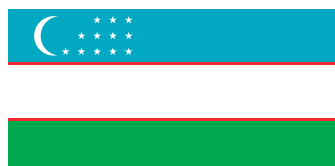




Overview of the Higher Education System

Uzbekistan



February 2017

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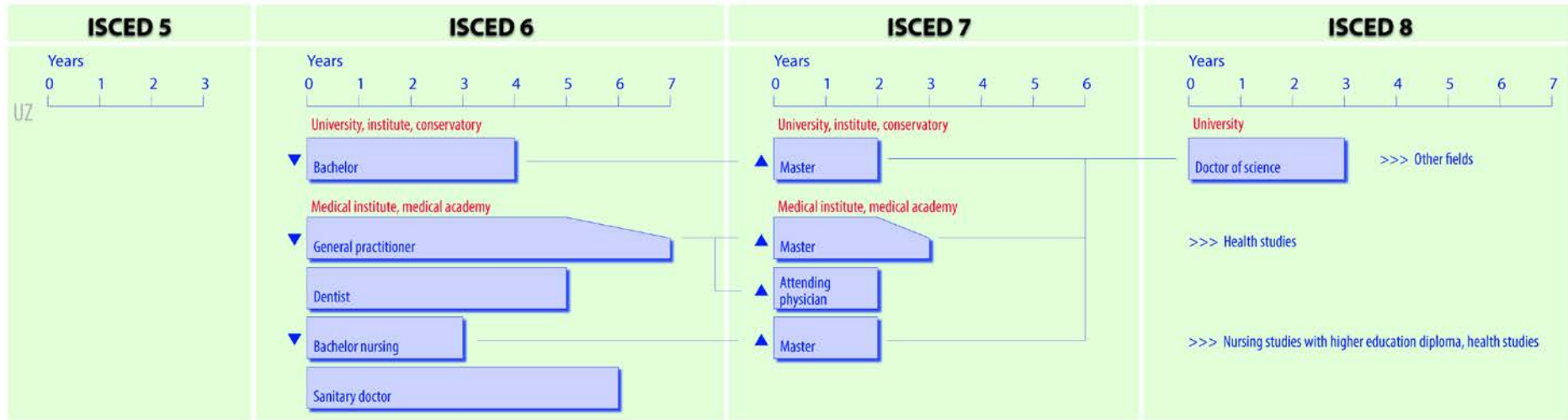
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The higher education system in Uzbekistan



- Most common length of a Bologna cycle
- Other length of a Bologna cycle
- Professional programme

- Programme outside the typical Bologna model
- Professional programme non Bologna

ECTS:
Credits according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

		regulated at national level	decided at institutional level
All	programmes have admission requirements	▼	▲
SOME		▽	△

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1 Overview

The Republic of Uzbekistan is located in the central part of Central Asia in-between Amudarya and Syrdarya rivers. The Republic borders with all Central Asian states. Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara and Khiva are the major cities and cultural centers of the country.

The total area of the Republic is 447,400 square kilometers. The population exceeded 31 million people in 2015. Children under the age of 16 years account for 35% of the population, while 60% of the youth under the age of 30 years. Slightly more than half of the population of the Republic live in urban areas (51.0%)¹. Uzbekistan is a multiethnic country with more than 100 ethnic groups living there. Ethnic Uzbeks comprise about 80% of population². Other, most numerous, groups include Tajiks, Russians, Kazakhs, Karakalpaks, Tatars, Kyrgyz, Turkmen and Koreans.

The Uzbek language is the official language of the Republic of Uzbekistan. A considerable part of the population knows Russian language. Recently, certain European languages (English, German and French) are becoming more and more popular among the youth.

Islam is the main religion in the Republic. However, the Republic of Uzbekistan is a secular state, where the various religions and creeds live side by side. The Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan guarantees a freedom of conscience to all and everyone has the right to profess or not any religion, while any forced conversion is prohibited³.

The gross domestic product has increased by 8% in 2015. According to the estimation of the World Bank and the IMF, GDP of Uzbekistan by purchasing power parity exceeds \$ 5,500 per capita⁴.

The literacy rate in the country is one of the highest in the world. The annual expenditures on education in Uzbekistan account for 10-12% of GDP, while their proportion in the State budget expenditures exceeds 35%.

1.1 Fundamental Principles and National Policy

According to the Article 41 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan "Everyone shall have the right to education".

Apart from the Constitution, the legal basis for the national policy in the field of education includes:

- the Education Act
- the National Programme for Personnel Training (the National Programme)
- Decrees and Resolutions of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as
- Resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The National Programme, adopted by the Parliament of the Republic of Uzbekistan, represents a long-term strategy to reinforce the education system. Goals and objectives of the National Programme are implemented in stages.

Other important legal documents to govern activities for development of the higher education system at this stage include:

- the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan № 1533 'Decree on measures to improve technical facilities and resources of higher education institutions, and radically improve the quality of staff training for the period of 2011-2016' (20 May 2011)

¹ The Government portal of the Republic of Uzbekistan <https://www.gov.uz/en/pages/population>

² Site of MFA of the Republic of Uzbekistan. <http://mfa.uz/en/uzbekistan/339/>

³ The Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Article 31

⁴ Data from official websites of IMF <http://www.imf.org> and WB <http://data.worldbank.org>

- the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan № 4456 "On further improvement of the system for training and attestation of university level research and teaching staff" (24 July 2012)
- the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan № 4732 "On measures for further improvement of the system for retraining and upgrading the qualifications of management and pedagogical staff of higher educational institutions" (12 June 2015)

1.2 Lifelong Learning Strategy

The Lifelong Learning Strategy of Uzbekistan has been developed based on the deep and large-scale examination of the foreign experience and critical analysis of the existing education system with a consideration of the national development specifics. The Lifelong Learning Strategy operations are ensured through the state educational standards, the continuity of the educational programmes for preschool, basic, secondary, secondary specialized, vocational education, higher and postgraduate studies, as well as upgrading the qualifications and retraining of staff. The education system also envisages an out-of-school education.

1.3 Organisation of Private Education

Today there is a number of private educational establishments at the level of preschool, basic and secondary education, as well as establishments providing out-of-school education for children, upgrading the qualifications and personnel training, as well as providing education for adults.

The Education Act adopted in 1997 regulates the creation and functioning of private educational establishments. Educational institutions of this kind may obtain a license in line with the established standards of the Cabinet of Ministers⁵, get registered as a legal entity and carry out educational activities.

1.4 National Qualifications Framework

Currently the State Educational Standards act as the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Issues related to NQF are covered in a number of normative documents, such as the Education Act defining the structure of the education system, as well as State Educational Standards (SES) developed for basic, secondary, specialized secondary, vocational and higher education, as well as qualification requirements for each Bachelor field and Master speciality.

The State Educational Standards define framework requirements for higher education levels, including:

- requirements to content of educational programme
- qualification requirements
- scope of educational workload for each level
- procedures and mechanisms to evaluate the performance of the higher education institutions, and the quality of students training
- requirements for the education outcomes and description of competences
- standard curriculum (distribution of contact hours per one discipline)

There are 25 SESs by educational areas, 442 qualification requirements for Bachelor fields, and 571 qualification requirements for specialities at Master. State Standards for higher education are developed and approved by Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education.

One of the new Erasmus+ Structural Measures projects on "NURSLIN: National Qualifications Framework: guidelines for development and recognition of qualifications" (561742-2015) aims to create a National committee on Qualifications Framework in Uzbekistan together with MHSSE to improve general provisions in educational standards in specific fields, based on ideas about Qualifications Framework and experience of EU HEIs.

⁵ Regulation on licensing the activities of non-government educational establishments. Approved by the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan № 100 (1 March 2004)

1.5 Statistics on Organisation and Governance

Number of students (in academic year 2014/2015)⁶	
260,905	
Public	Private
260,905 including 249,551 Bachelor students and 11,354 Master students	No private HEIs

Number of HEIs (academic year 2014/2015)		
82		
University	Academy	Institute
32 Including 20 public Universities, 6 branches in country regions and 6 international HEIs	6 Including 2 branches	44 Including 36 institutes of MHSSE, and other ministries, 7 branches in country regions and 1 international institute

Today there are 6 fields of knowledge in which the training of highly qualified specialists for the economic sectors and social sector is performed. Training is offered in humanitarian field in 48 HEIs, social sector, economics and law - in 40 HEIs, production and technical field - in 24 HEIs, agriculture and water resources - in 10, health care and social security - in 9, service sector - in 26.

There are 6 International Universities and one foreign Institute are operating in the country:

English is the language of instruction in the following universities:

- the Westminster International University in Tashkent,
- the Management Development Institute of Singapore in Tashkent,
- the Turin Polytechnic University in Tashkent,
- Inha University in Tashkent.

Russian is the language of instruction in the following universities:

- the Branch of Russian University of Oil and Gas in Tashkent,
- the Branch of Moscow State University in Tashkent,
- the Branch of Russian University of Economics in Tashkent

⁶ Data of MHSSE

These HEIs prepare Bachelors and Masters in specialities such as mechanical engineering, oil and gas engineering, information technologies, economics and business management, financial management, commercial law, computer engineering.

1.6 Distribution of responsibilities

According to the Education Act, the Cabinet of Ministers is responsible for the implementation of the unified public policy in the field of education; within the structure of the Cabinet of Ministers there is a special unit called the **Complex on issues of youth policy, education, culture and sports**, which, in particular, organises systematic examination of the process of implementation of the adopted measures aimed at reforming of the system for Lifelong Learning and personnel training.

The **Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education (MHSSE)** is a body directly responsible for the development of the Higher and Secondary Specialised Education in the country.

At the same time, some specific issues are under responsibility of other central state bodies:

- the **Ministry of Finance** is responsible for financing the education system
- the **Ministry of the Economy** prepares forecasts for economic development and population growth
- The **Ministry of Labour** prepares forecasts for labour market and implements a number of programmes aimed at professional training and upgrading the qualifications of unemployed
- The **State Testing Centre** under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan organizes testing for admission to public HEIs of the Republic; exercises control over quality of personnel training and objective evaluation of educational process effectiveness; performs attestation of teaching and management staff; issues licenses to non-governmental educational establishments; reviews and nostrificates educational documents issued in foreign countries.

There are also other sectoral ministries, which supervise HEIs oriented on some specific subjects.

