METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES FOR ACCREDITATION OF QUALIFICATION CENTRES

Kyiv, December 2019

PREFACE

Pursuant to Article 38 of the Law of Ukraine "On Education" (2017), it was established the National Agency for Qualifications (NAQ) in Ukraine. Its mandate includes the conduct of accreditation for Qualification Centres.

The role of the Qualification Centre is to award professional qualifications on the basis of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, abilities, competences) of individuals in accordance to the established standards. Accreditation shall be conducted in order to award/authorize or recognize the right of operators providing assessment and recognition of learning outcomes of individuals (including those attained in non-formal non-formal or informal education) to award the respective professional qualifications.

Accreditation authorizing to award professional qualifications is connected with the warranty of the fact that providers awarding professional qualifications shall have the relevant resources and competences to do so, and their decisions shall be valid and reliable.

The suggested methodological approaches on accreditation of Qualification Centres include a proposal to determine accreditation requirements for providers of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes to be entitled to award professional qualifications, as well as for procedures to conduct accreditation and monitoring of activities of the accredited Qualification Centres.

The document hereby suggests the criteria to assess activities of Qualification Centres when conducting their accreditation and monitoring of activities (accreditation criteria). Accreditation criteria are divided according to five principles (excellence categories). Pursuant to them, conformity to accreditation requirements is validated, such as management and organizational efficiency, quality assurance, administration and support, development of control and assessment materials, assessment and recognition of learning outcomes[1]. Description of each criteria includes recommendations (indicators) on possible conformity validation when conducting accreditation.

The suggested procedures for accreditation and monitoring of activities of accredited Qualification Centres implies the following three components (stages): initial accreditation, surveillance, re-assessment (regular accreditation), and whenever appropriate, extraordinary assessment and expansion of accreditation scope[2]. NAQ can choose the approach to do the monitoring: either by combining the surveillance and re-assessment (regular accreditation), or by performing the re-assessment only.

For accreditation authorizing the awarding of its first qualification, provider of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes shall undergo initial accreditation. It assesses conformity to all accreditation criteria. In case of passing initial accreditation, the Qualification Centre can at any time submit an application for accreditation under other qualifications (expansion of accreditation scope). It can be performed the NAQ not in a full scope, with account for assessment results during the initial accreditation, or according to prior monitoring activities.

Methodological approaches to accreditation of Qualification Centres are drafted Anatolii Garmash, ETF national expert, to support NAQ activities in development of respective provisions and guidelines on accreditation of Qualification Centres.

---

[1] When drafting the accreditation criteria, we referred to approaches by the Scottish Qualifications Authority, among others. More at: Awarding body criteria/ Scottish Qualifications Authority, 2007. – 40 p. www.sqa.org.uk

[2] The suggested Procedures were drafted with account for provisions of the National Standards of Ukraine DSTU ISO/IEC 17011 "Conformity Assessment. General Requirements to Accreditation Bodies Accrediting Conformity Assessment Bodies."

CONTENTS

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1.1. Scope

Key functions to be performed by a Qualification Centre:
- organization and conduct of qualifying assessment (according to requirements of assessment standard);
- development of control and assessment materials (assessment tools) to perform qualifying assessment;
- awarding of the respective qualification (issuance and registration of a document validating the attainment of professional qualification);
- assuring the quality of certification process (internal quality assurance) – assuring that awarding of professional qualification results from a positive assessment and recognition of learning outcomes for a person, according to an assessment standard and other established requirements.

Accreditation process shall cover key aspects of quality assurance of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes, and shall include the assessment of activities of provider of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes in terms of:
- conformity with the assessment standard requirements on:
  - control and assessment materials (assessment tools / exam materials);
  - assessment process / procedures (organization of assessment);
  - conduct of assessment;
  - policies and processes of internal quality assurance;
- capacity to fulfil assessment standard requirements and award professional qualification.

The objective of the Methodological Approaches shall be to determine key requirements to accreditation providers that perform assessment and recognition of learning outcomes for individuals to be authorized to award professional qualifications, and to formulate proposals on the procedures to perform accreditation and monitoring of Qualification Centres.

1.2. References to Regulatory Acts

Accreditation of Qualification Centres shall be based on provisions of Art. 34 and 38 of the Law of Ukraine "On Education."

1.3. Definitions of Terms

For the purposes of this document, the terms shall be used in the following meanings:

Accreditation of Qualification Centres (hereinafter – accreditation) – assurance by the National Agency for Qualifications of the fact that a provider of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes of individuals (including also those attained through non-formal or informal education) meets the requirements of the respective assessment standard, accreditation criteria, and, whenever applicable, other established requirements.

Accreditation process for the provider of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes shall be run on the basis of self-assessment and external assessment by NAQ of its competence and capacity for

conformity with the established requirements (accreditation criteria). Upon accreditation, a provider operating assessment and recognition of learning outcomes for individuals shall assume a status of a Qualification Centre under the established professional qualifications.

Stakeholders – natural persons or legal entities impacted by the activities of Qualification Centres or bodies they certified (persons to whom the Qualification Centre awarded the qualification).

Applicant – a person submitting an application to be admitted to assessment (certification)

Candidate – applicant who meets all the established preliminary requirements and admitted to assessment (certification).

Qualification Centres – entities authorized to assess and recognize learning outcomes of individuals (including also those attained through non-formal or informal education), awarding and/or validation of respective professional qualifications.

Accreditation Criteria for Qualification Centres (hereinafter – accreditation criteria) – key requirements under which competence and capacity of the provider is assessed to operate assessment and recognition of learning outcomes with the purpose of its accreditation as a Qualification Center.

Personnel – persons (both hired employees and external experts) who provide for operations of a Qualification Centre**.**

Certification – activities of a provider of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes performed with the purpose to award professional qualifications.

Assessment Standard – established requirements to the process of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes for an individual that shall be fulfilled to be awarded a professional qualification.

Other terms stated herein shall be used in the meaning stipulated in the Law of Ukraine "On Education."

1.4. General Requirements to Qualification Centres[3]

Qualification Centre shall be a legal entity or a structural unit of a legal entity, and shall be legally liable for the outcomes of its activities to assess and recognize learning outcomes.

Qualification Centre shall be responsible for the provision of justification and objectivity of decisions on awarding qualification (certification); the qualification shall be awarded only to those candidates who showed the respective competences (learning outcomes).

Qualification Centre shall not delegate any mandate on decision making on certification (awarding of qualification) to another operator.

In its operation of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes, the Qualification Center shall keep to the policy of unbiased approach, and act in an unprejudiced and non-discriminatory (fair) manner, as to applicants, candidates, and certified persons.

Qualification Centre shall have a competent personnel and sufficient financial resources to operate assessment and recognition of learning outcomes.

---

[3] The stated requirements meet the general requirements and principles for certification staff under Conformity assessment — General requirements for bodies operating certification of individuals/ ISO/IEC 17024:2012.

II. Accreditation Criteria for Qualification Centres

In order to undergo accreditation, providers operating assessment and recognition of learning outcomes of individuals shall be assessed under certain criteria for assessment of activities of Qualification Centers (hereinafter – accreditation criteria).

Accreditation criteria include the following elements: principles (categories of excellence, statements of excellence), quality standards (key requirements, key goals) and the related criteria.

Each quality standard includes several related criteria. In order to validate quality standard conformity (key requirements), a Qualification Centre shall demonstrate its conformity to all criteria under the standard.

Quality standards are divided under the following principles (excellence categories):

1. **Management and Organizational Efficiency**

Qualification Centre shall have an efficient system of management and organizational structure to provide for operations to assess and recognize learning outcomes of individuals, and to award professional qualifications.

2. **Quality Assurance**

Qualification Centre shall have an established strategy and procedures on quality assurance of the certification process that guarantee reliability, objectivity, and validity of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes of candidates.

3. **Administration and Support**

Administration and support of certification process shall meet the assessment standards, the needs of candidates and other stakeholders. Qualification Centre shall continuously review its policy to provide for sufficient resources and support for certification process.

4. **Development of Control and Assessment Materials (Assessment Tools)**

Qualification Centre shall demonstrate the required experience and competence in developing assessment tools (control and assessment materials) under the respective Assessment Standard (professional qualification).

