of Rosobrnadzor involved in external reviews of educational activities, representatives of international quality assurance organizations and international educational organizations from Armenia, Moldova, Great Britain and Kyrgyzstan. Within the framework of the seminar the Commission responsible for certification of experts and expert organizations involved in external review of educational activities held its meeting. The outcome of this meeting was the inclusion of international experts from Great Britain, Moldova, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan into the Register of certified experts of Rosobrnadzor. At the end of the seminar NAA and the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Professional Education (ANACIP, Moldova) signed an agreement on cooperation.

On September 30, 2016 the Director of NAA took part in the II International conference on the development of the education quality evaluation system “Use of the results of the education quality reviews – challenges and future perspectives”.

In October 2016 representatives of NAA were invited by the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR) to take part in the international conference “Global challenges and the future of independent accreditation in Kazakhstan” dedicated to the 5th anniversary of IAAR (Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan). IAAR also held a training seminar for expert candidates with the involvement of foreign lecturers. At the end of the training seminar the leading experts of NAA were certified as international quality assurance experts.

On 6-7 October 2016, within the framework of the agreement on cooperation signed in Moscow in June 2016, NAA’s representatives visited the headquarters of the German Agency for Accreditation in Higher Education (ASIIN) located in Dusseldorf,

Germany. The parties conducted working consultations on the issues related to quality assurance in higher education. The importance of the information exchange on the latest developments in legislation and related documents in the field of higher education was also emphasized and discussed.

On 20-21 October 2016 NAA's representatives participated in the General Assembly of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, ENQA.

NAA is open for cooperation with other international accreditation and quality assurance agencies. NAA has the opportunity:

- to inform the Russian public on European perspectives and challenges in the field of the education quality evaluation within the Bologna Declaration;
- to promote mutual trust and recognition of mobility within and across national borders;
- to take part in international projects on the issues of quality assurance of higher education;
- to involve international experts in the work of expert panels during accreditation of Russian HEIs, to interact when implementing international projects, to exchange specialists between QA agencies.

In its activity NAA adheres to the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area – ESG* developed by ENQA.

NAA's staff are the members of the working group of the Ministry of Education and Science on the development of new federal state educational standards of the fourth generation, which will include professional standards. These changes are connected with the amendments introduced by the Federal Law of May 02, 2015 № 122-FL "On introducing amendments to the Labor Code of the Russian Federation" and Articles 11 and 73 of the Federal Law "On Education in the Russian Federation".

The amendments will concern Section 8 "Requirements to the quality of education". They highlight the need for conducting internal evaluation of the quality of the basic study program with the involvement of employers, graduates who have at least one year of professional experience after the completion of the studies on the program, as

well as other stakeholders outside the organization. The educational organization is to provide quality assurance of the basic study program in particular through carrying out annual SWOT-analysis of the study program.

### SWOT-analysis of NAA's activity in the current context

	Positive factors	Negative factors
	Strengths (S)	Weaknesses (W)
<b>Internal environment</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Status of the federal state institution.</li> <li>2. International activities and contacts in the sphere of global education.</li> <li>3. Strong corporate culture. Good traditions and image. High professional level of NAA's senior management.</li> <li>4. Well-qualified staff with high experience in the Russian system of education (including 1 Doctor of Science, 13 Doctors of Philosophy (PhD), 6 Associate professors).</li> <li>5. Clear legal regulation and execution of educational activities in accordance with the normative time limits of state accreditation.</li> <li>6. Accountability and transparency of the state accreditation procedure (the information on the expert panel's composition, time schedule, accreditation results are published in the Internet).</li> <li>7. Information system of state accreditation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the possibility to submit a package of documents on state accreditation as well as to issue a certificate of accreditation in the electronic form;</li> <li>- automated creation of an expert panel for external review (random sampling method) taking into account the field of training and basic study program declared for state accreditation;</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Insufficient feedback with educational and research organizations on issues of state accreditation improvement.</li> <li>2. Insufficient quantity of foreign experts.</li> <li>3. Lack of clear analysis of working efficiency of experts and expert organizations.</li> <li>4. There is no clear definition in methodological recommendations for the external review of study programs implemented remotely in an on-line mode, as well as of inclusive education.</li> <li>5. There is no classification of experts able to carry out external review of study programs implemented remotely in an on-line mode or by electronic educational technology for study programs implemented according to the standards developed by educational organizations themselves.</li> <li>6. Lack of the staff candidates' pool in NAA.</li> <li>7. Substantial volume of hard-copy paperwork.</li> <li>8. Focused specialization of NAA's staff.</li> <li>9. Operational urgent tasks of the accreditation body.</li> <li>10. Indirect participation of student representatives in external reviews.</li> </ol>