2 Higher Education Funding

2.1 Public Education

The government of Uzbekistan gives a high priority to education. The annual public expenditure on education accounts for 10-12% of GDP. More than 70% of public expenditure on education is allocated to general secondary and specialised secondary as well as vocational education.

A new funding system for public-funded institutions, which was introduced in 1999, has improved their capacity for a more flexible and efficient use of extra-budgetary resources, self-financing and the attraction of private and foreign investment.

Higher education institutions, affiliated academic lyceums, and teacher training and qualification upgrading institutions in the regions are funded from the central budget. The share of private funding (tuition fees) reaches 60% of the total funding of current expenditures of HEIs.

A new per-capita financing procedure of normative planning and budgeting of HEIs was introduced from 1 September 2010. The budget for each HEI is calculated taking into consideration the basic normative expenditure for training of one student on state grant.

Routine expenditures of HEIs mainly include staff costs, student stipends, social payments and taxes, as well as expenditures for routine repairs and renovations and consumables.

Considerable public, international and private resources will be assigned to implement a Programme to strengthen the technical facilities and resources of higher education institutions and improve the training

quality of specialists for the period of 2011-2016 (20 May 2011). This includes, in particular, funding construction, refurbishment, renovation and provision of equipment for university buildings, sports facilities and student dormitories, and creation of modern scientific-research laboratories at HEIs. At the initial stage there are 19 HEIs are beneficiaries of the direct financial aid. In the nearest future, 15 new inter-university modern scientific-research laboratories will start operating in fourteen HEIs.

2.1.1 Financial Autonomy and Control

After prior approval of the MHSSE, extra-budgetary funds of universities and institutes are generated from the following sources and activities: student fees, educational services, entrepreneurial, consulting, expert, publishing, research and other activities in accordance with the University Charter. Over 90% of extra-budgetary funds are raised from student tuition fees (educational contracts paid by students).

Extra-budgetary funds may be used mainly for further improvements of infrastructures and facilities.

Enterprises, institutions and individuals offer education grants for students to cover tuition fees in order to meet the demand for particular specialists or in order to obtain corresponding higher education.

International HEIs operating in Uzbekistan are almost fully financially independent, because they are largely financed from tuition fees paid by students. For instance, Turin Polytechnic University operates under Uzavtoprom Association and its expenditures are covered largely from internal funds of the Association and partially from tuition fees.

2.1.2 Fees within Public Higher Education

Students of the higher education institutions in Uzbekistan are admitted on the basis of either the state grants or individual contracts. Approximately one third of students are covered by the state grants, while the two thirds cover the tuition fees from their own financial resources.

At the beginning of each academic year the size of the tuition fees for all higher education levels and majors, as well as standard costs per student studying on a state grant are determined separately by the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

In 2015/2016, the tuition fee for a Bachelor student studying on a contract basis varies between EUR 2,000 and EUR 3,000 per year⁷. The amount of contract includes monthly stipend.

The tuition fee for a Master student studying on a contract basis varies between EUR 2,100 and EUR 3,200 per year⁸. The amount of contract with Master student also includes stipend.

In international HEIs the tuition fee for Bachelor and Master students varies between EUR 3,000 and EUR 5,000 per year.

2.2 Private Education

The Education Act (1997) foresees for the creation and operation of non-governmental educational establishments. These educational institutions of this kind may obtain a license according to the established standards of the Cabinet of Ministers⁹, be registered as a legal entity and undertake educational activities. However so far there is no registered private HEI in Uzbekistan.

2.3 Financial Support for Learners' Families

If a student does not receive a state grant, then, in the majority of cases, the parents, enterprises or organizations pay for his or her contract.

⁷From 5.8 to 8.55 million Uzbek soums depending on speciality (Pedagogika-Pravo). Exchange rate (info euro) in September 2015 is 2924.63.

⁸From 6.3 to 9.4 million Uzbek soums depending on speciality (Pedagogika-Pravo). Exchange rate (info euro) in September 2015 is 2924.63.

⁹Regulation on licensing the activities of non-government educational establishments. Approved by the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan № 100 (1 March 2004).

In July 2001, a new system for the provision of educational loans was introduced; this gave an opportunity for a large number of students to study at any HEI throughout the country. Educational loans are available to citizens of Uzbekistan who have successfully passed the admission test and have been admitted to HEIs on a contract basis. Orphans and disabled students receive interest-free loans, while students from low-income families are provided with 50% discount of loan interest.

According to the point 31 of the Article 179 of the Tax Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan¹⁰, the amounts of salary and other income of citizens used to pay for education of children under the age of 26 in higher education institutions of Uzbekistan are tax exempted.

2.4 Financial Support for Learners

Student loans

In accordance with the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, student loans are allocated to citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan studying at the higher education institutions on contract-paid basis. Educational loans are provided by bank to students, their parents or authorized persons.

Educational loans for Bachelor students are provided for maximum 10 years, while Master students may qualify for maximum 5-year loan. The loan period includes period of study at HEI.

The period of military service is not included in the loan repayment period.

According to this Resolution, the following interest rates are set for student loans:

- for orphans, orphanage graduates, as well as disabled from birth with disability of the 1st and the 2nd degree - 0% (interest-free);
- For other categories of students - at floating interest rate not exceeding current refinancing rate of the Central Bank of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The loan interest rate and the amount of interest payments under student loans collected by a bank may be changed in case of changes in refinancing rate of the Central Bank, what should be specified in loan contract. In 2015 interest rate on student loans as set by the National Bank of the Republic of Uzbekistan was equal to 9.5% annually.

The payment of 50% of total bank loan interest on behalf of the students from low-income families is made by regional employment promotion centres from the means of the State Employment Promotion Fund¹¹.

Student grants

Full-time students studying both on the basis of the state grants and contracts receive stipends, the amounts of which are set by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan. A new procedure was introduced in 2001 to provide all students with a stipend, no matter whether they are studying on a state grant or on contract (with the exception of foreign students). This initiative was introduced in order to ensure the social protection of all students, to provide them with an opportunity to have a monthly stipend and to encourage those who are successful in their studies. For example, an enterprise/organisation/company pays the student's contracted fee directly to the university. If a student (who is on a contract) passed well all exams he/she receives a stipend in the same way as students' studying on state grant. Beside that, there are three levels of stipends set depending on student evaluation results: excellent, good or satisfactory.

¹⁰ Tax Code of the Rep of Uz: http://lex.uz/pages/getpage.aspx?lact_id=1286689

¹¹ The Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On measures for implementation of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dd. 6 April 2007 № ПП-616 "On measures to increase employment and improve the performance of the labour and social protection agencies"

Other social benefits

Students have right to use subsidized monthly tickets public transportation, as well as discounts for local air flights within the country. The students from regions are provided with free accommodation in student dormitories.

3 The structure of the Higher Education system

The Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education has 31 higher education institutions under its mandate. There are also a number of specialized HEIs coordinated by other sectoral ministries. For example, the Ministry of the Public Education is responsible for 4 pedagogical institutes, the Ministry of Health - 7 (and 7 more branches in regions), the Ministry of Culture and Sports affairs - 4 (and 1 branch in Nukus), the Ministry of Agriculture - 6 (and 2 branches in Bukhara and Nukus), the Cabinet of Ministers - 1, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - 1, the Ministry of Justice - 1, the Ministry for development of information technologies and communications - 1 (and 5 branches in regions), the Academy of Arts of Uzbekistan - 1, JSC "Uzbekiston temir yullari" (Uzbekistan railways) - 1 and the Navoi State Mining Combinat - 1.

According to the National Programme for Personnel Training, higher education is based on academic achievements of specialised secondary education (academic lyceum) and/or vocational education (vocational college) and includes two levels: Bachelor degree and Master degree.

The MHSSE's responsibility is to organize the academic year, including the length of the semesters, examination periods and academic holidays.

The academic year starts on September 2nd and lasts until the end of June. The academic year is divided into two semesters with holidays ranging from 10 to 12 weeks:

- 1st semester - from early September to late January;
- 2nd semester - from the beginning of February to the end of June, although the duration of the semester can vary depending on the status of the HEIs or on the study programme.

First level - Bachelor programme

This basic higher education provides fundamental knowledge in one of the branches of higher education for a minimum period of study of four years. Upon completion of the Bachelor programme graduates are awarded Bachelor degree and a state diploma (in Uzbek: *Bakalavr*), which entitles them to start professional activity or to continue studies at Master level.

Second level - Master programme

This level of higher education provides knowledge in specific areas and lasts for at least two years after the Bachelor degree. Master programme graduates are awarded a state diploma (in Uzbek: *Magistr*), which entitles them to work in the relevant professional areas or to continue education in postgraduate education establishments.

Second higher education

People with higher (specialised secondary, vocational) education may obtain a second and subsequent higher (specialised secondary, vocational) education. Second and subsequent higher (specialised secondary, vocational) education is obtained on contract-paid basis.

In particular, second higher education may be obtained by:

- individuals with Bachelor degree - in Bachelor's fields;
- individuals with Master degree - in Bachelor's fields and adjacent
- Master specialities.

The Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education issues a specific list of Master specialities, which are suitable for obtaining second and subsequent higher education.

The state Commission of the Republic of Uzbekistan for admission to educational institutions determines those higher education institutions that have a right to offer second and subsequent higher educational courses. Currently, 45 higher education institutions offer second higher education programmes, including 18 HEIs in Tashkent and 27 HEIs in regions.

Higher education institutions offering a second and subsequent higher education analyse previous educational experience (completed courses) of the students. Students have to take examinations in the relevant subjects in order to complete educational level in accordance with speciality requirements. Second higher education is offered based on the specialities and methods of teaching of a higher education institution. Upon completion of the second and subsequent higher education programme students are awarded diplomas depending on results of attestation. Academic performance of the students admitted to the second and subsequent higher (specialised secondary, vocational) education is evaluated based on a rating system for academic performance appraisal.

Tertiary education: postgraduate education

According to the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan № 4456 " On further improvement of the system for training and attestation of university level research and teaching staff " (24 July 2012) and the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan №365 "On measures for further improvement of postgraduate education system and on attestation of scientific and academic research personnel of highest qualification" (28 December 2012), the two-stage postgraduate education (two scientific degrees "Candidate of Sciences" and "Doctor of Sciences ") was replaced by a single level of "Doctor of Sciences" (In Uzbek - "Fan doktori") starting from the 1 January 2013.