5. **Assessment and Recognition of Learning Outcomes**

Qualification Centre shall provide for organization and conduct of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes under established requirements. The personnel involved into certification shall have the respective competence and required qualification. Due conditions for operation of assessment shall be provided.

2.1. Management and Organizational Efficiency

> *Qualification Centre shall have an efficient system of management and organizational structure to provide for operation the assessment and recognition of learning outcomes of individuals, and awarding of professional qualifications.*

Key Requirements/ Quality standard	1. Management system and organizational structure of a Qualification Centre shall provide for the possibility to act in an independent, professional, unbiased, and non-discriminatory manner
Criteria indicator	1.1. The role of a provider (organization) as a Qualification Center shall be clearly separated from its other functions. 1.2. Efficient measures are taken for the management of potential conflict of interests. 1.3. Roles and mandates of partner (subcontracting) organizations on assessment activities shall be clearly specified (such as in case of delegating assessment mandate to another entity or individual).
Recommendations/ Possible validation	Other roles of a provider (organization) shall not pose obstacles and shall not limit the possibility to operate assessment and recognition of learning outcomes. The roles, liability, mandate, and reporting of the personnel shall be clearly identified and distributed in a manner to provide for efficient fulfilment of functions/attainment of the goals by the qualification centre. Qualification Centre shall run the policy of an unbiased approach, and document how to minimize the potential sources of the conflict of interest. There are specific agreements on fulfilment of certain duties (functions) with partner (subcontracting) organizations (in case of operating assessment / providing conditions for assessment by other provider than the Qualification Centre).

Key Requirements/ Standard	2. Efficient management of the qualification centre is provided
Criteria	2.1. Decision making shall be made on the basis of objective information (factual data) 2.2. Goals and strategic priorities of Qualification Centre's activities on qualifications shall be clearly established and account for needs and interests of stakeholders 2.3. There is a policy of continuous development of activities of a Qualification Centre to meet the needs of candidates and other stakeholders 2.4. Possibilities and support (encouragement) shall be provided for professional advancement of the Qualification Centre personnel
Recommendations/ Possible validation	Qualification Centre shall justify its decisions on the basis of collected objective data. Qualification Centre shall select qualification to operate assessment and recognition of learning outcomes for individuals on the basis of identifying market/population needs for qualifications in the respective territory (number of potential candidates), availability of other Qualification Centres in the respective territory, available material and human resources or possibilities to engage them. Qualification Centre shall actively cooperate with the stakeholders, and has implemented procedures for feedback, response to complaints, etc.

	Procedures for professional development of the personnel shall be provided.

Key Requirements/ Standard	**3. Efficient business planning is done**
Criteria	3.1. Qualification Centre shall draft and implement business plans to improve available and implement new services 3.2. Annual formal performance assessment of the Qualification Centre shall be conducted
Recommendations/ Possible validation	Business plan shall include the respective provisions on all qualifications awarded by the qualification centre, identify objectives of operations, and a marketing strategy, with account for current and future needs of the Qualification Centre and stakeholders. Analysis of operations of the Qualification Centre shall be provided, and the assessment of profitability of the services rendered.

2.2. Quality assurance

Qualification Centre shall have an established strategy and procedures for quality assurance of certification process that guarantee reliability, objectivity, and validity of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes for candidates.

Key Requirements/ Quality standard	**4. Qualification Centre shall have an established strategy and procedures of quality assurance for certification process that underlie the development of the culture of continuous quality improvement**
Criteria indicator	4.1. Procedures of internal quality assurance shall cover all stages and elements of certification process, and shall provide for conformity of requirements of assessment standards under the respective professional qualifications 4.2. Quality assurance certification shall be operated on a regular basis and shall be an integral part of the management system of the Qualification Centre, including activities of partner (subcontracting) organizations 4.3. Efficiency of the internal quality assurance process shall be provided
Recommendations/ Possible validation	Internal quality assurance procedures and measures shall be clearly documented and provide for conformity of certification requirements with assessment standards under respective professional qualifications. Internal quality assurance measures shall cover all stages and elements of certification process, including: - Development of control and assessment materials (assessment tools); - Administrative procedures; - Registration of candidates and certification; - Planning and operation of assessment; - Appeal against decision, response to complaints, equal opportunities policy; - Requirements to personnel and engagement of external experts.

	Internal quality assurance system shall meet the goals and strategic priorities of Qualification Centre activities, and also cover activities of partner (subcontracting) organizations.
	There is a practice to collect and analyse feedback from key stakeholders and customers on quality / efficiency of services of the Qualification Centre.
	It is provided the informing of personnel and stakeholders on the strategy, procedures, and standards of quality assurance for Qualification Centre. Roles, responsibilities, and mandate of the personnel on the internal quality assurance system shall be defined, distributed, and understood by everyone, including also in all partner (subcontracting) organizations (assessment centres).
	Effectiveness and efficiency of the functioning of internal quality assurance system are traced. Qualification Centre operates internal assessment / control for quality of certification, at least once a year. On the basis of its results, respective corrective measures are taken to improve the available system of assessment and certification. The personnel in charge shall be informed on the results of such assessment (check/internal audit).

2.3. Administration and Support

Administration of certification process shall be in line with the assessment standards, needs of candidates and other stakeholders. Qualification Centre shall continuously review their policy to provide for sufficient resources and support for certification process.

Key Requirements/ Quality standard	5. Qualification Centre shall provide for efficient policy and procedures supporting certification process, and in accordance with assessment standards
Criteria indicator	5.1. The system or organization of operations of Qualification Center shall provide support for performance of its key functions: - developing control and assessment materials (assessment tools); - organization and conduct of certification under the established qualifications (qualifying assessment); - awarding the respective qualification (issuance and registration of a document that validates attainment of professional qualification); - quality assurance of certification process (operating internal assessment). 5.2. Established competence level and the number of personnel sufficient to provide efficient support for the qualification center for performance of its functions / reaching its objectives. 5.3. It is provided initial and advanced training of personnel according to their functions, training needs, and development strategy (business plan) of the Qualification Center. 5.4. Sufficient material resources are provided to support the certification process, including also for development of assessment tools, organization and conduct of assessment under requirements of assessment standard. 5.5. It is provided conformity of facilities where assessment is undertaken, working stations, equipment, materials, and other items and work means to job safety requirements, sanitary standards, and other legal regulations.

Recommendations/ Possible validation	Qualification Centre shall have documented procedures of assessment (certification) under established qualifications that provide for application of assessment methods established by respective assessment standards, and cover all stages of certification process.

Requirements to competence of the personnel involved into certification process and quality assurance shall be determined with account for the relevant assessment standards. Respective duties and tasks for the personnel of all categories shall be clearly defined. There shall be respective procedures for employment / selection for personnel.

Procedures / plan is provided for training and professional advancement for the personnel, as well as needs assessment for such training.

Material resources required for efficient support of certification process under established qualifications shall be clearly defined.

Available respective supporting documents on conformity of facilities, working stations, equipment, materials, and other items and means of labour with job safety requirements, sanitary provisions, and other requirements. |

Key Requirements/ Quality standard	**6. Qualification Centre shall have an efficient communication strategy in line with goals and strategic priorities of its operations**
Criteria indicator	Qualification Centre shall:

6.1. Cooperate with the National Agency for Qualifications, respective sectoral council, professional association, other developers of professional standards/assessment standards with the purpose to support improvement or development of respective professional qualifications.
6.2. Cooperate with partner (subcontracting) organizations, other key stakeholders on organizing and conduct of certification under respective professional qualifications and on operations of Qualification Centre.
6.3. Cooperate with educational institutions, other education providers on conformity of educational services with requirements of professional qualifications.
6.4. Cooperate with other qualification centres with the purpose exchange experience and improve certification procedures.
6.5. Support monitoring of their activities and activities of partner (subcontracting) organizations on the part of NAQ.
6.6. Provide for efficient internal communications.
6.7. Provide for access of information on assessment criteria and certification process, respective consulting and informing of customers (applicants), candidates, other stakeholders to support them and spread information on possibilities to attain respective qualifications.
6.8. Provide for protection of confidential information received during awarding of qualification.
6.9. Provide for disclosure of information on the awarded qualification, entering information and transfer of data that need to be entered to the Register of Qualifications, to the National Agency for Qualifications (NAQ). |

Recommendations/ Possible validation	Efficient communication shall be operated between qualification center and NAQ, sectoral councils, professional associations, other developers of professional standards/assessment standards and stakeholders.