	<p>- conducting systematic statistical reporting of external review; experts.</p> <p>8. Pool of experts and expert organizations engaged in external review.</p> <p>9. Optimization of the NAA's organizational structure. A special department was established to work with experts and expert organizations.</p> <p>10. Conducting a qualification exam for expert applicants at the visiting sessions of the Accreditation Commission during training seminars for experts and representatives of educational organizations (necessity is determined by the distance from their place of residence).</p> <p>11. The information system of state accreditation, providing storage of the information about the expert and his professional activity, allowing for immediate access to the information about the expert, as well as statistical analysis of the data on educational levels and intergraded groups of specialties, in which he is certified, etc.</p> <p>12. The process approach to the support of civil contracts with NAA's experts (expert organizations) in terms of experts' reimbursement for travel expenses and accommodation. Contracts supporting by the CFGD<sup>1</sup> staff from the moment of the expert documents' admission to the date of payment and transferring contracts into the archive.</p> <p>13. Material and technical equipment, providing the opportunity of distant interactions with experts (weekly Skype meetings), as well as with expert candidates (thematic webinars, online consulting), and the ability to conduct online interviews at</p>	
--	--	--

---

<sup>1</sup> Contract Follow-up Group Department

the Accreditation Commission meetings with the applicants from other countries and long-distant regions of the Russian Federation.

14. Methodological support of the external review of basic study programs of all levels of education.

15. Training and certification of experts and expert organizations involved in external reviews; holding weekly Skype meetings with expert panels, participating in external reviews.

16. Consulting and information support of educational and research organizations on the issues of state accreditation and future development of the HE system.

17. Regular training of NAA's staff in the matter of state accreditation of educational activities and other current issues of education.

18. Certification of NAA's staff engaged in the support of external reviews.

19. Modern, regularly updated material and technical base, high level of NAA's information system development.

20. Internal audit of NAA's activities and development of its strategic profile.

21. Consideration of the results of professional public accreditation and public accreditation during external reviews of educational activities.

22. Avoiding corruption and abuse in the NAA's activity.

23. The operation of the NAA's website in the information and telecommunication network "Internet".

24. High performance discipline of NAA's staff, efficiency of workers.

25. The speed of reaction to changes in the external environment.

	Opportunities (O)	Threats (T)
<b>External environment</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The changes in the Russian legislation in the sphere of education.</li> <li>2. The possibility of capacity building of the state accreditation procedure, including on the international level; integration of state, international, public and professional public accreditation.</li> <li>3. NAA's membership in international networks of quality assurance: ENQA, CEENQA, APQN, INQAAHE.</li> <li>4. Access to the most current information on the state and development of the Russian education system.</li> <li>5. The opportunity to participate in the development of regulatory documents relating to the assessment of education quality and conducting state accreditation of educational activities, as well as other current issues in education.</li> <li>6. Participation in deferent experiments on independent assessment of students' training quality.</li> <li>7. Participation in the events (seminars, conferences, workshops) organized by different Ministries related to quality assurance of education.</li> <li>8. Availability of mechanisms facilitating internal staff development (holding seminars and webinars on the topics directly affecting the staff professional activity).</li> <li>9. Participation in international network activity. Use of the best foreign practices in NAA's performance.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Deficient legal framework for state accreditation of study programs.</li> <li>2. Fixed financing from the state.</li> <li>3. Unstable socio and economic situation in Russia.</li> <li>12. Declarative nature of state accreditation.</li> <li>13. Training activities on topical issues of state accreditation of educational activities carried out by unauthorized agencies.</li> <li>14. The lack of experts' electronic signature.</li> <li>15. The absence of a national list of organizations conducting professional public accreditation.</li> <li>16. The lack of information and legal systems, existence of gaps in the legislation on education.</li> </ol>