3.1 Types of Higher Education Institutions

In Uzbekistan there are HEIs of the following types:

- **University:** provides educational programmes of higher education (both Bachelor and Master levels) and postgraduate education in a range of fields of knowledge and education: economy, fundamental and applied sciences and also carries out scientific research in a wide range of disciplines. The universities also conduct re-training and upgrading of qualifications for specialists in different sectors. The country has 32 universities in total, including 20 public universities, their 6 branches in regions and 6 branches of overseas universities.
- **Academy:** provides educational programmes in higher education in specific fields of knowledge and education. The Academies also conduct re-training and upgrading of qualifications for specialists in different sectors and represent leading scientific–methodological centres in the respective fields of their activities.

In 2015 there were total 6 Academies under various bodies: Tashkent State Medical Academy and its 2 branches in regions, the State Tax Academy, the Academy of Public Administration, the Banking and Finance Academy.

- **Institute:** provides educational programmes of higher education (Bachelor and Master levels) and postgraduate education, as a rule, in specific branches of study within one area of knowledge and education. The Institutes also carry out applied and, as a rule, fundamental scientific research. Throughout Uzbekistan there are in total 44 institutes, including 36 public and their 7 branches in regions of the country, as well as 1 branch of an overseas HEIs.

3.2 First Cycle Programmes

The first cycle education (Bachelor degree) is delivered by all types of HEIs in Uzbekistan. At the moment education at Bachelor level is provided in 174 specialisations.

The Bachelor programme provides a fundamental knowledge in one of the branches of higher education for a minimum period of study of four years. Upon completion of the Bachelor programme graduates are awarded a Bachelor degree and a state diploma (*Bakalavr*), which entitles them to start a professional activity or to continue studies at the Master level.

Bachelor programme in medical HEIs:

During studies at the first level of education - the Bachelor programme - all medical HEIs prepare general practitioners (general pediatrician, general therapist, general hygienist-epidemiologist, and general dentist) that are trained to work at the primary level of a healthcare center, in particular, in the rural health care facilities and in family polyclinics. The education period may vary from 4 to 7 years depending on the specific medical speciality.

3.2.1 Branches of Study

The education at Bachelor level is organised at universities, academies and institutes and continues for four or more (if at medical HEI) years. The higher education system in Uzbekistan covers 6 fields (25 branches of study):

- Humanities and education
- Economics and law
- Industry, machinery, construction, transportation and communications
- Agriculture and water resources
- Medicine and social security
- Service sector/arts and sports

The following priority areas of the Uzbek economy are taken into consideration when defining the national quotas for future specialists:

- Agro-industrial complex
- Energy sector
- Telecommunications
- Chemical industry
- Food industry

3.2.2 Admission Requirements

The Cabinet of Ministers issues each year a Resolution providing detailed information on the admission requirements for the enrolment in the higher education institutions in Uzbekistan. To be allowed to the entrance examinations to HEIs an applicant should submit to an admission commission the documents about previous education (not lower than specialised secondary, vocational or equivalent), medical certificate on state of health, photos, passport copy, as well as documents confirming the right for benefits and privileges. Public HEIs accept for a review only original documents about previous education and those confirming the right for benefits and privileges. That is why every applicant can submit documents only to one of public HEIs and only for one Bachelor field or Master speciality.

In the academic year 2015/2016, the general quota for admission to the public HEIs was for 58,022 students, 19,185 of which were on state grants (budget) while 38,837 were enrolled on a contractual basis. 5,000 applicants were enrolled to the Master programmes, 1,548 of which on budget and 3,452 on a contractual basis.

The State Testing Centre is responsible for organising the testing and development of the testing materials. Uzbekistan uses a modern multiple-choice testing system for entry examination to HEI. The tests are held at the beginning of August throughout the Republic for all types of public HEIs.

The admission to HEIs is based on equal rights for all (both on state grants and contract-paid basis), common requirements for enrolment and common test, which ensure the priority of admission of

applicants on state grants who demonstrated the best overall scores in the test. Other applicants have the right to be admitted on the basis of scores within the limit of contract-paid quotas.

The tests are organised in each HEI in education fields, languages and types of training. Creative admission exams are used for certain specialities (arts, music, architecture, sports) and are taken before general test. HEIs themselves conduct creative admission exams where they use criteria developed for each speciality. Creative admission exams are contributing up to 1/3 of the maximum score of general test.

Bachelor degree holders and specialists have the right to participate in the competition for one of the Master specialities noted in the list of related education fields.

Foreign applicants that seek admission to a HEI in Uzbekistan should meet the requirements and take the examination organized by the State Testing Centre in accordance with State Educational Standards of Uzbekistan.

Privileges provided to talented youth on enrolling to HEI.

In accordance with the Decisions of the President and the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan a number of categories of citizens may be enrolled on the basis of the state grant to the higher education institutions without taking the tests and creative examinations:

- winners of international and Republican Knowledge Olympiads, contests and competitions;
- winners of the State Prize of Zulfiya;
- winners of the Republican competitions "Tarbiya", "Hamshira" and "Nihol";

Privileges for applicants who passed military service

Citizens who have completed an active military service in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Uzbekistan and who provide necessary recommendations from the military command at the place of service are qualified for preferential admission terms such as an additional score equal to 27 percent of the maximum possible score.

Preference on enrolment of the disabled applicants: in case of equal entry exam scores, disabled applicants are given preference.

Admission requirements differ between the public and international HEIs in the territory of Uzbekistan. Every international HEI organises examinations according to its own criteria and own time schedule. HEIs providing education in English language require submission of an official international certificate (IELTS/TOEFL) confirming the knowledge of English language above a certain level. HEIs providing education in Russian organise examinations in Russian language. Previous education obtained in Russian language is a requirement of the Russian University of Economics. International HEIs perform preselection of candidates based on their applications, and the results of written and oral examinations.

3.2.3 Curriculum

The continuity and the linkage among general secondary, specialised secondary, vocational and higher education are important aspects of higher education quality. In 2015 the State Educational Standards (SES) were updated for all Bachelor fields and specialities at a Master level. The quality of higher education is assured by the State Educational Standards, which set the minimum requirements for each educational level, describe the main features, structure, content and implementation of curricula, ensure the quality control of personnel training and set the compulsory (core) components (the list of academic subjects).

The curriculum is approved both at the national and institutional levels. The educational process in higher educational institutions is carried out in line with the SES and is regulated by the curricula and academic timetable. However, a higher educational establishment is granted a right to change up to 5% of hours

between the lines for various discipline units, while inside a discipline unit – up to 10%, while preserving weekly load unchanged.

The languages of instruction in public HEIs are Uzbek and the Russian. In the Republic of Karakalpakstan, the languages of instruction are Karakalpak, Uzbek and Russian.

Education at the Bachelor level in the majority of public universities and institutes lasts 4 years, with the exception of the medical specialities, where the Bachelor level education may last for 5-7 years.

Education at the international HEIs is provided either in Russian or in English languages. Overseas HEIs use their own curricula.

Theoretical education on the first cycle (Bakalavr) in public HEIs should be distributed as follows:

Titles of subject units	Percentage by field					
	Humanitarian field	Social sector, economics and law	Production and technical field	Agriculture and water resources	Health care and social security	Service sector
Humanities and socio-economic disciplines	23 — 25	15 — 20	15 — 17	15 — 17	15 — 20	15 — 20
Mathematical and natural-science disciplines	8 — 25	10 — 15	20 — 25	20 — 25	10 — 15	10 — 15
General professional disciplines	33 — 50	50 — 55	35 — 50	35 — 50	45 — 50	45 — 50
Special disciplines	9 — 10	10 — 15	10 — 15	10 — 15	10 — 15	10 — 15
Additional disciplines	5 — 7	5 — 7	5 — 7	5 — 7	5 — 7	5 — 7

3.2.4 Teaching Methods

HEIs use the following teaching approaches: lectures, practical trainings, seminars and laboratory works. The lectures are conducted for large numbers of students (up to 150 students). Practical trainings and seminars are organised for groups of 25 students. Laboratory works and foreign language classes are used for academic groups, with one group divided into two sub-groups of 10-15 people each.

Modern higher education uses a wide range of interactive teaching methods and innovation technologies in the education process of the HEIs (computer simulations, business games, case studies and others). Lectures for groups of students shall not exceed 50% of the total number of the contact hours. Independent work should cover no less than 25% of the total student workload. Maximum student workload should not exceed 54 hours per week, including all types of classroom (contact) and out-of-class (independent) education activities.

The State Educational Standards recommend various teaching methods and techniques in the education process: interactive education methods, problem solving technique, game-based techniques, pedagogical strategies for the development of critical thinking, learner-centered education technologies, education technologies based on the effective organization and management of the education process, differential training, individualization of education, programmed learning technologies, integrated teaching methods and others.

Teachers have the right to choose their teaching methodology and technique. The list of the main training materials for the compulsory disciplines is recommended by a programme, developed by the leading HEIs together with other HEIs and approved by MHSSE.

3.2.5 Progression of Students

During an academic year, there are several interim assessments undertaken for the Bachelor and Master students regarding each academic subject taught during the semester. A rating system (minimum - 56 points, maximum - 100 points) was introduced in 1999 for all types of public HEIs in Uzbekistan. The system provides the assessment of the students' knowledge at the end of each semester. The following rating scheme is applied: excellent (86-100); good (71-85); satisfactory (56-70); for less than 55 the subject is considered to be insufficiently mastered by a student.

The decision about the transfer of the successful students to the next year of the educational programme is based on the assessment results. It is impossible to be transferred to the next year if at least one subject was failed. To complete the education at all types of HEIs, the graduates have to take the compulsory final state examinations with participation of the employers who have an opportunity to assess the relevance and quality of the curricula. To complete a Bachelor programme, the students also have to defend their final qualification work. Master students have to prepare and defend their dissertations.

3.2.6 Employability

Building the capacity of the university staff to provide effective employment assistance for the university graduates and develop their entrepreneurship skills is an important issue for all Uzbek HEIs and so they establish close relationships with the potential employers. Every HEI of Uzbekistan has a marketing department, which provides guidance and organises employment seminars, job fairs, provides consulting and offers internships.

The regulation on the higher education¹² contains a number of paragraphs related to the employment of the graduates and the job placement of the students. Paragraph 9 states that one of the tasks of the higher education institution is a "monitoring of quality of education and personnel training, conducting marketing researches and monitoring of profession-based job placement". Paragraph 6 states that "employment of the persons who obtained higher education on state grants basis is made with regard to the interests of society and civil rights of graduates".