There are available respective agreements (contracts) with partner (subcontracting) organizations, other stakeholders.

Qualification Centre shall provide access of the NAQ to respective information on their operations and operations of partner organizations related to provide for certification process.

There shall be provided understanding, implementation, and abidance by respective policies on all structural levels of a Qualification Centre, including also in partner (subcontracting) organizations. The personnel is provided with the relevant documentation for performance of their functions. Regular meetings of the personnel involved in certification process are taking place, with the purpose to exchange experience, notify on the changes on certification process, standardization of assessment practices in a qualification centre.

Various forms of informing shall be used: awareness campaigns (events), awareness meetings, information materials, advisory support, participation in demo assessment, posting information on websites and in social media, conduct of training /briefings, providing guidelines (recommendations), etc.

The available communications system of the Qualification Centre shall provide for protection of confidential information and shall protect it against an unauthorized access thereto.

Available procedures to provide for entering information and transfer of data to NAQ within the relevant format and timeline. |

Key Requirements/ Quality standard	**7. Qualification Centre shall have the policy and procedures on approving partner organizations**
Criteria indicator	7.1. Qualification Centre shall provide that all partner partner (subcontracting) organizations shall be capable (competent) to fulfil established mandate (functions) and conform with requirements on quality assurance established by the Qualification Centre
Recommendations/ Possible validation	Qualification Centre shall have a procedure for assessment (inspection/audit) and monitoring of activities of partner (subcontracting) organizations for conformity to due /relevant accreditation criteria.
Qualification Centre shall offer to partner organizations support and consultancy on established requirements on quality assurance and procedures for assessment (inspection/audit) for conformity to fulfil the delegated powers.
Partner (subcontracting) organizations (assessment centres) shall implement measures on internal quality assurance conformant with internal quality assurance system of the Qualification Center.

Key Requirements/ Quality standard	**8. Qualification Centre shall have transparent procedures for appealing against decisions and submitting complaints**

ETF Working together Learning for life
European Training Foundation

Criteria indicator	8.1 Possibility shall be provided for appealing against decisions and for filing complaints about the certification process, and efficient response to their judgements
Recommendations/ Possible validation	Qualification Centre shall have publicized procedures for submission, consideration, and approval of decisions on appeals and complaints related to appealing against assessment process and recognition of learning outcomes, decisions on partner organizations, and decisions on certification results. On the basis of judgements for statements of appeal and complaints, if required, respective corrective measures shall be taken.

Key Requirements/ Quality standard	**9. Qualification Centre shall have an efficient system of registration and certification of candidates**
Criteria indicator	9.1 It shall be provided that applicants who fulfilled the established eligibility requirements to access the assessment (certification), receive access to assessment and are registered by the qualification centre. 9.2 It shall be provided that a candidate successfully fulfilling all assessment requirements under qualification or the part thereof, shall receive a document on attainment of respective qualification or the part thereof, according to the established format, and within the timeline set by the Qualification Centre. 9.3 It shall be provided that documents for certification results are issued only to those candidates who successfully fulfilled all assessment requirements under the qualification or the part thereof. 9.4 It shall be provided respective procedures on prevention of awarding of qualification following deceptive (nonintegral) actions during the assessment process, unjustified or erroneous decisions.
Recommendations/ Possible validation	Procedures on registration and certification of candidates shall be followed. Qualification Centre shall approve a format and content of all qualifying documents it issues. Qualification Centre shall issue documents under the established format on attainment of qualification or the part thereof. Decision on awarding of qualification (certification) shall be adopted on the basis of information (evidence) collected during assessment. Measures shall be taken on prevention of awarding of qualification due to deceptive (nonintegral) actions during the assessment process, unjustified or erroneous decisions.

Key Requirements/ Quality standard	**10. Qualification Center shall follow equal opportunities policy**
Criteria indicator	10.1. Qualification Center shall have a public policy of non-discrimination and equal opportunities, in line with the acting law.
Recommendations/ Possible validation	Policy of non-discrimination and equal opportunities shall be provided for all applicants, candidates, and the personnel. It shall be provided that all candidates have equal opportunities to undergo assessment. Qualification Center shall have procedures to provide for special conditions for assessment that would be accessible for candidates who wish to use them for various reasons (such as persons with special needs), while at

the same time following the requirements of assessment standard. Such special conditions take into account the candidate's needs and do not offer to them any unfair advantages.

Procedures of assessment (certification) in the Qualification Center shall not have any unjustified limitations that could prevent provision of special conditions for assessment of candidates with special needs.

It shall be provided that candidates who failed to timely take the assessment for compelling reasons have the right to undergo the assessment.

Key Requirements/ Quality standard	11. Qualification Centre shall have procedures for unfair practices
Criteria indicator	11.1. It shall be established procedures and actions of Qualification Center on any cases of unfair practices or suspicion for such practices.
Recommendations/ Possible validation	Qualification Centre shall undertake investigation for any suspected unfair practices of the personnel, including activities of partner (subcontracting) organizations. Rights of persons who notified on possible cases of unfair practices shall be provided under the acting law.

Key Requirements/ Quality standard	12. Qualification Centre shall provide for record-keeping and storing of documentation on the certification process
Criteria indicator	Qualification Centre shall: 12.1. Provide for documenting of its policies and objectives to support their activities. 12.2. Provide for record-keeping and storing of data (information) related to certification process. 12.3. Provide for fulfilling of requirements on confidentiality of information.
Recommendations/ Possible validation	Qualification Centre shall have established procedures for record-keeping of documentation related to implementation of the relevant policies on certification. The personnel shall be provided with the relevant documentation for fulfilling of their functions. Qualification Centre shall have procedures for record-keeping and storing of data (information) related to certification process. Access to such information (data) shall be provided in conformity with the confidentiality requirements. Information on applicants, candidates, and persons with awarded qualification (certified persons) shall include data validating efficient fulfilment of assessment requirements under qualification. Qualification Centre shall keep records for the issued documents on awarded qualification. Storage of such data (information) shall be provided within the timeline established by the qualification centre, to provide for their contractual obligations and to operate external assessment /monitoring by NAQ. Qualification Centre shall provide for record-keeping and storing of data (information) related to assessment in partner organizations, and also activities of partner (subcontracting) organizations that does not challenge confidentiality of information. Requirements to non-disclosure and confidentiality of information shall be notified to al the personnel.

2.4. Development of control and assessment materials (assessment tools)

> *Qualification Centre demonstrated the necessary experience and competence to develop assessment tools (control and assessment materials) under the relevant Assessment Standard (professional qualification).*

Key Requirements/ Quality standard	**13. Control and assessment materials (assessment tools) shall meet the requirements of the relevant assessment standard under professional qualification**
Criteria indicator	13.1 Control and assessment materials (assessment tools) shall allow to efficiently operate reliable and credible assessment of competences under relevant professional qualification. 13.2 Regular update of control and assessment materials shall be provided.
Recommendations/ Possible validation	Control and assessment materials (assessment tools) shall be developed on the basis and in accordance with the requirements of assessment standard under relevant professional qualification, and shall allow for collecting sufficient information (evidence) to make a decision on certification. Control and assessment materials (assessment tools) shall be standardized to provide for objectivity and reliability (credibility) of assessment operated by the qualification centre and/or partner (subcontracting) organizations. There shall be regular meetings of the personnel involved in the certification process, in order to exchange experience and generalize information on assessment practices. Regular review (update) shall be provided for control and assessment materials with account for assessment practices in the qualification centre.

2.5. Assessment and Recognition of Learning Outcomes

> *Qualification Centre shall provide for organization and recognition of learning outcomes in accordance with established requirements. The personnel involved into certification shall have the relevant competence and required qualification. Due conditions shall be provided for operation of assessment.*

Key Requirements/ Quality standard	**14. Qualification Centre shall provide for organization and operation of assessment under unified requirements and in accordance with assessment standard**
Criteria indicator	14.1. Certification procedure shall provide for reliability, objectivity, and validity for assessment of competences (learning outcomes) of candidates in accordance with assessment standard. 14.2. Unified requirements shall be provided for organization and operation in all partner (subcontracting) organizations, in accordance with in accordance with assessment standards under established qualifications. 14.3. Regular inspection/ monitoring shall be conducted for operation of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes. 14.4. It shall be provided the non-disclosure of information on control and assessment materials and confidentiality of candidates' materials.
Recommendations/ Possible validation	Qualification Centre shall have the documented procedures for assessment (certification) under established qualifications, that provide for application of assessment methods established by the relevant assessment standards, and cover all stages of certification process.