	<p>10. Inclusive education, individual learning paths, fixed by the federal state educational standards.</p> <p>11. Integration of educational and professional standards</p>	
--	---	--

As a result of the SWOT-analysis the priorities for the enhancement of NAA activities were developed:

1. To participate in the working groups of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation and Rosobrnadzor for the development of normative legal documents regulating the procedure of state accreditation, and other normative documents in the sphere of education. As part of these activities to make proposals in draft legal documents on state accreditation and on stimulation of experts and expert organizations.
2. Enhancement of the state accreditation procedure.
  - To prepare methodological recommendations for carrying out external review of basic study programs delivered in an on-line mode with the use of e-learning and distance learning technologies;
  - To continue analyzing the data on delivery of the basic study programs submitted for state accreditation. To draw up analytical references on the data for experts to work during external review;
  - To conduct a comparative analysis of the state accreditation results and the results of an independent assessment of the quality of students' training;
  - To consider the results of professional public and public accreditation during the external review of basic study programs with regard to the assessment of the quality of students' training.
3. Working with experts and expert organizations.
  - To regularly provide feedback with educational and research organizations on the external review results aimed at an objective estimation of the expert panel's work;

- To continue the practice of involving students and employers in the state accreditation procedure. To discuss the results of their participation in the expert panel in order to enhance the objectivity and transparency of the procedure;
- To develop criteria and indicators for assessing the performance of experts and expert organizations;
- To prepare a 2017 plan of training sessions for representatives of educational and research organizations, experts and expert organizations on the issues of on-line forms of learning, e-learning, distance learning technologies, inclusive education;
- To continue the practice of involving representatives of educational and research organizations, experts as moderators at the Agency's training workshops;
- To expand the pool of experts engaged in external reviews by foreign experts. To conduct an online training seminar for international expert candidates;
- To hold training sessions (off-line, on-line) for representatives of educational and research organizations on the issues of state accreditation and future development of higher education in the federal districts of the Russian Federation.

#### 4. Activities in the electronic and information environment.

- To continue monitoring the websites of educational organizations during the period between state accreditation procedures. To prepare an analytical reference. To conduct training sessions for representatives of educational organizations on meeting the requirements for maintaining official websites;
- To carry out marketing research of the educational services provided by Russian accreditation agencies;
- To coordinate the availability of experts' electronic signature with the Federal Service for Supervision in Education and Science (Rosobrnadzor) in order to make a complete transfer to the electronic document management;
- To continue studying websites of international QA agencies in order to optimize NAA's official website;
- To take part in the creation of the national register of organizations carrying out professional public accreditation of study programs.