Although there is no legal obligation to find employment for all graduates, the Higher education system of Uzbekistan provides assistance in finding jobs to as many graduates as possible. In this regard, a HEI organises regular meetings and activities with participation of potential employers, ensures participation of employers during final examination, as well as organises job fairs together with local authorities. HEIs collect data on the employment of graduates and annually report them to the Ministry.

According to the SES, a Bachelor programme graduate should be trained to be able to:

- work independently according to his/her specialization on positions subject to replacement by individuals with higher education;
- continue higher education on Master level with a selected speciality corresponding to the Bachelor field;
- obtain additional vocational education in the system for retraining and upgrading the qualifications of personnel.

3.2.7 Student Assessment

Student assessment is based on a rating system. The regulation to govern the rating assessment of students was developed and approved by MHSSE and registered by the Ministry of Justice.

¹² Regulation on higher education. Registration number by Ministry of Justice, № 1222 dated 22 February 2003.

The main objective of the "rating system for control and assessment of students' knowledge in higher education institutions" is to develop competitive staff through the management of the quality of education, as well as to prevent, detect and eliminate gaps in the progression of students.

In particular, the objectives of national rating system include:

- The control and analysis of progression of students in terms of knowledge, skills and abilities, and their compliance with State Educational Standards.
- Ensuring accurate, correct and effective assessment
- The organisation and analysis of systematic and timely acquisition of knowledge by students
- The development of students' abilities to work independently, effectively use information resources
- The objective and fair assessment of students' knowledge
- Ensuring systematic and continuous training in specific subjects
- Creating conditions for the computerization of organizational issues of educational process

The Regulation specifies 3 types of examinations (control works): current, interim and final.

Current examinations may be conducted during classes, in the form of oral examinations, quizzes, multiple choice tests, discussions, assessment of written assignment—and written homework.

An interim examination is conducted to assess the knowledge related to the specific part of a subject within the academic curricula implemented during the given semester. It may be conducted no more than twice during one semester and may include an oral and written examination or multiple-choice test.

The final examination is a way to assess progression of students with regard to the whole course of a specific subject. In general, it is conducted as a written assignment or a clinical examination.

Current and interim examinations are subject to periodic inspections by the Commission lead by the head of department. The commission set up by rector of a HEI is responsible for assessment of the final examination assignment.

The progression of students in a specific subject is assessed on a 100-points scale. Current and interim examinations add up to 70 points, while final examination may add up to 30 points.

The knowledge of a student who received from 86 to 100 points is assessed as "excellent". If a student received less than 55% of required total points during current and interim examination, it means that he/she does not have a clear understanding of a subject and does not know its content. This student is deemed to have failed this stage of control assessment and is not allowed to final examination and other stages of education. In case if a student fails on a final examination he/she will have one month to get prepared to retake it. If a student fails again the examination, he may be expelled from HEI by the rector's order. Every case is considered separately and various factors may be taken into account for taking the decision.

If a student disagrees with the assessment's results, he/she may refer to the Appeal commission.

Assessment results are entered and stored in a computer database and should be used for general evaluation of students and department activity.

The progression of students determines the amount of their stipends. A student who received 86-100 points has a 50% higher stipend than a student who only managed to receive 71-85 points; it is also twice as high as that of a student who collected 56-70 points. This is the way to motivate students to study better.

Every public university has a division that is responsible for the monitoring of students' progression; some universities use special software with database containing data on each student's progression, various analytical and individual reports, as well as data on achievements in specific disciplines and in various

academic years. These analytical reports are regularly provided to the HEI administration and to the relevant Ministry.

International HEIs have their own systems and methods to assess the progression of students that depend on specifics of their curricula and on their national traditions.

3.2.8 Certification

Upon completion of the Bachelor programme, graduates are awarded the Bachelor degree and a state diploma, which entitles them to start professional activity. The Higher education institution is a body responsible for the certification of its students. A graduate also receives a diploma supplement (in Uzbek - *Diplomga Ilova*) that contains information about the level, type and content of the graduate's curriculum.

Only students who have obtained a Bachelor degree in a specific branch of study may apply for a specific Master programme.

Diplomas awarded by international HEIs in the territory of Uzbekistan are recognized by governmental authorities and do not require nostrification.

3.3 Short-Cycle Higher Education

Some Bachelor degree programme allow the option to accelerate studies using interconnected syllabi by individuals who have specialised secondary, vocational education with a major similar to (similar in general professional training) the major of the given branch of higher education.

The list of education branches and conditions for training on interconnected syllabi is determined by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Curricula of higher education may be covered in the following ways: full time and part-time training, in a form of external and distant education.

The list of Bachelor fields and Master specialities, which are allowed for part-time training, is specified by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Students receiving part-time training are provided with benefits at the place of employment as it stipulated by Articles 248-250; 254-257 of the Labor Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan¹³.

3.4 Second Cycle Programmes

3.4.1 Branches of Study

The Master degree programme provides knowledge in specific areas and lasts for a period of minimum two years after the Bachelor programme. Upon completion of the Master programme students are awarded a state diploma (in Uzbek - *Magistr*), which entitles them to work in relevant professional areas. Admission to Master degree studies is on a competitive basis. Only students who have obtained a Bachelor degree in a specific field may submit documents to apply for the Master speciality, which corresponds to the previous Bachelor degree programme.

Medical Master Programme

The Master level medical education - 2-3 years – includes the training of physicians in 39 narrow specialities (surgeons, cardiologists, ophthalmologists, infectiologists and others) who are trained to work at specialised units of health care, medical educational and scientific institutions.

Clinical Internship

The Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated by 18 of December 2009 "On improvement of the system for upgrading the qualifications and retraining of medical personnel" has approved the regulation on clinical internship, where physicians upgrade their qualification in 43 narrow clinical specialities.

¹³ Regulation on higher education. Registration number by Ministry of Justice, № 1222 dated 22 February 2003.

The clinical internship is the main type of postgraduate medical education, which provides a two-year training as qualified specialist physician.

All medical HEIs, as well as all Republican Scientific Medical Centres offer clinical internship in various medical specialities approved by the order of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Annually, the Ministry of Health, announces a competition for enrolment to clinical internship.

The deadline for submission of documents for competition is 20 July of each year.

Documents are submitted to the admission commissions of medical HEIs or Republican Scientific Medical Centres.

The competition consists of 2 stages: a test and an interview.

The education starts on 2 September and lasts for 2 years. Upon completion of the first year of studies medical interns take an examination. Upon completion of the second year of studies, the interns have to pass a final attestation and receive a diploma of a specialist in a corresponding speciality. Unlike Master programme, when applying to clinical internship, it is necessary to provide a trilateral agreement for training of a specialist.

3.4.2 Admission Requirements

Admission to the Master programmes follows procedures similar to those for Bachelor programme: it is organised by a HEI in accordance with quotas for entrance on the basis of state grants and contracts, which are approved, accordingly, by Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The admission to Master programmes is based on a principle of equal rights for all (both for those on state grants and contracts), common requirements for entrants and common test, which ensures admission of the best applicants for state grants. Other applicants have the right to be admitted based on collected scores within the limit of quotas for entrance.

The tests are organised separately in each HEI considering the Master degree specialities, languages of instruction and types of training.

Undergraduate students awarded with Presidential scholarship and other governmental scholarships are admitted to Master programmes on a state-budget grant without any entrance exams.

3.4.3 Curriculum

In contrast to the Bachelor degree programmes, Master degree programmes shift the emphasis from the theoretical study of basics of different subjects to an independent academic research.

The total amount of study time should be allocated in the following way:

- theoretical training 25-30%;
- attestation 4-7%;
- holidays 13-16%;
- scientific work 50-55%.

Scientific work should be divided into the following:

- academic research work and preparation of a Master dissertation 70-75%;
- scientific-pedagogical work 25-30%;

The amount of theoretical training should be divided among the discipline units depending on the Master speciality in the following way:

- general methodological disciplines 30-45%;
- speciality disciplines 40-50%;

- optional disciplines 13-30%¹⁴.

3.4.4 Teaching Methods

More than 50% of the total time at Master level entails scientific work, which consists of academic research, scientific-pedagogical work and the preparation of a Master degree dissertation independently and under supervision of academic supervisor.

An academic supervisor is appointed from the most qualified professors and teachers of the majoring department.

The teaching methods for academic research work should:

- develop the practical skills for independent research work;
- stimulate the development of the necessary knowledge and skills to conduct scientific researches, an analysis and a formulation of research results as well as a preparation of scientific publications with a use of modern information technology tools;
- provide students with skills to search databases for the latest achievements in science, engineering and technologies.
- apply them during the preparation of a Master degree dissertation.

In turn, teaching methods for scientific-pedagogical work should:

- develop competences and skills in delivery of training using modern educational and information technologies as well as interactive methods for educational work.
- Install competences and skills in organisation of methodology works to support the education process.

3.4.5 Progression of Students

This part is similar to what was described in the Bachelor programme section; please refer to section 3.2.5.

3.4.6 Employability

According to the SES of higher education, a Master programme graduate should be prepared:

- for independent academic research, scientific-pedagogic and management professional activity in the selected speciality;
- to obtain postgraduate education in speciality that corresponds to Master programme training;
- to obtain additional vocational education in the system for retraining and upgrading the qualifications of personnel.

In contrast to Bachelors, Master degree holders can apply for jobs that require higher level of independence in decision-making: specialists, teachers at HEIs, executives.

3.4.7 Student Assessment

Please refer to section 3.2.7.

3.4.8 Certification

Master programme graduates are awarded a state diploma, which entitles them to start working in relevant profession. Master graduates can continue education on a postgraduate programme.

3.5 Programmes outside of the Bachelor and Master degree Structure

According to the Education Act, higher education in Uzbekistan includes a Bachelor degree programme (minimum 4 years of studies) and Master degree programme (minimum 2 years of studies). There are

¹⁴ State Education Standard for Higher Education. General provisions. C. 7.2. Last revision by Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers #3 from January 10, 2015.

several Bachelors are trained for 4.5-5 years. For instance, Bachelors in Architecture are trained for 4.5 years. Bachelors in "International relations", "International law" and "International economic relations" at the University of World Economy and Diplomacy are trained for 5 years.

Specifics of the medical education are described in the item 3.4.1.