Assessment process shall be planned and organized so as to provide for objective and systematic (integral) assessment of candidate's competences, in accordance with assessment standard requirements. The personnel making decisions on awarding of the qualification shall not be involved into assessment (exam) or training of the candidate.

Qualification Centre shall provide for partner organizations abiding by all requirements of assessment (certification) procedures under established qualifications.

Qualification Centre shall conduct regular inspection / monitoring of assessors' performance and reliability of their judgements. On the basis of such assessment / inspection results, the relevant corrective actions and measures shall be taken to improve the available practice for assessment and certification.
Qualification Centre shall make all possible efforts to simplify assessment procedures in order to avoid unnecessary bureaucracy, and to make them more practical to reduce the prime cost of assessment.

Assessment (certification) procedure shall include requirements for non-disclosure of information on assessment materials and for confidentiality of candidates' materials. Requirements for non-disclosure and confidentiality of information shall be made known for all the personnel.

Key Requirements/ Quality standard	15. Qualification Centre shall provide for relevant conditions to operate assessment
Criteria indicator	15.1. Sufficient number of personnel shall be provided, with the relevant competence and required qualification to operate the assessment and recognition of learning outcomes. 15.2. Material resources required for due operation of assessment shall be provided to meet the requirements of the relevant assessment standard and other established requirements. 15.3. Qualification Centre shall provide for fulfilling of due conditions to operate assessment in all partner (subcontracting) organizations.
Recommendations/ Possible validation	Assessment and recognition of learning outcomes shall be operated by the personnel who have respective competence and the necessary qualification to conduct assessment and recognition of learning outcomes under established qualification, as stipulated by the Assessment Standard. Material resources shall be determined under requirements on conditions to conduct assessment under Assessment Standard, and shall be sufficient to conduct assessment under respective qualification, and shall be accessible to all candidates. Facilities hosting the assessment, working stations, equipment, materials, and other items and means of labour shall meet the requirements for job safety, sanitary provisions, and other regulations. There shall be available the relevant validating documents on conformity of facilities, working stations, equipment, materials, and other items and means of labour under requirements of job safety, sanitary provisions, and other requirements. Qualification Center shall provide for partner organizations to fulfill all requirements related to conformity of qualification and competence of the personnel and material resources to assessment standards under professional qualifications.

III. Procedures for the accreditation and monitoring

For attainment (recognition) of the right to award professional qualifications, a provider operating activities on assessment and recognition of learning outcomes for individuals shall have the status of a Qualification Centre.

The status of a Qualification Centre shall be granted upon the results of the of accreditation process operated by NAQ on the basis of self-assessment and external assessment of competence and capacity of a provider of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes for conformity to accreditation criteria and other established requirements.

Conformity level of provider's activities on assessment and recognition of learning outcomes with accreditation criteria shall be established in two stages: by means of self-assessment by the Qualification Center and by NAQ external assessment.

Both self-assessment, and NAQ external assessment are key processes to provide for quality of certification process underlying provision of due assessment and recognition of learning outcomes in accordance with assessment standards.

Self-assessment (internal quality audit) is an integral part of the internal quality assurance system in a Qualification Centre, of processes internal assessment and monitoring. Self-assessment shall be operated in order to assess and determine efficiency of processes and procedures to provide for certification quality, to improve activities on assessment and recognition of learning outcomes.

External assessment shall be operated by NAQ with the purpose to provide for conformity of certification process in a Qualification Centre with the established requirements for awarding of qualification (assessment standards requirements)[4], and trust to quality and recognition of qualifications awarded in the qualification centre. Thus, external assessment shall validate the findings of internal assessment enhancing trust to independent assessment in Qualification centres in general, both on a national scale, and internationally.

3.1. Self-assessment

During self-assessment, conformity of certification process (assessment and recognition of learning outcomes of individuals) shall be tested with the requirements of assessment standard, efficiency of the management of system in a Qualification Centre, and internal assurance of certification quality.

Self-assessment shall be used in accreditation process. Provider of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes shall draft a self-assessment report on conformity with accreditation criteria.

To draft the self-assessment report, a provider of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes shall:
■ analyse the activities on assessment and recognition of learning outcomes in terms of conformity with all accreditation criteria: quality standards (key requirements) and associated criteria (indicators);
■ collect the data required to validate the conformity (documents, information, reports, etc.), in accordance with recommendations included in the description of accreditation criteria, among other things;

---

[4] Pursuant to Article 34 of the Law of Ukraine "On education", procedures of awarding (award), validation of qualifications shall be regulated by special laws and other regulatory legal acts.

- justify conformity with accreditation criteria on the basis of the collected factual data:

    а) identify any non-conformities with accreditation criteria and possibilities for improvement (strong and weak points);

    б) determine corrective actions and measures (plan of actions) to provide for conformity with accreditation criteria and to improve available assessment and certification practices.

3.2. Accreditation procedure

Accreditation process shall be operated on the basis of external assessment and self-assessment report drafted by provider of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes. During the accreditation, NAQ shall assess whether the provider or their personnel operating activities on assessment and recognition of learning outcomes:
- have the competence to operate certification;
- operate assessment and recognition of learning outcomes in accordance with assessment standards requirements;
- meet the established accreditation criteria.

NAQ shall assess conformity to assessment standard requirements, accreditation criteria, other established requirements, both during initial accreditation, and during surveillance, re-assessment, extraordinary assessment, and in case of application for expansion of accreditation scope.

Accreditation shall be operated upon the initiative of a provider operating activities on assessment and recognition of learning outcomes of individuals.

Key stages of accreditation process shall be:
1. Submission of an application for accreditation
    1.1. Submission of application by a provider of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes.
    1.2. Consideration of documents and information attached to the application.
2. Preparation for and operation of accreditation activities:
    2.1. Establishing an expert group on accreditation.
    2.2. Drafting a plan of actions for accreditation.
3. External assessment (accreditation expert evaluation):
    3.1. Conducting an analysis of provided information and documentation.
    3.2. Conducting an on-site inspection (audit)
    3.3. Analysis of obtained data and addressing non-conformities
4. Making a decision on accreditation
    4.1. Assessment of accreditation activities results and providing recommendations.
    4.2. Making a decision.

Upon accreditation (receiving a status of a Qualification Centre and issuing an accreditation document), competence and current operations of the Qualification Centre shall be controlled by means of regular surveillance (monitoring). Before the expiry of accreditation document, a re-assessment shall be operated of the Qualification Centre (next (regular) accreditation).

3.2.1. Application for accreditation

Submitting an application

In order to be awarded a status of a Qualification Center and the right to award professional qualifications, a provider of activities on assessment and recognition of learning outcomes of individuals (hereinafter – an applicant) shall submit to the National Agency for Qualifications (NAQ) an application for accreditation or for expansion of accreditation scope.

In case a provider (applicant) submits an application on behalf of several partner (subcontracting) organizations, an applicant shall provide for availability of agreements signed between partner organizations on distribution of powers (functions) in assessment.

The application shall include information that allows to identify:
■ a preferable scope of accreditation (list of professional qualifications under which certification is planned to be operated);
■ an applicant's right to undergo accreditation (relevant details about the applicant, including their name, address, information on legal status, structural relations, functions, liabilities, etc.);
■ information on all processes (distribution of powers and functions) used by the applicant under terms and conditions of partner (subcontracting) relations (outsourced) that will impact conformity with accreditation criteria (such as providing conditions for assessment of learning outcomes of individuals by a provider other than applicant).

The application shall have attached a self-assessment report and other documentation relevant to validate conformity with accreditation criteria and other established requirements.

Consideration of documents and information attached to the application

NAQ shall consider application for accreditation and the submitted documents, check the completeness of accompanying documents. In case information and documents are incomplete or failed to be submitted, the applicant shall finalize the submitted set of documents. The applicant shall grant access to all data and documentation associated with accreditation process, upon NAQ's request.