## 5. International Activities.

- To continue studying international experience, best practices for the development of national quality evaluation system. To study the experience of the international agencies:
  - Higher Education Evaluation Centre of the People’s Republic of China (China),
  - Accreditation Agency Specialised in Accrediting Degree Programmes in Engineering, Informatics, Natural Sciences and Mathematics (ASIIN, Germany),
  - National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance (ANQA, Armenia).
- To conduct an on-line conference with accreditation agencies from different countries on the issues of the higher education quality;
- To intensify the involvement of international experts in external reviews under the agreements concluded by the Agency with:
  - Accreditation Agency Specialised in Accrediting Degree Programmes in Engineering, Informatics, Natural Sciences and Mathematics (ASIIN, Germany)
  - Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA, Germany)
  - Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education, (SKVC, Lithuania)
  - Independent Kazakh Quality Assurance Agency in Education (IQAA, Kazakhstan)
  - Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR, Kazakhstan)
  - National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance (ANQA, Armenia);
  - EdNet Agency on Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (EdNet, the Kyrgyz Republic);
  - National Agency for Quality Assurance in Professional Education (ANACIP, Moldova).
- To determine the strategy of NAA’s international activities until 2020.

6. NAA's professional capacity building:

- To develop a plan for professional development of NAA's staff;
- To conduct training for two main departments supporting the state accreditation procedure:
  - Department for the Support of Accreditation Procedures,
  - Information and Analytical Department;
- To conduct attestation of the staff of the Department for Organizational Support and Logistics for the purpose of performance evaluation;
- To compile a candidate pool of NAA's managing staff;
- To update the criteria and indicators of labor incentive systems for NAA's staff;
- To continue auditing activities of the structural divisions of the Agency and make adjustments to NAA's development strategy until 2020.

### **III. Analysis of NAA's activities against the criteria assessed as "partial compliance" and "non-compliance"**

In September 2014 in order to determine the compliance of NAA with the full membership criteria of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, NAA underwent external review in terms of the Agency's compliance with the ESG 2005 criteria.

According to the results of external review the following criteria of the standards were recognized partially compliant or incompliant.

#### **ENQA Criterion 1–Activities (ESG 3.1, 3.3)**

##### **ESG - 2005 2.4 Processes fit for purpose**

**Standard.** All external quality assurance processes should be designed specifically to ensure their fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for them.

#### **ENQA Board Recommendations**

- NAA should include trained international experts in the panels, especially as there are no legal obstacles to do so. The Board notes NAA's intention to involve international experts in the future.
  - NAA should include students in the panels. Involvement of student will be a requirement in the revised ESG.
  - The Board notes that "*experts mostly work alone during a site visit*", and strongly supports the panel in recommending that experts work as a team "*in order to facilitate the inclusion of students and international experts in the groups and in order to avoid the risk of subjective assessments by separately working experts*".
- Some aspects or parts of the criterion/ESG standard are not met. The three reasons listed above lead to a finding of partial compliance.

## **Report on implementation of the ENQA Board recommendations**

According to Paragraph 13 of Article 92 of the Federal Law of 29.12.2012 № 273-FL “On Education in the Russian Federation” external review shall be conducted by experts who have the necessary qualification in the field of the core study programs submitted for state accreditation, and (or) by expert organizations which meet the established requirements. Experts and expert organizations carrying out external review of an educational organization shall not be entitled to be in civil law relations (experts shall not be entitled to have any employment relationship) with this educational organization.

During the reporting period, NAA made a number of arrangements for involving international experts into the expert community of the Russian Federation. In order to clarify the requirements applied to experts and expert organizations, NAA held training activities (seminars, webinars) for expert candidates with the engagement of representatives of the international academic community. Following the results of training and successful completion of qualification tests 4 experts from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova involved in carrying out state accreditation were granted the powers of an expert.

4 more applications submitted by the representatives of the Republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia and the Great Britain are currently under review.

In 2016, the All-Russian non-governmental organization “Russian Union of Youth” (RUY) which is considered to be one of the most popular, non-governmental, non-profit, non-political youth organizations in Russia was granted the powers of an expert organization for carrying out external review. Certification of RUY allowed students’ participation in the state accreditation procedure.

The involvement of certified expert organizations (Medical League of Russia, NASDOBR) makes it possible to conduct external review with a greater degree of objectivity and transparency as the composition of expert panels include not only representatives of the academic community, but also students and representatives of employers, who can assess the level of competences’ acquisition, compare them against the requirements applied to modern specialists of the relevant industry.