There are two branches of Russian HEIs: Moscow State University named after M.V.Lomonosov and the University of Oil and Gaz named after Gubkin which offer 5-year specialist degree programmes.

3.6 Third Cycle (PhD) Programmes

3.6.1 Organisation of Doctoral Studies

Once the state requirements for postgraduate education were introduced in January 2013, the two-stage postgraduate education (two scientific degrees "Candidate of Sciences" and "Doctor of Sciences") was replaced by a single level of "Doctor of Sciences" (in Uzbek - "*Fanlar doktor*").

Postgraduate education continues for up to 3 years in the following forms:

- senior research fellows - staff members and;
- independent research fellows.

The workload for theoretical and academic research for senior research fellows - staff members takes 36 hours per week, of them no more than 12 hours shall be allocated to classroom-based learning. For independent research-fellows, the education workload is 12 hours per week, of them no more than 4 hours shall be allocated to classroom-based learning.

All research fellows may choose Uzbek, Russian, Karakalpak or English language to prepare their research thesis. Fellows may choose another language for development of thesis provided that it should be agreed with the Supreme Attestation Commission.

3.6.2 Admission Requirements

Applicants to the Doctor of Sciences degree studies should be only holders of:

- A Master degree or higher education diploma received before the introduction of Master degrees or its equivalent diploma in higher military education;
- A candidate of Sciences degree or PhD received abroad, as well as other equal academic degrees;
- A Bachelor degree, diploma of military specialist with higher education or diploma of specialist with higher education, with more than 5-year work experience and scientific achievements (patents for inventions, scientific publications, participation in scientific and technological innovations, etc.), and participating in research and education activities.

3.6.3 Status of Doctorate Study Research Fellows

There are two categories of students receiving postgraduate education. First, senior research fellows staff members which are considered as academic staff at a higher educational or scientific-research establishment, where they are enrolled for postgraduate studies. They have an education workload at the HEI (not less than 300 academic hours during 3 years of postgraduate studies). In parallel, independent research fellows get prepared to defend their dissertation at their main place of employment.

3.6.4 Supervision Arrangements

The decision of an admission commission indicates the name of an Academic Advisor responsible for a particular fellow. Every Academic Advisor may supervise the work of no more than three fellows.

During their first year of studies all fellows cover the theoretical and methodological programme in the chosen speciality. Appointed Academic Advisors develop these programmes, while the HEI council approves them. These programmes include scientific research methodology issues for a given discipline. To improve special knowledge of the fellows, in subsequent years of studies, the HEI council develops

and approves qualification curricula in special disciplines. Fellows pursue these programmes independently.

Prior to the defence of a doctoral dissertation all fellows should discuss the dissertation's results at international and republican scientific conferences and seminars, and have at least two scientific publications in international journals that are recognized by Supreme Attestation Commission (SAC), and at least two works should be published in international conference materials (one of them - abroad).

The Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education together with the Academy of Sciences and other interested Agencies monitor the effectiveness of the fellows' activities in line with established criteria for each year of studies.

3.6.5 Employability

Individuals awarded with a Doctor of Sciences diploma may apply for managerial positions in education and science, which require Doctor of Sciences diploma as a must.

In many cases, having a Doctor of Sciences diploma is seen as an advantage during the selection of candidates to managerial positions in public, international and private organizations.

3.6.6 Assessment

During the postgraduate studies, all candidates for their doctoral degree should take examinations in modern History of Uzbekistan, foreign languages, the speciality, as well as in a number of additional disciplines specified by the Supreme Attestation Commission (SAC) depending on the field of science, the nature and level of the previous education. The qualification examination for Doctor of Sciences degree candidates are organised in accordance with Regulation of SAC¹⁵. The Commission to conduct qualification examinations in every subject area should include 5-7 specialists, including at least two specialists having a Doctor of Sciences degree in relevant field. The examination is conducted in oral and written form.

The knowledge of fellows is assessed using a 100-point scale:

86-100: excellent;

71-85: good;

56-70: satisfactory;

0-55: unsatisfactory.

Every commission member makes evaluation independently. Afterwards, the chairman summarizes all marks and gives an average score. Following the results of examination, minutes are prepared and signed by all members of the Commission. The research fellow receives an Examination Certificate valid for 5 years.

3.6.7 Certification

The documents that confirm that the dissertation results are implemented into science, practice or accepted by particular organizations for implementation are submitted by the Research Fellow to the Academic Council, which awards Doctor of Sciences scientific degree (hereinafter - Academic Council),. These documents should be reviewed, certified by scientific and technological councils and approved by heads of organizations.

The Academic Council decides to accept a dissertation for defence and informs SAC to publish this information on SAC web-site and in the journal "SAC Bulletin".

Then, at least 1 month before the defence date, at least 50 copies of a short summary of the dissertation (abstracts) are sent to organizations according to a compulsory mailing list and an additional list of the Academic Council.

¹⁵ Regulation of SAC under the Cabinet of Ministers dated 28 January 2016 "On conducting qualification examinations".

The Academic Council appoints three official opponents that have Doctor of Sciences scientific degrees. Feedback from the official opponents and the leading organization should be provided to the candidate not later than 10 days prior to the defence.

After the defence, (within 1 month) the Academic Council sends to SAC the original copy of the dissertation and certification profile of the candidate, as well as their electronic copies. Within 3 months SAC takes decision and approves the candidate for awarding the Doctor of Sciences degree.

3.6.8 Organisational Variation

Postgraduate education is organised in the following forms:

- senior research fellows - staff members and;
- independent research fellows.

4 Teachers and Education Staff

4.1 Initial Education for Academic Staff in Higher Education

To obtain a job as a teacher at HEIs it is necessary to have at least a Master degree.

Basic education, working conditions and upgrading of the qualifications of teachers are described in the Classifier of the main positions of employees and professions of workers that revised by the Cabinet of Ministers and came into force on 1 July 2015.

A recent Resolution of the Government provides a clear legislative framework to resolve issues related to the employment of individuals with a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree obtained abroad¹⁶.

4.2 Conditions of Service for Academic Staff Working in Higher Education

Academic teaching staff of HEIs consists of: teachers - department assistants, senior teachers, assistant professors, professors and heads of departments. Recruitment for each position is organised in the form of open competition every 5 years. Qualification requirements are set for each academic position.¹⁷ The academic Board of a HEI secretly votes to select the candidates for the positions. Voting is valid in case of participation of at least 2/3 of Academic Board members. At least 50% of participant votes are required for successful election. A 5-year contract is signed with a winning candidate. Individuals willing to continue teaching activities at the HEI should report on the work performed upon expiration of the contract.

In the graduation year, a Master graduate of a HEI, under the State job placement scheme, receives a teaching position without competition for a 3-year period, subject to availability of vacant positions. This arrangement applies only for those Master programme graduates who studied on a state grant basis.

Every teacher should attend courses for upgrading the qualifications once in 3 years.

4.2.1 Planning Policy

The number of teaching and administration staff is calculated based on a number of students per one employee for Bachelor and Master degree programs respectively. Since 2009/2010 academic year the number of scientific-pedagogical staff of HEIs is determined based on ceiling normative of teacher/-students ratio 1:10.5.¹⁸ Every HEI (depending on its profile) proposes a number of positions to its respective ministry. For example, medical HEIs should submit their proposals to the Ministry of Health,

¹⁶ Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan № 246 "On the introduction of amendments and addenda to certain decisions of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan to enhance effectiveness and quality of pedagogical activities" (25 August 2015).

¹⁷ Regulation on rules of recruitment of the pedagogical staff into higher education institutions on competitive basis. Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan №20 dated by February 10, 2006.

¹⁸ Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan №164 dated by August 1, 2008 "On approval of improved system of remuneration for employees of Higher Educational Institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan".

Tashkent State Agrarian University and other agricultural institutes - to the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, etc.

4.2.2 Entry to the Profession

The procedure for employment of scientific-pedagogical staff in HEIs was adopted by a Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan №20 dated by February 10, 2006: "On approval of Regulation on rules of recruitment of pedagogical staff into higher education institutions on competitive basis." Requirements for candidates are determined in job descriptions.

Every position has a requirement with regard to the education level:

- A Head of department should have Candidate of Sciences or Doctor of Sciences or PhD degree;
- A professor - Doctor of Sciences degree or academic title of professor;
- An assistant professor - Candidate of Sciences / Doctor of Sciences degree or academic title of assistant professor or PhD;
- A senior teacher or teacher - higher education diploma (Master/specialist).

The HEI's rector has a right to decide to announce a competition for the replacement of positions at the university. Knowledge of foreign languages and ability to use ICT at work are important for employment at HEI.

Closer links between enterprises and HEIs are encouraged through direct cooperation agreements and by creating branches of faculty departments in factories or enterprises. As a rule, these departments are responsible for: placement of students and teachers at enterprises and development of practical work-based learning; preparation and presentation of joint lectures together with colleagues from enterprises; and development of continuing education programmes for the staff of enterprises. Scientists from Academy of Sciences and specialists of enterprises from different sectors of economy are involved to the part-time work at HEIs.

Professor from an overseas higher education institution can be invited to work without competition.

4.2.3 Professional Status

The Academic Board of a HEI decides on terms and conditions of a labour contract with teachers at public HEIs. Competition is announced at the end of a labour contract period for the heads of departments, professors, assistant professors, senior teachers and teachers in a corresponding academic year. Contracts with the full-time teachers are signed for 5 years, subject to condition of taking courses for qualification upgrading every 3 years, while for part-time teachers contracts are signed for 1 year.

4.2.4 Salaries

The overall budget for personnel expenditures is set in accordance with the funding rules of HEIs, Unified salary rate system, the basic salary rates for particular positions and other normative documents related to staff and expenditure conditions for HEIs' personnel.

The rate of basic salaries for teaching staff and management staff of higher education institutions is set by a decision of the Government.¹⁹ However, the higher educational institutions have the right to set differentiated rates of allowances, salaries and to apply various forms of payment and motivation.

4.2.5 Working Time and Holidays

Average weekly workload for teachers is 36 hours per week with 42-43 working weeks per annum. The overall workload for teachers is 1540 hours per one academic year that are distributed between teaching (academic), research, methodological and social activities. The academic workload consists of the

¹⁹ Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On the introduction of amendments and addenda to certain decisions of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan to enhance effectiveness and quality of pedagogical activities" (№ 246 dated 25 August 2015).

following types of tasks: delivery of lectures, practical training, supervision of laboratory assignments, student's evaluation, supervision over senior students and graduate thesis.