NAQ shall analyse submitted application and the accompanying documents before the start of accreditation expert evaluation (external assessment), in order to make sure that:
■ information on the applicant and their quality assurance system for certification is sufficient for operation of external assessment;
■ requirements to operation of accreditation expert evaluation (external assessment) are clearly defined, documented, and made known to the applicant;
■ any known misunderstandings between NAQ and the applicant have been settled;
■ NAQ has a competence and capacity to perform the accreditation process;
■ Preferable accreditation scope, the required duration of external assessment and any other issues that have an impact on accreditation process have been taken into account (such as threats to unbiased position);
■ Records are kept on justification of decision to operate accreditation.

3.2.2. Preparation to operate activities for accreditation (external assessment)

In case of no remarks or upon improvement of application, NAQ shall make an agreement with the applicant on conducting accreditation, establish an expert group on accreditation, and make a program and plan of actions for accreditation.

Establishing an expert group for accreditation

NAQ shall select a group of experts for accreditation who will operate external assessment for the applicant. Composition and size of the expert group shall be determined with account for the following:

- accreditation scope (of professional qualifications under which certification is planned) – accreditation scope requires including into an expert group for accreditation the experts with the relevant technical competence;
- accreditation goals (initial, re-assessment, expansion of accreditation scope), planned duration of accreditation activities, availability of partner (subcontracting) organizations, accreditation criteria conformity assessment is undertaken for;
- whether accreditation is operated under an individual professional qualification, or under two or more qualifications at the same time;
- available experience for operating accreditation activities (external assessment/ audit), such as experience for performing activities for external assessment of an applicant;
- possibility to act in an unbiased and non-discriminatory manner as to performance of certain activity on external assessment.

NAQ shall identify requirements to competence criteria of the personnel involved into performing activities on accreditation.

Competence of an expert group shall be identified on the basis of the application's preliminary analysis. The required level of competence shall be found with the entire group in general, but not with individual group members. Group leader shall be competent enough to perform the duties of the accreditation group leader, and shall be responsible for their activities and judgements.

Group leader shall distribute duties and tasks to conduct the audit of specific processes, functions, or activities, with account for the necessary competence, effectiveness and efficiency of using the opportunities of the accreditation group members. In order to achieve accreditation goals, during external assessment (audit) the accreditation group leader can introduce changes to distribution of duties.

When conducting external assessment, upon agreement between NAQ and the applicant, there could be attending observers (such as members of an organization undergoing external assessment, consultants, NAQ staff, representatives of regulatory bodies, other persons, upon justification) and/or accompanying persons (persons appointed to support accreditation group members in operating external assessment/ audit). Accreditation group shall provide for lack of influence of observers and accompanying persons on the process or results of the audit.

Accreditation group may not include representatives of the applicant where external assessment is undertaken, or organizations interested in the accreditation outcomes.

The applicant shall timely be notified on the group composition. The applicant may object against including into accreditation group any persons (experts) for objective reasons (such as in cases when a member has or has had relations with the applicant that might threaten the unbiased attitude).

Drafting plan of actions on accreditation

NAQ shall define the program of actions on accreditation – such as describe activities to be undertaken during accreditation, including the plan for on-site inspection (audit), to be agreed with the applicant.

The program of accreditation actions can include information on the following:
- accreditation goals;
- scope of accreditation (professional qualifications under which certification is planned to be undertaken);
- accreditation criteria the conformity assessment is operated for;
- grounds for operating accreditation (initial, re-assessment, expansion of accreditation scope);
- composition of accreditation group;

- dates, venue and expected time (duration) to operate on-site external assessment (audit);
    - distribution of tasks between the accreditation group members;
    - observers and accompanying persons;
    - requirements to providing for confidentiality of information;
    - list of organizations and persons given a judgement of on-site external assessment (audit), etc.

Accreditation goals defined by the program of accreditation works shall describe what needs to be achieved by the inspection, and shall cover the following aspects:

а) determining conformity of certification process of assessment and recognition subject (applicant) with assessment standard requirements;

б) determining the capacity of an applicant to provide for conformity with accreditation criteria, other established (legal, regulatory, contractual) requirements;

в) determining efficiency of the quality assurance system of the applicant with the purpose to make sure that the applicant is capable of providing for attainment of expected goals;

г) identifying possibilities for improvement of available practices of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes (areas for prospective improvement of the systems), is applicable

When developing the program of works for accreditation, NAQ shall account for complexity of accreditation scope, the process and procedure of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes (certification), internal quality assurance system of the applicant. The factors also play a role when conducting random inspections in the process of external assessment while providing assessment of a representative part of activities for assessment of learning outcomes, documents, and personnel of the applicant.

Moreover, when determining the program of works for accreditation it shall take into account the findings of prior audits and monitorings (in case of re-assessment (regular accreditation)), availability of partner (subcontracting) organizations, the demonstrated level of effectiveness and efficiency of the functioning of internal quality assurance system in applicant's certification.

Whenever necessary, members of accreditation groups shall develop templates of working documents (checklists, forms for recording observations, forms for documenting additional data, a. o.). Working documents shall be such so as not to limit the conduct of additional measures that might be needed in the process of accreditation.

3.2.3. External assessment (accreditation expert evaluation)

Key stages (tasks) of external assessment are:
- analysis of provided information and documentation (assessment of self-assessment report for conformity with accreditation criteria);
- on-site analysis of the applicant (checking the findings of on-site self-assessment report);
- analysis of the received data and addressing non-conformities.

Analysis of provided information and documentation

The appointed accreditation expert group shall do the analysis of self-assessment report for conformity with accreditation criteria, consider all documents and information accessed.

Objectives of the analysis of the provided documentation and information shall be:
- identification of adequacy (completeness, conformity degree with accreditation criteria, relationships, lack of internal controversies) of documents;
- identification of possible non-conformities with accreditation criteria in order to eliminate them before the start of on-site inspection;

- identification of relevance to continue the accreditation works of the applicant; and in case of establishing such relevance, the development (specification) of the plan for on-site inspection.

Self-assessment report and other provided documents (data) assessed in a structured manner, under established accreditation criteria – quality standards and the related criteria (indicators) and recommendations included in the criteria description.

The results of conducted analysis shall be documented and informed to the applicant. Whenever in the process of analysis of information and documents any issues are identified, termed as significant non-conformities with accreditation criteria and other established requirements, the documents shall be returned to the applicant to finalize them, with the specified elements where corrective measures need be developed and implemented to eliminate non-conformities before the start of on-site assessment.

The judgement shall be provided on the relevance or irrelevance for conducting on-site assessment (or temporary termination of external assessment (accreditation expert evaluation) to solve the issues related to the documentation). On-site assessment shall be conducted only upon eliminating the identified non-conformities.

Conducting the on-site assessment (audit)

The goal for conducting an on-site assessment is to provide for collection of sufficient evidence to enable NAQ to adopt the justified decision on accreditation.

Preparation for on-site assessment of the applicant shall be conducted on the basis of results of analysis of documentation and standard procedure (plan) for on-site external assessment.

In case of positive judgements of documentation analysis, leader of expert group on accreditation shall draft the final plan for on-site assessment (audit plan) established by the program of works on accreditation.

The plan for on-site assessment shall be beforehand notified to the applicant and the dates shall be preliminary agreed for on-site assessment.

The plan for on-site assessment (audit) shall cover at least the following aspects:
- selective testing of information and evidence for conformity with all established accreditation criteria and requirements of other legal documents;
- observation over professionalism and competence of the applicant's personnel involved into the process of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes during the assessment measures;
- assessment of planning and conduct of internal audits, and analysis of activities for assessment and recognition of learning outcomes on the part of the applicant's management (self-assessment).

Members of the expert accreditation group shall collect information in accordance with the goals, area and criteria for accreditation, and shall estimate it. The information used as evidence for the audit must be verifiable. Audit evidence shall be registered.

Methods of information collection shall include:
- interview (surveying the personnel);
- observation over processes and activities of the applicant, working environment and assessment conditions;
- analysis of documentation and records (including also information from data bases, websites).

If individual processes (powers, functions) are delegated by applicant to other providers, during initial accreditation it shall be tested both the applicant, and all its partner (subcontracting) organizations (branches).

The applicant shall do preparatory measures to operate assessment on-site, provide access of accreditation expert group to all relevant documents and shall offer full support in the process of external assessment (accreditation expert evaluation).