NAA intends to attract other expert organizations in various areas of training.

It is established by the legislation that external review shall be carried out based on the executive order of an accreditation body which determines the composition of an expert panel, consisting of experts and (or) representatives of expert organizations. The executive order contains data on the study programs under state accreditation assigned to the members of the expert panel with the indication of their educational level, integrated groups of professions, specialties and fields of training.

Thus, external review of the study program is conducted by the expert panel. The external review process results in the conclusion of the expert panel.

Recommendations are implemented.

## **ESG 2.5 Reporting**

**Standard.** Reports should be published and should be written in a style, which is clear and readily accessible to its intended readership. Any decisions, commendations or recommendations contained in reports should be easy for a reader to find.

### **ENQA Board Recommendations**

In 2008, the panel recommended NAA to make the expert panels' reports publicly available. Not much progress has been made in this area. As stated in the review report: *"The state accreditation process is not documented in a single report, but in a number of documents with different purposes and different readerships". "Expert reports on the individual programs are only communicated to the HEI under review and not made public. This means, that future students, employers, the academic community, or other stakeholders do not have the possibility to study the analyses and recommendations of the experts. This is important information, and it should be made available for the general public"*. The outcomes of state accreditation are not easily accessible: only the expert panel's conclusions and positive decisions of the AB are published. Negative decisions can only be found in the annual analytical report made by NAA. In addition to the lack

of publication of full reports, HEIs do not have an opportunity “*to comment on the experts’ reports, the joint conclusion of the expert panel, or the analytical report prepared by NAA for the Accreditation Board before the decision making process in the Board*”. The Board concurs with the panel in finding it “*inappropriate that HEIs do not have an opportunity to correct factual misunderstandings with potential importance for the overall conclusions*”.

→ The lack of publication of full reports, the lack of easy accessibility of accreditation outcomes and the lack of opportunity for HEIs to comment experts’ reports on factual accuracy lead to a finding of partial compliance. The Agency is advised to promptly address these weaknesses as the revised ESG will be more challenging in terms of reporting.

### **Report on implementation of the ENQA Board recommendations**

At the end of external review, the expert panel members prepare reports on the study programs assigned to them. In the case of non-compliance of the study program with the federal state educational standards such report should be accompanied by the copies of the supporting documents, certified by the educational organization.

Based on the reports the head of the expert panel makes up a conclusion and within 3 working days from the date of the review completion submits it together with experts’ reports to the Accreditation Body.

The conclusion of the expert panel contains the following information:

- a) date of the expert panel’s conclusion;
- b) full name of the educational organization or its branch subjected to external review;
- c) data on the materials and documents presented by the educational organization or its branch during external review;
- g) description of the content and quality of students’ training on the study programs declared for state accreditation, conclusion on the compliance (incompliance) of the specified content and quality with the federal state educational standards on each study program submitted for state accreditation.

The Accreditation Body sends a copy of the conclusion to the educational organization or hands it against receipt to the authorized representative of the organization as well as publishes it on its official website in the “Internet” (Part 17 of Article 92 of the Federal Law of 29.12.2012 № 273-FL “On Education in the Russian Federation”, p. p. 43, 48 of the Regulations on State Accreditation of Educational Activities approved by the Decree of the RF Government of 18.11.2013 № 1039) within 3 working days after the receipt of the conclusion.

The following information should be posted on the websites of NAA and Accreditation Body:

- executive order on carrying out state accreditation;
- decision on state accreditation. The decision on state accreditation or refusal of state accreditation shall be made by the Accreditation Body on the basis of the expert panel’s conclusion;
- conclusion of the expert panel on the external review results;
- Register of the state accredited educational organizations;
- Register of certified experts and expert organizations involved in carrying out external review.