Before the start of an academic year every teacher should develop an individual work plan, which should specify activities and results planned for accomplishment. The main part of workload of the teaching staff is devoted to teaching, and every category of teachers has a recommended schedule for allocation of classroom academic hours.

The total workload of a teacher is divided in the following categories:

- Academic work 50-70%
- Research and methodological work 5-10%
- Academic research work 15-20%
- Organizational and methodological work 5-10%
- Civics and enlightenment activities 10-15%.

All employees, including part-time staff, are entitled to annual vacation securing their average salary and the job place. Employees receive annual vacation for at least fifteen working days. All employees have the right for a paid sick leave. Women have the right for a paid maternity leave including seventy calendar days before childbirth and fifty-six (in case of difficult confinement or birth of two or more children - seventy) calendar days after childbirth and state social insurance benefits. Moreover, women can chose to stay at home for childcare until a child reaches the age of two. During this period she receive child-care benefits and her employer keeps her job position reserved for her.

4.2.6 Promotion, Advancement

The decision on promotion and advancement of employees is made on an individual basis upon agreement with a Ministry.

There is a mechanism in place to determine teachers' rating, which aims to encourage and increase responsibility of employees for their work results. This procedure contributes to staff promotion or salary increase in accordance with Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan №164 dated by August 1, 2008 "The approval of improved system of remuneration of employees of Higher Educational Institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan".

The teachers' performance is evaluated on a 110-point scale using the following parameters:

1. Teaching work - up to 20 points
2. Methodological work - up to 20 points
3. Civics and enlightenment - up to 20 points
4. Scientific work - up to 30 points
5. Contribution to HEI development – up to 10 points
6. Personal skills development - up to 10 points

4.2.7 Retirement and Pensions

Teachers may retire on common conditions at age of 60 with a minimal employment record of 25 years of work for men and at age of 55 with minimal employment record of 20 years for women.

4.3 Continuing Professional Development for Academic Staff Working in Higher Education

4.3.1 Organisational Aspects

Every teacher is obliged to upgrade his qualification and to undergo procedures of internal and external evaluation. In 2012 the Head scientific and methodological centre (HSMC) for the organization of retraining and professional development of teaching and management staff of the higher education system under The Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education was established. Five

regional centres and 10 sectoral centres were created to retrain and to upgrade the qualifications of teaching staff of higher education institutions.²⁰

Successful teacher have to:

- upgrade regularly their personal pedagogical and professional proficiency;
- update curricula;
- learn and actively implement innovative pedagogical, information and communication technologies in the education process;
- study and use a foreign language in pedagogical and scientific activities.

Courses for retraining and upgrading of qualifications are organized in 226 fields of knowledge, for management staff they are organized in the HSMC and for teaching staff - in 19 regional and sectoral centres that serve 23206 management and teaching staff of HEIs.

The Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan №-4732 dated June 12, 2015 "On measures for further improvement of the system for retraining and upgrading the qualifications of management and pedagogical staff of higher educational institutions", defines the key directions for further improvement of the system for retraining and upgrading the qualifications of management and pedagogical staff:

- continuous upgrading of the pedagogical and professional proficiency of pedagogical staff of HEIs, learning of regulatory norms, latest achievements in theory, scientific and applied researches, technological progress and innovations with a regard to discipline taught, as well as contemporary teaching methods;
- updating qualification requirements, curricula, programmes and methods for retraining and upgrading the qualifications of pedagogical staff with regard to the wide implementation of contemporary highly-effective education and innovation technologies, the best foreign practice;
- learning active implementation in the education process of innovative pedagogical, information and communication technologies using global Internet network, multimedia systems and distance learning methods;
- studying of foreign languages and their wide use to continuously increase teacher's professional proficiency in pedagogical and scientific activities.

A focused work is ongoing to study best practices of foreign countries. A systematic work was organised in Uzbekistan with the help of the Erasmus+ by European Commission and the British Council to invite foreign specialists at the expense of the implemented projects and programmes.

4.3.2 Incentives for Participation in Continuing Professional Development Activities

Permanent Interagency Commission under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan is organised to ensure effective coordination of the activities related to organisation of retraining and attestation of management and teaching staff of HEIs.

Regular (at least once in 3 years) participation in courses for upgrading the qualifications is compulsory for every teacher and HEIs' management staff.

Retraining and upgrading qualification are carried out at two-month, off-the-job, courses comprising of curricula with 288 contact hours. The students attending retraining and qualification upgrade courses secure their main place of employment and average salary during the whole education period; their workload is allocated among other staff of HEIs.

²⁰ Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan №278 dated 26 September 2012 "On measures on the further perfection of the system of retraining and improvement of professional skills of the pedagogical staff of the higher educational establishments"

Upon completion of courses for retraining and qualification upgrade, trainees should pass an attestation. HEI's teaching staff that passed successfully through attestation have an advantage on a competition for vacant teacher position in the relevant field.

Teaching staff who failed attestation at the end of education must, within one year, attend the same training course one more time and cover full cost of training.

In case of a repetitive failure to complete the courses within specified time frame, the main employment contract with the staff is terminated. In this case, they are not allowed to work at HEIs unless and until they complete courses for qualifications upgrade one more time and prove their proficiency.

A sabbatical leave securing the employment position and an average monthly salary may be offered to research fellows in order to facilitate finalisation of their doctoral dissertations, subject to an approval by an Academic council and the order of HEI's rector. The sabbatical leave can also be granted to authors of textbooks and teaching materials to finalize their work. The length of sabbatical leave is: up to 3 months for authors of textbooks and teaching materials and up to 6 months to finalise doctoral dissertations.

5 Management and Other Education Staff for Higher Education

5.1 Requirements for Appointment

Each higher education institution is led by a rector appointed by the Cabinet of Ministers. The rector is responsible for the organisation of the education process in HEI in accordance with the State Educational Standards, as well as for control and methodological guidance of academic lyceums or a professional college established under the HEI.

Each HEI has two boards (the Academic Council and the Board of Trustees), which are responsible for key management issues and the quality of education. The Board of Trustees is a public administration body of the HEI regardless of its type of ownership. It consists of the representatives of the local public authorities, enterprises and organizations, mass media, public organisations and professional associations. The Board of Trustees operates according to the legislation and the HEI Charter.

Usually, HEIs have five vice-rectors responsible for: academic issues, scientific researches, civics and enlightenment, supervision of academic lyceums and professional colleges, as well as economical and financial matters.

Vice-rector for civics and enlightenment is responsible for social and cultural issues, the relations with parents, student and youth organisations, sponsors, public structures and local communities. He/she deals with the organisation of social events, exhibitions, sports competitions, contests, performance of talented students and, in general, upbringing of young generation in light of national and universal human values as well as cultural and historical traditions.

A HEI is divided into faculties depending on the branches of study led by Deans. Faculties comprise of divisions and departments. Head of department is the highest academic position in a department.

5.2 Conditions of Service

In recent years, the management system of higher education in the country has witnessed significant organizational and staffing changes. A system for recording and maintaining HR documentation was created and further improved. A human resource database covering all management and teaching staff was created. New mechanisms for quality assessment of HEIs' employee performance were implemented. A procedural document including description of management activities and profiles was introduced. The multilevel system for HEIs to manage staff development aims to constant preparation of young managers and administrators for all levels and to identify positions according to requirements for each management level. Managing personnel development includes practical training for candidates in the leading HEIs within the country and abroad.

6 Quality Assurance in Higher Education

6.1 Responsible Bodies

The Cabinet of Ministers decides on specific measures to implement public policy in education. The Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education (MHSSE) is a body responsible for direct supervision and development of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education in the country.

The State Testing Centre (STC) under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan is authorised to undertake attestation and state accreditation of all educational establishments in Uzbekistan regardless of their corporate subordination or type of ownership. The main objectives of the STC are the following:

- ensure control on the quality of education and training;
- organise and conduct attestation and state accreditation of educational establishments regardless of their corporate subordination and ownership form; define ratings of educational establishments;
- review State Educational Standards and state requirements and, on their basis, review syllabuses and curricula for all types of education.

Every HEI in Uzbekistan has an internal control and monitoring division, which is responsible for monitoring the quality of the education process, upgrading the qualifications of teaching staff, and the quality of education in general. In this regard, the division performs regular transparent and comparable quality assessment in the educational establishment. The division is also responsible for control over execution of governmental decisions, decrees and resolutions, as well as orders of MHSSE.

6.2 Approaches and Methods for Quality Assurance

The Quality Assurance system consists of normative documents and procedures facilitating the control, monitor and assess of progression of students, it also includes performance indicators of teachers, departments and institutes.

Under the Education Act, the State Educational Standards define the requirements for the content and quality of general secondary, specialised secondary, vocational and higher education. They provide detailed information on the main features, such as the structure, content and implementation of curricula, quality control of personnel training, compulsory (core) components (the list of academic subjects), learning outcomes and descriptions of obtained skills and abilities.

The State Testing Centre (STC) is authorised to undertake state attestation and accreditation of all educational establishments in Uzbekistan regardless of their status or type of ownership.

State attestation and accreditation of educational establishments is organised and conducted in accordance with the Regulation on State Accreditation of Educational Establishments in the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Accreditation of an educational establishment is conducted by the STC based on the results of attestation. This is the prevailing method of public control aimed to assess the educational establishment and to decide whether the content, level and quality of personnel training is in accordance with the State Educational Standards.

An educational establishment is subject to an attestation every five years. This process comprises of a comprehensive analysis of the educational establishment's performance in the previous three years, divided into types of education, with special attention paid to predefined criteria.

State accreditation includes recognition of compliance of the educational establishment with criteria and requirements specified in the State Educational Standards and granting the right to issue a diploma to

graduates of the HEI.

The State Testing Centre is also responsible for recognition of foreign education degree documents received abroad. In this regard, international and bilateral agreements, State Educational Standards and other normative documents in education are taken into consideration.

External assessment

Usually, every HEI passes a general attestation once in 5 years. At this time, every teacher and every manager should undergo several procedures, including: assessment of students performance, attendance, contribution to the management of the institution, contribution to scientific researches and development, number of publications.

Attestation and accreditation procedures are regulated by the Regulation on attestation and instruction for criteria and methodology of attestation.

