**External Assessment in Higher Education**

Tolkyn Skabayeva

Bimen L.K., Altybaeva Sh.B., Bailov A.A.
 National Testing Center of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan

The new stage of development of our country is focused on the rapid progress of Kazakhstan in the community of the 50 most competitive countries. The President outlined a basis for further work in the next decade. An important role in their successful carrying out belongs to system of education, its harmonization to world standards.

An important factor in improving the education system performs monitoring of the quality of education, compliance tracking of students and graduates of those requirements which are presented to society and who seek to realize the educational institutions. Control, checking, monitoring, and state regulation of the quality of education, educational achievements of students and educational services of educational institutions form a system of education quality assessment.

The most effective system for centralized system of control and monitoring the quality of education is an external evaluation of educational achievements of students, carried out at all levels and stages of education by standardized testing.
 In higher education from 2005 to 2011 an external evaluation was carried out in the form of Intermediate State Control (ISC) ​​ for 2nd year students (for 3rd year medical specialties) of all educational institutions regardless of ownership and departmental affiliation. ISC was not passed by students of art majors and students of advanced forms of learning.

On the verge of reforming the education system in 2005 ISC was of strategic importance. Thanks to it, multiple deficiencies in the training of students in the educational process, etc. were identified. Thus, it can be emphasized the following serious errors such as:

1. Many universities conducted the education which was not appropriate to the state compulsory educational standards (SCES):

− Some subjects of SCES compulsory component were not taught;
− The content did not comply with the minimum of disciplines of SCES program.
2) Among the university students "dead souls" were found - students who were officially in the list of students, but did not attend classes, and even examination session.
3) Students of many universities could not overcome the threshold, showing the poor quality of university educational services, so that this university held an extra state certification.

4) Many universities, especially private ones, had their branches and representative offices over the country where almost nothing was taught. In 2005 160 civilian universities, 45 branch offices and 5 higher institutions representatives were operated, total - 210 linear universities. Currently all branches and representative offices have been closed.

ISC was introduced in stages. Earlier in the mode of experiment was conducted in 2004, intermediate certification of students (ICS) of full-time students learning in the disciplines of four areas of higher education: pedagogical, economic, legal and medical. In 2005, the ISC covered all civilian profession full-time education. In 2006 they were joined by specialties as «Military and Security." In 2007, the ISC was introduced among the students of correspondence courses for three areas: pedagogical, economic, legal. From 2008 to 2011 ISC covered all specialties of full time and distance learning.

ISC was carried in the form of a comprehensive test in 5 compulsory subjects and compulsory basic cycle component of SES, only 125 tests in 25 tests in each discipline, testing time was 180 minutes (3 hours). The discipline of obligatory ISC consisted of "Computer Science", "Philosophy", "Foreign Language". Basic disciplines were offered by National Educational and Methodological Council (NEMC).

The introduction of computer science at ISC is due to the widespread introduction of computer technology into all areas of science, technology and society. Many organizations have introduced workstations to effectively manage workflow, economical use of human and timing recourses.

Philosophy as the progenitor of all the sciences, contributing to the formation of world view, is a compulsory subject in the training for all specialties. In this discipline the basic styles of scientific thinking, dialectic method of understanding reality, the general laws of nature, society and thought are given.
 Kazakhstan's integration into the global community is possible only with knowledge of the citizens of the world languages. The need for foreign languages ​​has been allocated by the President N.A. Nazarbayev in the early 90s. A few years later trilingualism should be a reality in our society.

When choosing a core discipline ISC, NEMC guided goals and objectives for training. Thus, "Education" and "Psychology" had been selected for the basic direction of special educational disciplines as well as knowledge of these disciplines, for teachers and future teachers is obligatory.

ISC test database was formed in accordance with international requirements. Each year, the base is updated and improved. Before the introduction of new tests, they were subjected to repeated examination and testing, where the experimentally their objectivity and reliability was confirmed. On the content of tests disciplines ISC innovative changes affect different areas of life (such as economics, law, information, etc.) as well as research and analysis of tests presented by the Appeal Commission.
 The complexity, specificity, and a large amount of work required a professional approach in the formation of the database. Every year training seminars on theory and methodology of educational measurement were organized for developers and test experts. Compiled at the proper level tests significantly improved the effectiveness of the educational process, improve the quality of students' knowledge.