The information system of state accreditation used by NAA in its activities enables educational organizations to monitor the stages of external review through their Personal Accounts.

Recommendations are implemented.

### **ENQA Criterion 5 – Independence (ESG 3.6)**

**Standard.** Agencies should be independent to the extent both that they have autonomous responsibility for their operations and that the conclusions and recommendations made in their reports cannot be influenced by third parties such as higher education institutions, ministries or other stakeholders.

## **ENQA Board Recommendations**

- Rosobrnadzor, the official government authority, participates directly in the recruitment and certification of new experts for which NAA does not have full and formal responsibility.
- NAA selects experts from the database and does not have the authority to complete the composition of expert panels as the final composition of the panel, including the head of the panel, is approved by Rosobrnadzor.
- The Accreditation Board makes formal decisions *“to be considered as recommendations to Rosobrnadzor, who takes the final decision on accreditation. [...] Representatives from Rosobrnadzor are members of the Accreditation Board. The head of Rosobrnadzor is even chairing the board”*.

Thus, independence is therefore not guaranteed from the evidence gathered in the review report. The three reasons listed above lead to a finding of non-compliance.

## **Report on implementation of ENQA Board recommendations**

According to Paragraph 5 of the Procedure for certification of experts and expert organizations for carrying out external reviews, including the Procedure for the maintenance of the register of experts and expert organizations, approved by the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation of 20 May 2014 № 556, in order to certify experts and expert organizations engaged by accreditation bodies in external reviews of organizations carrying out educational activities, the Accreditation Body establishes an Accreditation Commission and approves the Regulations on the Accreditation Commission and its composition.

All procedures for certification of experts and expert organizations for carrying out external reviews are conducted by NAA.

During the reporting period, the composition of the Accreditation Commission on certification of experts and expert organizations engaged in external reviews of educational activities, has changed significantly. NAA's Head is the Chairman of the Accreditation Commission. The Commission includes representatives of public,

educational, research organizations, representatives of the learning and teaching unions, employers, NAA's staff.

The composition of the Accreditation Commission is formed so as to prevent the conflict of interests that could affect the decision taken by the Commission.

The decision of the Accreditation Commission is documented in the Minutes signed by the Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Secretary and members of the Accreditation Commission who took part in the vote. NAA is fully and solely responsible for the selection and certification of new experts (expert organizations).

The selection of experts and (or) expert organizations for external reviews is made from the Register of experts and expert organizations engaged in external reviews in an automatic mode using the method of random selection based on the following parameters:

- integrated group of professions, specialties and fields of training in which the expert (expert organization) is certified for carrying out external reviews of organizations engaged in educational activities;
- the expert's place of residence or place of stay (the location of the expert organization).

NAA notifies the expert (expert organization) that this very expert (expert organization) is selected for carrying out external review (hereinafter - notification) of the organization engaged in educational activities, provides information about its location and the exact dates of the external review.

The expert (expert organization) gives the written consent confirming the lack of any dependence from persons interested in the outcomes of the external review, and (or) lack of self-interest in the results of the external review.

After getting the expert's consent to participate in the external review, NAA forms an expert panel, appoints the expert panel head from among the experts included in the expert panel; sends the Accreditation body's draft executive order on conducting external review for approval. Automated selection of experts does not allow the Accreditation body to influence the selection of experts for external review, making the selection procedure independent.

The Accreditation body shall consider the expert panel's conclusion on external

review and make a decision on compliance or non-compliance of the content and quality of students' training in the organization carrying out educational activities and in its branches, with the FSES at each level of education and integrated groups of professions, specialties and fields of training, that the study programs declared for state accreditation refer to.

The decision on state accreditation or refusal of it is taken together with the Collegial Body on the basis of the expert panel's conclusion.