The Instruction provides 13 kinds of HEIs' activities that should be assessed by an attestation commission:

- Implementation of the State Educational Standards.
- Level of students' knowledge.
- Quality of teaching staff.
- Academic research activities.
- Availability of textbooks and teaching materials.
- Property and equipment.
- Teaching methodology and information technologies.
- Integration of science and industry.
- Postgraduate degree programmes.
- Partnership with lower levels of education - specialised secondary and vocational education.
- Civics and enlightenment.
- Employment of graduates.
- International partnership.

Every field of education and speciality are assessed with regard to the 13 parameters listed above. A HEI is deemed to have passed attestation if at least 75% of fields of education and specialities have successfully passed attestation. If the number of fields of education and specialities that have passed attestation equals to 67-75%, a university is conditionally attested. If less than 67% of fields of education and specialities have passed attestation, then such a HEI fails attestation.

Attestation results are shown in a special report that includes an action plan to improve fields of education and specialities that do not meet attestation requirements. The HEI has one year to resolve the issues. These fields of education and specialities will re-take attestation after one year. If these fields of education and specialities fail attestation for the second time, they should be closed following to decision made by the attestation commission.

The State Testing Centre convenes the attestation commission. Elected members of the attestation commission include leading researchers and scientists of universities, of the Academy of Sciences and scientific-research institutes, employees of ministries and representatives of corresponding industrial sectors/enterprises. A member of the attestation commission should not be an employee of the university which is under the given attestation. The Commission Chairman is usually an employee of the State Testing Centre.

In order to obtain accreditation, a university should present syllabuses and curricula and the report of the attestation commission; non-public HEI should also provide copies of licenses for educational activities. The State Testing Centre publishes attestation and accreditation results of specific universities and specific specialities in the mass media.

Internal Quality Control

Before the start of an academic year, every teacher should develop an individual work plan, which should specify activities and results to achieve.

Individual plans are approved by the Head of Department and presented to the Monitoring department. The Department also prepares a development plan, which should be approved by the Academic council of the university (faculty). During the academic year, the Head of Department is responsible for control over performance of development plans. Quality of teaching is controlled through open lectures and peer review.

Every teacher should also participate in a peer review that is focused mainly on education methodology. Usually one teacher visits classes of another teacher in accordance with peer review schedule. A teacher who assessed should demonstrate all elements of education and practical methods of classroom management: Presentation / introduction to the topic, feedback to students, presentations by students, task and homework assessment, short introduction to the next topic and allocation of assignments and homework. A reviewer should prepare a review report including general quality assessment with regard to content, methodology, assessment, progression of students and compliance with SES. The report should also contain discussion of strong and weak sides of a teacher and recommendations for improvement. The report should be discussed with the teacher being assessed and should be delivered to the Head of department for control and subsequent monitoring.

Progression of students is one of the main indicators of a teachers' performance. A Head of department assigns young teachers (with less than 3 years of experience) to more experienced colleagues who offer mentoring consultations and exercise daily control.

By the end of an academic year, every teacher should report on completion of the individual plan. Concurrently, students assess every teacher through anonymous survey. Performance scores accumulated in the pedagogical rating system with regard to annual plans should place on the faculty announcement board. Based on the specific reports and results of continuous monitoring, with condition that accumulated points exceed 1540, the Head of department may recommend the staff member for promotion and salary increase.

The internal control system of a university comprises of a self-assessment of the development and implementation of individual plans, monitoring of teacher's work performed by Head of department, and monitoring of the work of departments and faculties and staff at university level performed by the monitoring division. Internal monitoring and teachers' assessment are organised in accordance with the State requirements.

The choice of the specific ways of qualification upgrade and staff personal development can be based on internal control results, individual skills and preferences of particular teachers.

The universities may engage foreign experts to perform internal assessment. This option is generally used in international universities during their internal audits.

In 2012 a new initiative - rating of HEIs - was introduced to stimulate improvement in level and quality of scientific and pedagogical activity of higher educational establishments, their achievement in line with international criteria and standards, with a focus on the quality of teaching and training of specialists demanded by real economy sectors. The framework of the rating of HEIs is set by MHSSE together with the State Testing Centre for each HEI using the following indicators: teaching quality index (35%), students and graduates proficiency index (20%), scientific and technological capacity of HEIs (35%) and other indicators (10%).²¹

²¹ Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan № 371 dated by December 29, 2012 "On the introduction of system of rating assessment of higher educational establishments of the Republic".

7 Educational Support and Guidance

7.1 Support Measures for Learners in Higher Education

7.1.1 Definition of the Target Group(s)

The state policy ensures equality for all students regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion and financial status. These include orphans, disabled, students from regions, and talented youth.

Student's and teachers moral and psychological condition is considered of high importance. That is the first Vice-rector of HEI is the Vice-rector on civics and enlightenment who organises activities related to enlightenment and cultural work aimed to develop youth in aesthetics and creativity; to promote healthy lifestyle and high standards of moral and physical development.

Every HEI has cell units of the youth movement of the Republic of Uzbekistan NGO "Kamolot"²². These units provide support to students to ensure the development of their intellectual and cultural potential, comprehensive protection of their rights and improvement of student's social and living conditions. The majority of students are members of the "Kamolot" movement.

7.1.2 Specific Support Measures

Orphans receive interest-free loans to pay for education contracts. Disabled applicants are given preference in case of equal scores on entry examination to HEI. The students from regions are provided with free accommodation in student dormitories.

The most talented students may qualify for state scholarships. State scholarships of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan are granted to the last-year students (on Bachelor and Master programmes separately) of higher educational establishments, citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan following to results of competition in 11 fields of education (agriculture and water resources; engineering and information technologies; healthcare and social sector; humanities and social sciences; natural sciences; business and management; education; culture, arts and sports; foreign languages; law and international relations; journalism). The Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan organises the competition.

Students in the two last years of Bachelor programme at public higher educational establishments of the Republic of Uzbekistan can receive other state scholarships (named after Beruniy, Ibn Sino, Navoiy, Ulugbek and Imam al-Bukhariy).

Scholarships from the youth movement NGO "Kamolot"

This movement offers scholarships for active and talented Bachelor and Master degree students. "Kamolot" scholarships are granted for 10 months. The minimum size of the scholarship equals to one minimal monthly wage. If the student shows commitment and effectiveness, the scholarship can be extended until the end of the Bachelor or Master degree programme.

All students have the right to use subsidized monthly public transportation tickets, as well as discounted airfare for domestic flights.

7.2 Guidance and Counselling for students

7.2.1 Academic Guidance

Every group of students (25-30 students) is appointed an academic supervisor. The group supervisors organise regular meetings with students, monitor the progression and attendance of students, as well as assist students in their everyday life issues. A supervisor helps students to get oriented quickly in the

²²http://kamolot.uz/kamolot_nima.html

specifics of studying at university; in its structure and services, presents university and speciality traditions; helps to effectively organise the education, to plan independent work, to prepare education schedules; liaises with all teachers that conduct classes, and, if necessary, helps to organise additional classes and consultations; helps to solve financial problems; visit student's dormitories, participates in resolution of everyday life and other important issues; liaises with students' parents and promptly reacts to arising situations, renders and organises psychological support to students.

Academic Supervisors for courseworks and dissertations are appointed for each student and consult students in the selection and development of a project topic; monitor project preparation, consult on academic research methodology and on search of required sources and literature, if necessary, to correct errors of a student, to prepare a review of their coursework and present it during department meeting, where defence of coursework takes place.

7.2.2 Psychological Counselling

In general, students receive primary psychological help from group supervisors. Some Universities organised Psychological Service Centres that deliver qualified support to students facing difficult life situations. These include, for instance, Psychological Service Centres at Tashkent State pedagogical university named after Nizami and the Bukhara State University.

7.2.3 Career Guidance

The employment of graduates and the development of entrepreneurial culture among students are recognized as important issues for all HEIs of the Republic and they work on establishment of relationships with potential employers.

All HEIs of Uzbekistan have marketing departments / career centres, which should provide occupational guidance, organise job fairs, provide consulting, as well as organise practice and internships at enterprises.

The employment of graduates is one of the most important indicators for quality of education and work organisation at a HEI; it is assessed during both attestation and rating of a HEI.

8 Mobility and internationalisation in Higher Education

8.1 Student Mobility

International cooperation is one of the most dynamically developing areas of higher education in Uzbekistan. Thanks to inter-governmental agreements, there are wide opportunities to study abroad. International cooperation is organised in the following areas:

- establishment of joint higher education institutions;
- involvement of foreign teachers and scientists in the teaching process at HEIs of the Republic;
- fostering academic mobility;
- facilitating the organisation of joint academic research work;
- organisation of international conferences on the current problems in higher education, innovative technologies, resources and energy saving;
- Attracting foreign investments.

Student mobility is organised through with the assistance from certain international programmes, such as Erasmus+ (European Union) , Fulbright (USA), DAAD (Germany), Great Britain Chievening Programme, as well as a number of programmes financed by the governments of Japan, France, China, Spain, and Russian Federation.

The EU Programme Erasmus Mundus of the European Union is a cooperation and mobility programme in higher education. About 700 students from Uzbekistan has already benefited from long-term grants for mobility to study at European partner university under this programme.

The first generation of Credit Mobility projects under Erasmus+ started with 67 partnerships in 2015, including 30 HEIs of the Republic and 28 European universities (from 13 EU members states) that provide for a total of 253 mobilities²³, including 183 students of Uzbekistan (Uzbekistan-EU) and 70 program participants from EU (EU-Uzbekistan). In 2016, 107 Uzbek students will receive stipends for education in Europe and 12 PhD students from EU will arrive to Uzbekistan. Besides, 76 Uzbek employees of HEIs will spend mobility abroad in Europe and 58 scientific and teaching employees of EU universities will teach and share their experience and knowledge in Uzbekistan.

A significant progress has been achieved with individuals who obtained Doctor of Philosophy degree (PhD) overseas and all issues related to their employment on teachers' positions at HEIs have been solved.

8.2 Academic Staff Mobility

Tempus

Tempus programme started in Uzbekistan in 1994; since that time more than 80 inter-university cooperation projects have been financed. Being the only programme that provides a basis for an intensive 3-year inter-university cooperation at international level Tempus programme significantly influenced general process of the internationalization of HE in Uzbekistan. Tempus programme became a powerful and effective instrument for a support of the educational reforms, especially since 1997 when the new Education Act and the National Programme for Personnel Training (NPPT) were adopted. Later, the programme became even more relevant, as Tempus projects facilitated implementation of governmental decisions adopted in 2011-2012 with regard to modernization of the higher education system in Uzbekistan.