In the period from 2006 to 2011 in the ISC (EAEA) of higher education were involved in more than 1,200 developers and over 900 experts from a number of tests of the teaching staff of higher educational institutions, of which about 150

have been trained at workshops.

ISC Technology was designed to prevent any attempt to change the real test results. Test materials were introduced to the rank of state secrets, during the preparation of examination material they were adhered to the regime of secrecy, acted limited access to these materials, while testing the cross-distribution of students in the basic institutions of higher education or the distribution of the areas of education were used, trained representatives of the RK, Chairmen of Appeal Committees and programmers of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan to guide and control over the ISC, abiding the technology were directed in basic schools.

In order to familiarize with the regulations, the technology of the ISC, the software-training workshop was held with the Chairmen of the Appeal Committee, representatives and programmers RK. Each year 250 teaching staff from among 65 universities of RK were invited as representatives of the ISC and programmers of RK, Chairmen of the Appeal Committee.

Prior to 2007 ISC results influenced on the progress of students as they were issued a certificate with ISC scores, with scores below the threshold, the student could not go to the next course. At the time every year of the universities there were numerous demands for the abolition of certificates. Since 2008, in 70% of payroll university students allowed to pass ISC. However, statistics on the results of the ISC show deterioration of the students. This is particularly due to the fact that the cancellation of certificates affected the motivation of the students.

Thus, the state control over the activities of institutions of higher education approved the procedure in the conduct of educational activities of institutions of higher education. In 2005 ISC score threshold of 30% (40% for the medical professions) of the total number of questions have not been 0.29% of the total number of 67,123 students participated. Therefore, the following 2006 increased the threshold (50% for medical specialties and 35% for others), the technology has become more complicated distribution of students in the basic institutions of higher education, resulting in 2.16% of the total number of 78,958 students participated. In 2007, due to the introduction of part-time students in ISC three most popular specialties the percentage of students who have not passed ISC, has more than 2.5 times last year - 5.72% of 101,086 students. In 2008, when part-time students were involved ISC in all specialties (total number of participants - 83,942 students), and increased the threshold score - 40% (60%), the percentage of students who did not pass ISC increased up to 10%. At the same time each year an average score of students increased from 69.10 to 82.28.

Analysis of the ISC results suggests that the introduction of ISC as a system of external assessment of the quality of education brought to bear a positive influence on the improvement of higher education level. After completing their basic goals and objectives, ISC has lost its relevance. Demands of the time show that the most effective is the introduction of state control during the state certification of graduates.

Indeed, higher institution, with a view to training: in the educational process, to provide with material resources, educational literature, laboratory, technical and software equipment, result-oriented, that is demanded by a competitive specialist. Namely it is for university graduates to society will judge the quality of training at universities, defining, thus, their ranking compared to other schools.

In accordance with the Law of RK "On education" and the State Programme of Education Development for 2011-2020 launched an external assessment of educational achievements of graduate students (EAEA). The aim is to assess EAEA quality of educational services, and determine the level of development of SCES learners.

 The annual observance of all EAEA graduates best display quality of higher education, will conduct a comparative analysis of universities. The authorized agency will annually select areas of specialties subject to be EAEA this year. At the same time EAEA will monitor academic achievement of students in each area of training, assessment of educational process, and comparative analysis of the quality of educational services to educational organizations. EAEA results will be used in assays for rating studies.

Considering the different status of universities, their results can not be equated and, moreover, they should not affect the issuance of diplomas to graduates. The main objective is to assess the quality of EAEA educational activities of the university, not the student. Therefore, this result is crucial for determining the feasibility of this university, its ranking compared to other universities in general or specific areas of training.

EAEA will involve students studying on all forms of education regardless of ownership and subordination. EAEA will be held in the form of a comprehensive test on four subjects. Number of tests in each discipline is 25. Total test time is 150 minutes (2.5 hours). Disciplines are selected from the cycles of basic majors and mandatory component of SCES.

Organization and coordination of EAEA local government will carry out the Commission in conjunction with the territorial authorities of the Monitoring Committee in the field of education and science.

For the purpose of testing technology and evaluation of tests, as well as to prepare students for EAEA carried out organizational work for the experimental test. In 2012, the conducting EAEA will be in three areas of preparation: education, economics, business, law and 16 specialties.

Thus, the introduction of EAEA will allow maintaining state monitoring of educational services by encouraging universities to provide quality education. EAEA results will enable citizens to choose their own university to study.