In accordance with the amendments of September 2015 to the Regulations on State Accreditation, the Accreditation Board of Rosobrnadzor (a collegial body) was established. It is a permanent body established in order to consider state accreditation issues. The Chairman of the Collegial body is Pavel Krasnorutskiy, the Chairman of the All-Russian non-governmental organization "Russian Union of Youth".

Following the results of review of documents and materials, the Collegial body shall take a decision, which is considered by the Accreditation body. The latter makes the final decision.

The recommendations are implemented.

### **ENQA Criterion 6 – External quality assurance criteria and processes used by the members (ESG 3.7)**

**Standard.** The processes, criteria and procedures used by agencies should be pre-defined and publicly available. These processes will normally be expected to include:

- a self-assessment or equivalent procedure by the subject of the quality assurance process;
- an external assessment by a group of experts, including, as appropriate, (a) student member(s), and site visits as decided by the agency;
- publication of a report, including any decisions, recommendations or other formal outcomes;

- a follow-up procedure to review actions taken by the subject of the quality assurance process in the light of any recommendations contained in the report.

### **ENQA Board Recommendations**

The following deficiencies should be addressed:

- No student involvement as experts in panels. In addition, experts have to be approved by Rosobrnadzor.
- No publication of full reports and no permanent appeals procedure established as part of the state accreditation system. In addition, HEIs do not have an opportunity to correct factual errors in expert's reports.
  - No follow-up procedure beside the reaccreditation processes after 1 or 6 years.

### **Report on implementation of ENQA Board recommendations**

In order to involve students to external reviews, in 2016 the All-Russian non-governmental organization "Russian Union of Youth" was granted the powers of an expert organization for carrying out external reviews.

For external reviews NAA forms an expert panel, appoints its head from among the experts included in the expert panel, and sends for approval the Accreditation body's draft executive order on conducting external review. NAA is fully and solely responsible for the selection of experts.

Within 3 working days after the receipt of the expert panel's conclusion, the Accreditation body shall send a copy to the organization or hands it out to an authorized representative of the organization against receipt. Thus, the organization inspects the conclusion of the expert panel for carrying out external review before the Accreditation body makes the final decision. The organization carrying out educational activities has the right to withdraw its application for state accreditation at any stage of the state accreditation procedure before the decision of the Accreditation body is made; and to reapply for state accreditation after resolving all complaints made.

The organization carrying out educational activities may apply for state accreditation no earlier than 1 year after the refusal of state accreditation or deprivation of it.

Since 2015, during the period between state accreditation procedures, NAA tracks the changes in the educational organizations by monitoring their sites.

The Article 29 of the Federal Law of 29.12.2012 № 273-FL "On Education in the Russian Federation" obliges educational organizations to make an open and public information resources that provide information on their activities, and to provide access to these resources by placing them in information and communication networks, inter alia on the official website of the educational organization in the Internet.

NAA uses monitoring results in state accreditation; educational organizations are informed about typical violations at NAA's training activities for representatives of educational and research organizations.

The recommendations are implemented.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

In the period of 2015-2016 the procedure of state accreditation has undergone significant changes that, in its turn, led to the changes in NAA's activities.

NAA's amount of work has significantly expanded due to the increase in the number of basic study programs submitted by educational and research organizations for state accreditation.

The increase in programs required a greater number of experts to be involved with NAA's staffing remaining the same.

The changes and additions relating to the state accreditation procedure, amendments in the legislation on education being gradually introduced in 2015-2016 should be communicated both to the expert community, and to the representatives of educational and research organizations. Thus, in 2015-2016 NAA was actively engaged in holding a series of training events on these issues.

In order to bring the legislation in line with the new amendments and additions the methodological recommendations for carrying out external review of basic study programs at all education levels should be also enhanced.

In order to improve the procedures of state accreditation and quality assessment of students' training the Agency conducted the experiments in:

- reducing the complexity of expert panels' work during external review of study programs;
- testing the level of acquisition of basic competences by students studying on the program.