Erasmus Mundus

In 2004, the higher education institutions of Uzbekistan started participation in "Erasmus Mundus" programme. About 200 teachers and researchers received mobility grants to study at European partner universities within 25 "Erasmus Mundus" partner programmes with participation of Uzbek HEIs.

Erasmus+

Active participation of higher education institutions continues also within a new programme of the European Union Erasmus+. Thus, following results of the first calls for proposals on the Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE), 12 new projects with 13 HEIs from the capital and 14 HEIs from regions were awarded a grant. The projects will aid to resolve national qualifications framework issues, to create interdisciplinary Master programme in mathematical engineering, to develop Master programme in Nuclear physics based on ICT, to modernize medical equipment at universities.

ISTEDOD (Talent) Fund²⁴ under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan was created in 2003; it aims to increase professional competence of the young teachers and research staff. It was created based on the previously operating Presidential Funds "Umid" ("Hope") which provided scholarships for graduate and undergraduate students and "Ustoz" ("Teacher") managing fellowship programs for young education professionals.

One of the ISTEOD Fund's objectives is to establish effective cooperation with leading scientific and research centres across the world, and to further support careers of talented young teachers and researchers through education and research fellowship programmes.

²³ Data from National Erasmus+ office Uzbekistan.

²⁴ <http://istedod.uz/en/>

8.3 Other Dimensions of Internationalisation in Higher Education

8.3.1 European, Global and Intercultural Dimension in Curriculum Development

European Union provides support to the process of educational reforms in Uzbekistan since 1994 when the first Tempus Tacis projects in Samarkand and Bukhara were initiated. More than 80 projects provided significant support to the whole process of the higher education system modernization in Uzbekistan.

Curricula development programmes were especially important due to their direct connection to the National Programme for Personnel Training and to introduction of the two-stage higher education system. During a number of years, many Tempus projects were aimed to develop new curricula with introduction of new specialities, mainly at Master degree level, in the field of engineering and technologies, applied sciences, education, teachers training, social sciences, management and business. Relevance of new programmes to local labour market demands was ensured through direct participation of sectoral ministries, local energy sector enterprises, aviation, automobile, food, textile, chemical industry, Chamber of Commerce and other non-academic organisations from key sectors of economy.

Employers and state organizations demonstrated a high interest in the graduates of new Master programmes in such fields as food safety, agriculture and water resources management and ICT. Scientific laboratories established with participation of Tempus projects made a special contribution to increase qualification of specialists.

Results of the first Erasmus+ competition in 2015 demonstrated high interest that higher education institutions of Uzbekistan express towards participation in the new programme: 12 projects were funded with participation of HEIs from Uzbekistan.

Project teams from 27 universities including 13 capital and 14 regional HEIs started their participation in 8 regional and 4 national projects for a capacity building in partnership with 38 universities from 14 countries-EU members. 7 of 12 new projects will facilitate the development of new curricula.

Within the framework of projects, representatives of HEIs and MHSSE will have an opportunity to study the progress of the Bologna process in Europe, as well as to apply some of its principles within the structural projects. For instance, during 2016-2018 a NURSLIN project will be implemented that aims to develop the National qualifications framework, which should contribute to the deepening of cooperation among the higher education systems of Uzbekistan and Europe.

8.3.2 Partnerships and Networks

The MHSSE highly assessed contribution of Tempus / Erasmus programmes. 55 universities across the country participated in Tempus projects and created long-term relationships with European partner universities. As a programme for mutually beneficial and equal partnership, Tempus / Erasmus represent tools that set strong international partnership relationships. After closure of the project's financing, ties between Uzbek and European universities-partners are maintained through the exchange of students and teachers, joint publications, participation in research and other academic projects.

8.4 Bilateral Agreements and Worldwide Cooperation

8.4.1 Bilateral Agreements

Following the development of bilateral agreements, branches of leading and reputable European and Asian HEIs were opened and operate in the country. They include Westminster International University in Tashkent, the Management Development Institute of Singapore, the Turin Polytechnic University, the Russian University of Oil and Gas, the Moscow State University, the Russian University of Economics and the Inha University of the Republic of Korea.

Bilateral relationships in education develop dynamically with the following European Union member-states: Germany, France, Great Britain, Spain, Czech Republic, Latvia. A number of national development agencies from European Union operate in the country: British Council, GIZ, Alliance Francaise, Goethe Institute; from Asia: JICA, KOICA.

Besides, cooperation is organised with some embassies: the US embassy implements Fulbright programmes; Chinese and Japanese embassies provide scholarship programmes for internship and receiving Master degree at leading Universities of these countries.

8.4.2 Cooperation and Participation in Worldwide Programmes and Organisations

The participation in Programmes of Worldwide Organisations - donors such as ADB, WB, Islamic Development Bank, allows attracting investments for the development of education sector. In particular, the World Bank prepares a project for higher education development in the amount exceeding 40 million US Dollars.

UNESCO implements a project for ICT development in the education field.

9 On-going reforms and Policy developments

9.1 Overall national education strategy and key objectives

The National policy in the field of education is governed by the Constitution, Decrees and Resolutions of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan and Resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Radical reform of education sector in Uzbekistan started in 1997 with the adoption of the Education Act and the National Programme for Personnel Training (NPPT). These two documents provide a legal framework for the further development of the higher education system in Uzbekistan.

The importance of the education system reform should be considered in the specific demographic context of Uzbekistan: youth under 16 accounts for 35% of total population, and more than 62% of population is under 30.

One of the first regulatory acts adopted in the country after its independence was the Law "On the basis of state youth policy in the Republic of Uzbekistan" dated by November 20, 1991. At the moment, a number of measures are being implemented to support talented youth in accordance to the Decree of the President №ПП-2124 "On additional measures aimed at implementing the state youth policy in the Republic of Uzbekistan" dated by February 6, 2014, as well as "Programme for additional measures aimed at implementing state youth policy in the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2016" approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan on 11 December 2015.

9.2 Overview of the education reform process and drivers

During the first stages of the reform of the education system in 1997-2004, the main emphasis of investment efforts was aimed to develop a vocational education system to provide youth with competitive professional skills. At the same time, higher education was structurally reorganized to introduce a Bachelor and Master degree programmes. Later, in 2005-2009 the focus was made on basic and secondary education system, when almost all infrastructures of the secondary schools were renovated. Large attention is paid to the reinforcement of the infrastructure and quality of the higher education system since 2011.

9.3 National reforms in Higher Education

Currently, reforms are focused on the implementation of the governmental decisions on the modernization of the national higher education system in order to increase the quality of higher education, introduce a national rating system of the universities, improve teaching of the foreign languages,

introduce new system of postgraduate studies, as well as to develop a system for upgrade of qualification and retraining of academic and administrative staff of HEIs.

According to the Decree of the President dated May 20, 2011, the Programme to strengthen the technical facilities and resources of higher education institutions and improve the training quality of the specialists for the period of 2011-2016 was adopted. In the framework of this program, the following activities were implemented:

- Strengthening and developing the technical facilities and resources of higher education institutions from 2011 to 2016;
- Optimizing the quality of taught subjects and courses to achieve high quality and to improve the State educational standards.

9.3.1 2015

The most important governmental decisions in the field of development of higher education in 2015 were the following:

- Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan (№3 dated by January 10, 2015) "On the introduction of amendments and addenda to the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan №343 dated by August 16, 2001 "About approval of the State Educational Standards of the higher education".
- Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan N 36 dated by March 02, 2015 "On approval of Regulation on Master programme".
- Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan (#-4732 dated by June 12, 2015) "On measures for further improvement of the system for retraining and upgrading the qualifications of management and pedagogical staff of higher educational institutions".
- Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan № 246 "On the introduction of amendments and addenda to certain decisions of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan to enhance effectiveness and quality of pedagogical activities" dated by August 25, 2015, which secured the legislative framework to resolve issues related to employment of individuals with PhD degree obtained overseas as teachers in higher education institutions.
- Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan №351 dated by December 3, 2015 "About measures for the organization of target training of the perspective management staff for higher and secondary specialised educational institutions".

9.3.2 2014

- Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan N 2155 dated by March 24, 2014 "On establishment of Inha University in Tashkent".
- Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan N 2215 dated by July 22, 2014 "On the establishment of Tashkent State Dentistry Institute".

9.3.3 2013

- Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan N 1954 dated by April 15, 2013 "On the establishment of Bukhara Engineering-Technical Institute".
- Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan №124 dated by May 05, 2013 "On approval of the State educational standard on foreign languages of the system of continuous education".
- Resolution of the Presidium of the Supreme Attestation Commission under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan № 195/2 dated by January 31, 2013 On approval of Regulation on procedure for awarding Doctor of Sciences scientific degree.

10 Legislation

Regulatory base of the higher education system of the Republic of Uzbekistan

1. The Education Act of the Republic of Uzbekistan.
2. The National Programme for Personnel Training.
3. The State Education Standard for Higher Education. General provisions. 16 August 2001.
4. The Regulation on higher education. Registered by Ministry of Justice, № 1222 dated 22 February 2003.
5. Regulation on licensing the activities of non-government educational establishments. Approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan № 100 dated 1 March 2004.
6. Regulation on rules of employing the pedagogical staff into higher education institutions on competitive basis. Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan №20 dated 10 February 2006.
7. Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan №164 dated 1 August 2008. "On approval of improved system of remuneration for employees of Higher Educational Institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan".
8. Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan № 1533 dated 20 May 2011 'On measures to improve technical facilities and resources of higher education institutions, and radically improve the quality of excellence for the period of 2011-2016'
9. Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan № -1875 dated 10 December 2012 "On measures for further improvement of foreign languages learning".
10. Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan №365 "On measures for further improvement of postgraduate education system and on attestation of scientific and academic research personnel of highest qualification" dated 28 December 2012.
11. the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan № 4456 "On further improvement of system for training and attestation of research-pedagogical human resources of highest degree level" dated 24 July 2012.
12. Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan №278 dated 26 September 2012 "On measures on the further perfection of the system of retraining and improvement of professional skills of the pedagogical staff of the higher educational establishments"
13. Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated 12 June 2015 №4732 "On measures for further improvement of system for retraining and upgrading the qualifications of management and pedagogical staff of higher educational institutions".
14. Regulation of SAC under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated 28 January 2016 "On conducting qualification examinations".

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