The measures of on-site assessment shall be planned in the manner so as to enable an expert group to operate assessment of a representative number of cases on assessment and recognition of learning outcomes, and to operate due assessment of competence and performance of the applicant.

Analysis of received data and addressing the non-conformities

Accreditation expert group shall operate analysis of all evidence data collected during assessment on-site (audit). The evidence shall be assessed by the accreditation criteria. The results of such assessment may show the conformity or non-conformity of accreditation criteria, or indicate to possibilities for improvement.

The results (audit data) and evidence validating them shall be included into report on external assessment (results of accreditation expert evaluation, hereinafter – report) and shall be informed to the applicant. The report shall also include any identified non-conformities.

The report shall be drafted by the expert accreditation group as a summary of the audit, upon consideration of all audit data and other information collected in the course of the audit, for conformity with the goals and accreditation criteria. The report shall include audit conclusions on the following aspects:
■ degree of conformity of the applicant with accreditation criteria;
■ efficiency of quality assurance system of the applicant and on capacity to improve the process of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes;
■ proposals on accreditation.

Audit findings shall be presented to the applicant, including recommendations on accreditation. Any non-coordinated opinions on the audit data, or audit opinions between the expert group on accreditation and the applicant shall be discussed and settled, if possible.

The report shall be submitted to NAQ. Threat, the applicant shall implement corrective measures to eliminate the identified non-conformities and present to NAQ the information on which corrective measures are taken or planed during the period agreed with NAQ.

NAQ shall check the effectiveness of the implemented corrective measures. Such checking of efficiency of implemented corrective measures on the identified non-conformities can be operated on the basis of consideration of documentation submitted by the applicant, or in case of necessity, NAQ can conduct complete or partial (brief) assessment on-site (additional audit).

3.2.4. Making decision on accreditation

Assessment of accreditation findings and suggested recommendations

NAQ shall adopt decisions on accreditation on the grounds of received data and audit findings, and any other relevant information (collected evidence data, information on elimination of identified non-conformities, etc.). NAQ shall assess impartiality, justification, and completeness (sufficiency) of the provided information.

Information submitted by the expert group on accreditation to NAQ for decision making on accreditation shall include the following:

- external assessment report (findings of accreditation expert evaluation);
- information on identified non-conformities and their elimination — corrective measures implemented by the applicant;
- validation of the fact that on-site assessment (audit) goals have been fulfilled;
- recommendations on awarding accreditation or rejecting accreditation within the applied scope (professional qualifications);
- any other information that helps NAQ identify whether the applicant is a competent and capable, and conformant with accreditation criteria, and shall operate certification in accordance with the requirements of the respective assessment standard.

To provide for efficient consideration of results of accreditation works, whenever required (such as in case of different interpretations), NAQ can contact the respective sectoral (intersectoral) or professional council, professional association, sectoral employers association on offering a candidate of the expert in the respective field to analyse and offer recommendations on accreditation works results.

On the basis of the consideration (expert evaluation) and discussion of the report on external assessment (results of the accreditation expert evaluation) and other accreditation materials submitted by the expert group (NAQ committee?), one of the four options of assessment on accreditation shall be adopted:

1) applicant fully conforms with accreditation criteria;
2) applicant generally conforms with the accreditation criteria but some insignificant non-conformities have been identified on certain elements, and such that can be eliminated by taking corrective measures within a short period of time;
3) applicant has significant non-conformities that can be eliminated with the help of improvements (corrective measures) within a long period and need additional check on-site (additional audit);
4) applicant utterly non-conforms with the accreditation criteria, and requires crucial improvement that cannot be limited to implementation of individual corrective measures.

Adopting the decision

Decision on accreditation or rejection of accreditation shall be adopted by persons (NAQ members) who are not part of the accreditation expert group.

Depending on the type of assessment for accreditation works, NAQ shall adopt the decision on accreditation and awarding the status of a Qualification Centre, or rejection for accreditation under the claimed area (professional qualifications), such as:

In case (1), NAQ shall adopt a decision on accreditation .

In case (2), applicant shall offer to NAQ information on the plan of corrective measures to eliminate the identified non-conformities. During the term agreed with NAQ, the applicant shall present to NAQ the documents verifying the exercise of corrective measures. With members of the accreditation expert group, NAQ shall check the implementation of corrective measures. If required, an additional full or partial (brief) on-site assessment (audit) may be operated. NAQ shall adopt decisions on accreditation based on the results of considering the presented documented evidence, or additional on-site assessment.

In case (3), repeated external assessment shall be operated (accreditation expert evaluation, according to section 3.2.3). During the repeated external assessment, special focus is on e1ffectiveness of corrective measures by the Applicant. NAQ shall adopt decision on accreditation base don the results of repeated external assessment.

In case (4), the applicant shall be informed about the need to have the full scope accreditation works (pursuant to section 3.2). NAQ shall adopt the decision on rejection for accreditation.

In the event the decision on accreditation is taken (awarding the status of a Qualification Centre), NAQ shall issue to the Applicant a document on accreditation valid for x years. An agreement shall be concluded between the Qualification Centre (an accredited provider of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes) and the NAQ. It shall include rights and liabilities of the Qualification Centre and NAQ (such as on the mandatory access to information for NAQ).

3.3. Monitoring of Accredited Qualification Centres

NAQ shall operate monitoring of operations of the accredited Qualification Centers in order to provide for having the Qualification Center continue being competent and conformant with the requirements of the respective assessment standard, accreditation criteria, and other established requirements. Monitoring of the Qualification Centers shall include surveillance and re-assessment[5], as well as extraordinary assessment, if required, or the assessment to expand the accreditation scope.

3.3.1. Surveillance

Surveillance shall include conduct of activities for assessment on-site (audit), as stipulated above (section 3.2.3.):
■ Selective verification of information and evidence for conformity with all the established accreditation criteria and requirements of other regulatory documents;
■ Observation during the conduct of activities for assessment and recognition of learning outcomes to assess the factual competence of the Applicant's personnel involved into certification process;
■ Assessment of planning and conduct of internal audits and operations for assessment and recognition of learning outcomes on the part of the Applicant's management (self-assessment).

Surveillance plan shall be developed in a manner to assess the representative number of samples (sampled information) covered by the respective accreditation scope. However, the scope of assessment activities during surveillance is usually smaller than during initial accreditation, and depends on the findings of the previous activities of on-site assessment, on elimination of audit non-conformities identified before, the changes in the personnel, or changes in the system of internal quality assurance, or other changes related to the operations of the Qualification Center, and can impact the conformity with accreditation criteria.

Surveillance shall be operated at least once within the period between the initial accreditation and the first external re-assessment (and later, between the first and the following re-assessments), and shall be organized under procedures stipulated in section 3.2.3 on conducting assessment on-site (audit), and the analysis of received data and addressing non-conformities. The expert group to conduct surveillance shall be established under procedures stipulated in par. 3.2.2.

On the basis of the surveillance results, NAQ may verify, suspend, or cancel the validity of the accreditation document, or reduce the scope of accreditation.

3.3.2. Re-Assessment

Re-assessment (regular accreditation) shall be operated before the expiration date of the accreditation document. For re-assessment, NAQ shall take the same steps that in the process of initial accreditation

---

[5] NAQ shall choose in which manner to do the monitoring: either by combining surveillance and re-assessment (regular accreditation), or operate only the re-assessment.

described in section 3.2. At the same time, taking into account the findings of surveillance audits, NAQ may do the works for repeated assessment not in full scope.

The re-assessment activities shall not cover the assessment on-site (audit) or take into account the analysis findings for reports from previous surveillance audits and effectiveness of Qualification Center over the recent accreditation cycle.

3.3.3. Conducting extraordinary assessments

Conducting an extraordinary assessment depends on reasons that served as a basis for initiating it, and aimed at tackling certain issues for which it had been initiated.

NAQ may conduct extraordinary assessment of the Qualification Centre in the following events
- in order to check the degree of elimination of non-conformities and performance of corrective measures based on the findings of previous external assessment (audit);
- in the event a notification is received from the Qualification Centre on changes that might affect conformity with accreditation criteria verified during accreditation;
- in order to investigate complaints, consider appeals, particularly, when the analysis of a complaint or any other information testify only to the fact that Qualification Centre may not conform with accreditation criteria;
- in order to verify the possibility to resume the validity of the suspended document on accreditation.