In 2015-2016, much attention was given to external reviews of the programs for training highly qualified staff. This is due to the fact that the Federal Law of December 29, 2013 № 273-FL "On Education in the Russian Federation" introduced a new level of higher education - training of highly qualified staff. Before September 1, 2013 it was state accreditation of postgraduate professional study programs, which was carried out against federal state requirements. After September 1, 2013, the education level of postgraduate training was made equal to the level of higher education - training of highly qualified

staff. At the end of 2014 the first federal state educational standards for the programs on training of the teaching staff in graduate (postgraduate) education, on training of highly qualified staff on programs of traineeship, assistantship - internship.

Expert organizations listed in the Register of certified expert organizations are actively involved in external review of basic study programs on a specified field of training to ensure the objectivity, transparency and engagement of the professional community and student body in the procedure.

On a regular basis NAA organizes training sessions for its staff members to inform them about the amendments in the regulatory framework in the sphere of education.

NAA together with the Federal Service for Supervision in Education and Science proactively collaborates with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation to develop federal state educational standards of a new generation. These standards will take into consideration professional standards. More attention will be focused on the internal evaluation of the study program's quality carried out with the involvement of employers, graduates with professional experience and other stakeholders. The educational organization should provide quality assurance of the basic study program through its annual SWOT-analysis.

One of the directions of NAA's activities is to monitor websites of educational organizations with respect to their information transparency. By monitoring websites of educational organizations NAA keeps itself informed about the changes that occur in educational organizations and uses this data in the state accreditation procedure. NAA informs educational organizations about typical violations in this respect at training workshops and webinars.

NAA is actively involved in international activities. Thus, in 2016 NAA signed the agreements on cooperation with several international quality assurance agencies in higher education. A few international experts were certified for carrying out external reviews in the Russian Federation and were included in the Register of experts.

Exterior changes in the education system demanded corresponding changes in the structure and management system of NAA. However, NAA is currently recognized at the state level as an agency responsible for carrying out the procedure of state accreditation,

a steadily operating organization tending to sustainable development and maintaining a leading position in the field of external review of the education quality.

The results of self-evaluation showed that the recommendations of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) have been taken into consideration in NAA's work:

1. The pool of experts involved in external reviews has increased due to the fact that foreign experts and expert organizations were granted the powers of an expert and expert organization.
2. The composition of the expert panel has enlarged due to the inclusion of students and employers, which in its turn enhanced the quality, transparency and objectivity of the external review procedure.
3. Openness and transparency of the state accreditation procedure have increased:
  - the opportunity for educational organizations to keep informed about the procedure of state accreditation through their Personal Accounts in the information system of state accreditation;
  - introducing the educational organization to the expert panel's conclusion before the accreditation body takes a decision;
  - publication of the decision on state accreditation, a full version of the expert panel's conclusion based on the external review results, a Register of certified experts and expert organizations involved in external reviews on the official websites of NAA and Accreditation Body.
4. Independence of NAA.
  - The Accreditation Commission responsible for certification of new experts was supplemented by representatives of public, educational, research organizations, representatives of the teaching and learning unions and employers, NAA's staff members (Chairman – NAA's Director).
  - The automated mode of experts' nomination with the use of the random selection method eliminates the influence of the Accreditation Body on experts' selection for external review. The decision on state accreditation or refusal of state accreditation is taken by the Accreditation Body with due consideration of the

decision made by the Collegial Board and on the basis of the expert panel's conclusion. The Chairman of the Accreditation Body is the Chairman of the All-Russian non-governmental organization "Russian Union of Youth".

5. Full versions of expert panels' conclusions are published in the electronic information network "the Internet".
6. Keeping itself informed about the changes in the educational organization's activities during the period between state accreditation procedures by monitoring the websites of educational organizations. The outcomes of the analysis of the monitoring results are brought to the notice of educational and research organizations at training seminars.

## STATE ACCREDITATION MODEL