Extraordinary assessment shall be conducted under procedures described in section 3.2.3., and may be exerted without doing the assessment on-site (audit), is sufficient materials have been provided needed for consideration and decision making.

3.3.4. Expansion of Accreditation Scope

If a Qualification Centre wishes to conduct certification under other professional qualifications (other scope of accreditation) than the accreditation received before, it shall submit the application for expansion of accreditation scope, as stated in section 3.2.1. General procedures to conduct works to expand accreditation scope is stipulated in section 3.2.

The scope of works to expand accreditation scope shall be established on the stages of application consideration and document analysis presented by the Qualification Centre. NAQ may do the activities for expansion of accreditation scope not in full scope, particularly, it may analyse only the documentation, in case of application for expansion of accreditation scope under the scope similar to the accredited area. Besides, activities to expand accreditation scope may be conducted in combination with the conduct of the regular surveillance audit (section 3.3.1.). Some aspects of organizing, management system, procedures and processes for quality assurance may be assessed in the process of initial accreditation, or during the preliminary monitoring activities.

3.4. Administrative Measures

In case of non-conformity of the Qualification Centre with accreditation criteria, NAQ may use such types of administrative measures:
- temporary suspension of the accreditation document's validity;
- cancellation of accreditation document;
- restriction (reduction) of accreditation scope.

Temporary suspension of accreditation document's validity in full scope or in part of accreditation scope implies that the Qualification Centre may not operate certification (award qualifications) for the period of temporary suspension of its validity. Upon resuming the validity of the suspended document, Qualification Centre may resume its certification activities.

Cancellation of the accreditation document implies that accreditation was cancelled in full scope and the Qualification Centre shall lose the right to award qualifications.

Restriction (reduction) of accreditation scope shall mean that accreditation of Qualification Centre remains without changes on certain professional qualifications, but at the same time, the right is lost to award professional qualifications for the scope that had been cancelled.

Decision on suspension of the accreditation document's validity shall be taken in the event when over the established term, the Qualification Centre may eliminate the causes for identified non-conformities by taking corrective measures agreed with NAQ. Verification of fulfilling conditions to resume the suspended document's validity can be done by NAQ by analysing documents presented by the Qualification Centre and/or by conducting the extraordinary assessment (short-term audit).

NAQ shall adopt decision on cancellation of the accreditation document's validity in the following events:
- if the findings of the surveillance audit show crucial non-conformity of the Qualification Centre with accreditation criteria and other established requirements (identified breaches cannot be eliminated within the established period of time);
- in case of changes in the requirements for accreditation, the Qualification Centre cannot provide conformity with the new requirements;
- if a Qualification Centre fully terminates its activities or terminates activity in the scope of accreditation, or fails to perform operations covered by the accreditation scope for a long time (over x months);
- if a Qualification Centre failed to take timely measures aimed at prevention of breaches of the Agreement with NAQ, such as fails to fulfil its financial liabilities to NAQ (such as on payment for accreditation works, surveillance audit);
- if a Qualification Centre failed to eliminate the causes (identified violations) within the term negotiated with NAQ, for which the accreditation document's validity was suspended;
- upon the Qualification Centre's request.

Qualification Centre may independently submit request to NAQ on suspension, cancellation of the accreditation document, or limitation of accreditation scope.

LIST OF SOURCES

1. Awarding body criteria/ Scottish Qualifications Authority, 2007. – 40 p.
2. Cedefop (2015). European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop reference series; No 104. http://dx.doi.org/10.2801/008370
3. CNFPA. Direcţia Standarde Ocupaţionale, Calificări şi Atestare. Criterii minime de performanţă pentru autorizarea centrelor de evaluare. http://www.patrosec.ro/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Criterii-minime-de-performanta-CEv_19_01_10-6.pdf
4. Conditions for being on the register of end-point assessment organisations. [Електронний ресурс].– Режим доступу: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conditions-for-being-on-the-register-of-end-point-assessment-organisations#introduction
5. Conformity assessment — General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons/ ISO/IEC 17024:2012
6. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning. 2012/C 398/01 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32012H1222%2801%29
7. EDUCAÇÃO E TRABALHO, SOLIDARIEDADE E SEGURANÇA SOCIAL. Portaria n.º 232/2016 de 29 de agosto. - Diário da República, 1.ª série — N.º 165 — 29 de agosto de 2016. https://data.dre.pt/eli/port/232/2016/08/29/p/dre/en/html
8. Ghid de utilizare pentru instrumentele de evaluare a competenţelor dobândite în context non-formal sau informal/ BUILD UP Skills QualiShell. Schema naţională de calificare pentru forţa de muncă din construcţii pentru realizarea de anvelope de înaltă performanţă ale clădirilor. - Aprilie 2015. http://www.iee-robust.ro/qualishell/downloads/D5-4_QualiShell_Ghid-utilizare-instrumente-evaluare-competente.pdf
9. Metodologia de certificare a calificărilor şi competenţelor (M4) şi ghidul de aplicare. Evaluarea competenţelor profesionale. – Bucureşti, 2009. https://www.academia.edu/4401413/Ghidul_de_aplicare_a_M4_-_Metodologia_de_certificare_a_calific%C7%8Erilor_%C5%9Fi_competen%C5%A3elor._Evaluarea_competen%C5%A3elor_profesionale
10. Pearson Edexcel and EDI NVQs and SVQs Delivery Guidance and QA Requirements 2016-17 – v1.0 September 2016. https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/Support/Quality%20Assurance/edexcel-edi-nvq-svq-delivery-guidance-qa-requirements.pdf
11. Professions act. Passed 22.05.2008 (Estonia) https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/523022015001/consolide
12. Regulation on Examination, Assessment, Evaluation and Certification of Vocational Qualifications Authority (Turkey) https://myk.gov.tr/TRR/File10.pdf
13. SQA Approval Guidance, 2012. http://www.ammatillinenkoulutusvienti.fi/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/SQA_SCQF_Approval_Guidance_v1.0.pdf
14. Systems and Qualification Approval Guide/ Scottish Qualifications Authority, - 2015. https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/Systems_and_Qualification_Approval_Guide.pdf
15. Акредитація освітніх програм (за матеріалами проекту QUAERE): методичний посібник / В.А. Бугров, А.П. Гожик, Д.В. Щеглюк та ін.; за заг. ред. Л.В. Губерського. – К.: ВПЦ "Київський університет", 2018. – 74 с. http://nmc.univ.kiev.ua/docs/Akreditation%20of%20study%20program.pdf
16. Вимоги до підприємств, установ, організацій для підтвердження результатів неформального професійного навчання осіб за робітничими професіями (Затверджено Наказ Міністерства соціальної політики України, Міністерства освіти і науки України 16.12.2013 № 875/1776) https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0003-14#n16
17. ДСТУ ISO 9000:2007 Системи управління якістю. Основні положення та словник термінів (ISO 9000:2005, IDT) https://dbn.at.ua/_ld/11/1128_432_iso9000-1-.pdf
18. ДСТУ ISO/IEC 17011:2005 Оцінка відповідності. Загальні вимоги до органів з акредитації, що акредитують органи з оцінки відповідності (ISO/IEC 17011:2004, IDT) http://quality.nuph.edu.ua/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/dstu_iso_17011_2005.pdf
19. Керівництво із застосування положень Постанови з акредитації та верифікації (ПАВ),

грудень 2017 https://menr.gov.ua/files/docs/Zmina_klimaty/
Керівництво%20із%20застосування%20положень%20Постанови%20з%20акредитації%20та
%20верифікації%20(ПАВ).pdf

20. Оцінка відповідності - Вимоги до органів, що здійснюють аудит і сертифікацію систем менеджменту згідно ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 (ЗД-08.10.32, Наказ НААУ від 01.02.2016 № 205-Я) https://naau.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/ZD-08.10.32_ISOIEC_17021_1.pdf

21. Порядок акредитації/ Витяг з Настанови з управління НААУ від 25.02.2019 № 261-Я https://naau.org.ua/dokumenti-dlya-akreditaciyi/poryadok-akreditaciyi/

22. Про затвердження Положення про акредитацію освітніх програм, за якими здійснюється підготовка здобувачів вищої освіти/ Наказ Міністерства освіти і науки України від 11.07.2019 № 977 https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0880-19

Annex 1. List of Accreditation Criteria

1. Management and organizational efficiency

Qualification Centre shall have an efficient system of management and organizational structure to provide for activities for assessment and recognition of learning outcomes for individuals, and awarding of professional qualifications.

Quality standard	**1. Management system and organizational structure of Qualification Centre enables operations in an independent, professional, impartial, and non-discriminatory manner**
Criteria	1.1. The role of an operator (organization) to act as a Qualification Centre is clearly separated from its other functions.
	1.2. Efficient measures are taken to manage the possible conflict of interests.
	1.3. Roles and powers of partner (subcontracting) organizations on assessment activities are clearly identified (such as in cases of delegating powers for assessment to another operator).

Quality standard	**2. Efficient management of the qualification centre is provided**
Criteria	2.1. Decision-making is done on the basis of objective information (factual data).
	2.2. Goals and strategic priorities of operations of the Qualification Center on qualifications are clearly identified and take into account the needs and interests of stakeholders.
	2.3. Policy of continuous development of the Qualification Centre is kept, in order to satisfy the needs of candidates and other stakeholders.
	2.4. Possibilities and incentivization (encouragement) are provided for professional growth of the Qualification Centre's personnel.

Quality standard	**3. Efficient business-planning is operated**
Criteria	3.1. Qualification Centre develops and implements business plans to improve available and introduce new services.
	3.2. Annual formal assessment of Qualification Centre's performance is conducted.

2. Quality assurance

Qualification Centre shall have an identified strategy and procedures on quality assurance of certification process that guarantee reliability, impartiality, and validity of assessment an drecognition of learning outcomes of candidates.

Quality standard	**4. Qualification Centre has an identified strategy and procedures for quality assurance of certification process that guarantee the formation of the culture of continuous quality improvement.**
Criteria	4.1. Procedures of internal quality assurance cover all stages and elements of certification process, and provide for conformity with requirements of assessment standards under certain professional qualifications.
	4.2. Quality assurance certification shall be operated on an ongoing basis, on a systematic basis, and is an integral part of the management system of Qualification Centre, including activities of partner (subcontracting) organizations.
	4.3. Efficiency of internal quality assurance process is provided.

3. Administration and support

Administration and support of certification process shall meet the assessment standards, the needs of candidates and other stakeholders. Qualification Centre shall continuously review their policy to provide for sufficient resources and support of certification process.

Quality standard	**5. Qualification Centre provides for efficient policy and procedures that support the process of certification in accordance with assessment standards**
Criteria	5.1. Organizational system of Qualification Centre's operations provides for support of fulfilling their key functions: - development of control and assessment materials (assessment tools); - organization and conduct of certification under established qualifications (qualifying assessment); - awarding of relevant qualification (issuing and registering a document verifying the attainment of professional qualification); - quality assurance of certification process (operating internal assessment). 5.2. Established competence level and the personnel quantity is sufficient to provide for efficient support for Qualification Centre fulfilling its functions/reaching its goals. 5.3. Initial and advanced training of personnel is provided, in accordance with their functions, needs for training, and development strategy (business plan) of the Qualification Centre. 5.4. Sufficient material resources are provided to support the process of certification, including also the development of assessment tools, organization and conduct of assessment in accordance with requirements of assessment standards. 5.5. Conformity of facilities is provided where the assessment is operated, of working stations, equipment and materials, other items and means of labour with the job safety requirements, sanitary provisions, and other regulations.
Quality standard Criteria	**6. Qualification Centre has an efficient communication strategy in line with objectives and strategic priorities of its operations.** Qualification Centre: 6.1. Cooperates with the National Agency for Qualifications, in line with the sectoral council, professional association, other developers of professional/ assessment standards, with the purpose to support improvement or development of the respective professional qualifications. 6.2. Cooperates with partner (subcontracting) organizations, other key stakeholders on organization and operation of certification under respective professional qualifications and activities of the Qualification Centre. 6.3. Cooperates with educational institutions, other education providers on conformity of educational services with requirements of professional qualifications. 6.4. Cooperates with other qualification centres in order to exchange experience and improve certification procedures. 6.5. Supports monitoring of its activities and activities of partner (subcontracting) organizations on the part of NAQ. 6.6. Efficient internal communications is provided. 6.7. Access to information is provided on assessment conditions and certification process, relevant consulting and informing of customers (applicants), candidates, other stakeholders to support them and disseminate information on possibilities of attaining certain qualifications.

Quality standard Criteria	**7. Qualification Centre has a policy and procedures on approving partner organizations.** 7.1. Qualification Centre provides that all partner (subcontracting) organizations be capable (competent) to fulfil the stated tasks (functions) and conform with the requirements established by the Qualification Centre on quality assurance.
Quality standard Criteria	**8. Qualification Centre has transparent procedures to appeal against decisions and to file complaints.** 8.1 Possibility is provided to appeal against decisions and to file complaints against the certification process, and efficient response upon the results of their examination.
Quality standard Criteria	**9. Qualification Centre has an efficient system for registration and certification of candidates.** 9.1 It is provided that the applicants who meet the established eligibility criteria to access the assessment (certification) are admitted to assessment and registered by the Qualification Centre. 9.2 It is provided that the candidate successfully meeting all assessment requirements under qualification or the part thereof receives a document on attainment of the respective qualification or the part thereof, in accordance with the established format and within the timeline set by the Qualification Centre. 9.3 It is provided that the documents upon certification are issued to those candidates only who fulfilled all the assessment requirements under qualification or the part thereof. 9.4 It is provided that respective procedures on preventing the award of qualification following the cheating (non-integral actions) during the assessment process, unjustified or erroneous decisions.
Quality standard Criteria	**10. Qualification Centre follows the equal opportunities policy.** 10.1. Qualification Centre has a published non-discrimination and equal opportunities policy in line with the acting law.
Quality standard Criteria	**11. Qualification Centre has due procedures related to cases of non-integral practices.** 11.1. It is defined the procedures and actions of the Qualification Centre on any cases of non-integral practices or suspicion for committing such practices.
Quality standard Criteria	**12. Qualification Centre provides for keeping record and storing of documentation on the certification process.** Qualification Centre: 12.1. Provides for documenting of its policies and objectives to support their activities.

6.8. Protection is provided for information received during award of qualification that shall not be disclosed.

6.9. Publication is provided for information on the awarded qualification, entering the information and transfer of data to be entered into the Register of Qualifications, to the National Agency of Qualifications (NAQ).

12.2. Provides for keeping record and storing of data (information) related to the certification process.

12.3. Provides for meeting requirements on confidentiality of information.

4. Development of control and assessment materials (assessment tools)

Qualification Centre showed the necessary experience and competence on the development of assessment tools (control and assessment materials) under respective Assessment Standard (professional qualification).

Quality standard	**13. Control and assessment materials (assessment tools) meet the requirements of respective assessment standard under professional qualification.**
Criteria	13.1 Control and assessment materials (assessment tools) allow to efficiently operate reliable and verifiable assessment of competences under relevant professional qualification.
	13.2 It is provided regular update of control and assessment materials.

5. Assessment and recognition of learning outcomes

Qualification Centre shall provide for organization and operation of assessment and recognition of learning outcomes in accordance with established requirements. The personnel involved in certification shall have respective competence and required qualification. Due conditions shall be provided for operation of assessment.

Quality standard	**14. Qualification Centre provides for organization and operation of assessment under unified requirements and in accordance with assessment standard.**
Criteria	14.1. Certification procedure provides for reliability, impartiality, and validity of assessment of competences (learning outcomes) of candidates in accordance with assessment standard.
	14.2. It is provided unified requirements to organization and operation of assessment at all partner (subcontracting) organizations in accordance with assessment standards under established qualifications.
	14.3. It is operated regular verification/monitoring of operating the assessment and recognition of learning outcomes.
	14.4. It is provided for non-disclosure of information on control and assessment materials and for confidentiality of candidates' materials.

Quality standard	**15. Qualification Centre shall provide for relevant conditions to operate assessment.**
Criteria	15.1. Sufficient number of personnel is provided who have the respective competence and necessary qualification to operate assessment and recognition of learning outcomes.
	15.2. Sufficient material resources are provided to operate assessment, that meet the requirements of the respective assessment standard and other established requirements.
	15.3. Qualification Centre shall provide for conformity with due conditions to conduct assessment at all partner (subcontracting) organizations.