

# QUALITY ASSURANCE STRATEGY 2020-2023





#### INTRODUCTION

This document describes the Quality Assurance Policy for the Erasmus + Project No. 609563-EPP-1-2019-1-DE-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP Internationalizing Master **Programs** Agriculture via English Medium Instruction (IMPROvE\_AGRO). It is developed under WP7 (Effective Project Quality Control and Monitoring) of the Project in accordance with the Project Description and all applicable rules and guidelines. The focus is on quality assurance assessments, as well as monitoring and evaluating project management, communication, distribution strategy, workshops and steering group activities. The document considers a set of planned activities, defines the goals, roles and responsibilities of the project participants. The Quality Assessment Strategy (QAS) includes established indicators, methodology and procedures for assessing project activities and results. For each task, the responsible partner (s), deadlines and implementation tools, expected results or products, and the corresponding quality criteria for project results are determined within the framework of quality indicators approved by all partners. Monitoring the progress of the project and the quality of the results in each work package will ensure the high quality of the project results and ensure that the results are in line with the project objectives.

#### I. PROJECT MISSION

The mission of the IMPROvE\_AGRO project is to promote the modernization, quality and accessibility of higher education in Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Russia through the internationalization of master's programs in agriculture and forestry, by bringing them to EU quality standards, using English as a language of instruction and introducing a blended learning format.

Universities - partners of the IMPROvE\_AGRO project share a number of common principles and values that shape their approach to the organization and implementation of master's programs:

- the concept according to which in modern conditions, when time is valued, the creation and promotion of distance and mixed forms of implementation of educational programs is the central problem in modern societies, where the development of information and computer technologies creates a need for complex and interactive content;
- confidence that a quantitative increase in the number of specialists with theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of agriculture and forestry development, the exchange of the best world teaching practices using English as the language of instruction will create conditions for improving the quality of education in accordance with the EU quality standards for national and interstate levels.
- the concept according to which in the conditions of rapidly changing political, economic, legal conditions, the dynamism of the labor market, the growth of individualization of education, flexible mechanisms for the formation of master's programs and the attraction of interested students from other countries of the programs are necessary, allowing to create educational products for a wider range of listeners



#### II. COMMITMENT TO IMPROVING QUALITY

The partners in the consortium IMPROvE\_AGRO understand that the quality of implementation of educational programmes is an ongoing process that depends not only on adequate standards and resources, but mainly on regular monitoring and development. Therefore, we commit ourselves to continuously improvement of quality of the project and its educational product, as defined in this document.

#### III. QUALITY ASSURANCE STRATEGY

#### 1. Goals and objectives related to quality:

- 1) ensuring sustainable development of master's programmes in the field of Agriculture and Forestry;
- 2) implementation of high-quality training of competitive specialists in accordance with the requirements of employers.
- 3) training of highly qualified teachers in the context of improving the educational environment via introduction of innovative educational technologies, information and resource support and social partnership.
- 4) involvement of employers in the development of the content and assessment of the main professional educational programmes.
- 5) creation of an interactive platform IMPROvE\_AGRO, as a virtual platform for institutional interaction of stakeholders in the field of Agriculture and Forestry at different levels.

#### 2. LEVELS OF EVALUATION

The project quality plan is an integral part of the QA strategy. It outlines the elements of project evaluation and the quality indicators against which the progress and quality of the project results is to be measured, defines the evaluation mode and the assessment tools that will be used.

Assessment of the quality of activities for the implementation of the project and the quality of the final product (educational programmes) is to be carried out using **internal** and **external** expertise:

#### 2.1. Internal Quality Assurance

An internal QA of the project has **two main components**:

- 1. Regular internal evaluation of the **project implementation** which is carried out by members of the institutional and international QA groups.
- 2. Constant internal assessment of the **quality of the educational product** (courses and teaching materials)



Regular internal evaluation of the project implementation is carried out by members of the **Institutional QA group** at each PC institution *involving vice-rectors*, *staff of the QA departments and academics*, and the **Trans-institutional QA group** (**TQAG**), including representatives from all partner institutions (Annex 1).

#### The Trans-institutional QA group (TQAG):

- ✓ monitors the project implementation process by work packages 2-6,
- ✓ establishes the QA criteria, procedures and tools for evaluating the developed courses
- ✓ evaluates the effectiveness of the activities in accordance with the accepted criteria;
- ✓ coordinates the interaction between partners at each stage of implementation;
- ✓ evaluates the quality and representativeness of analytical materials (WP2, WP4) and toolkits (WP3, WP5, WP 6) prepared by partners

The results of the quality monitoring are reported to the project management board at coordination meetings, which are held on a quarterly basis in person or online.

On the trans-institutional level, continuous internal assessment of the quality of the educational product (project result) is carried out by the members of the International QA Group in close interaction with the course development international working groups, formed for each thematic educational block, which include:

- ✓ leading academics from the PC universities;
- ✓ professionals in the relevant field from EU countries
- ✓ representatives of the non-academic partner organizations: Tobolsk Integrated Scientific Station of the Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Center for Molecular and Cellular Bioengineering;
- ✓ external experts.

The course development international working groups determine:

- the list of disciplines of master programmes to be developed jointly by partner universities
- their level in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework;
- compliance of the created educational products with the internal requirements of the project;
- correspondence of the created educational products to the needs of potential students;
- the level of application of the CLIL and AMI methodology in the development and teaching of the disciplines;
- compliance of the created educational products with the requirements of national and international regulatory documents in the field of education.

The activities of the thematic methodological working groups are coordinated by the Trans-TQAG, which includes the leaders of the methodological working groups.

During the project the TQAG meets once every six months via video conferencing. The TQAG prepares reports and recommendations on a regular basis in accordance with the work of the project and the QAS.



**Institutional internal monitoring** of the quality of educational products and services provided, at the level of partner universities in Russia, Kazakhstan and Mongolia, is carried out directly by their own educational and methodological units reporting, as a rule, to the vice-rectors for educational activities, and which are obliged to monitor the compliance of educational products of their universities with the current regulatory documents:

- ✓ divisions that are in charge of this type of educational activity: institutes, faculties and other divisions, entitled to academic activity in accordance with the national laws on education of each country.
- ✓ commissions, departments / departments for quality control of educational services,
- ✓ educational and methodological departments, etc.

They determine the form of assessing the quality of knowledge and skills of students, the form of final certification, appoint the commissions to assess the level of development of competencies.

#### 2.2. External Quality Assurance

The external quality assurance of the Project includes the following components:

- 1) external evaluation of the entire project will be carried out by the Agency of the EC EACEA via the interim and final evaluation reports.
- 2) Project monitoring will be carried out by the national Erasmus + offices in accordance with their timetable for the project monitoring process.
- 3) Peer review and cross-project experience sharing with Erasmus + internationalization projects will be conducted through videoconferencing or face-to-face meetings.
- 4) External assessment of the created educational **products,** including an assessment of compliance with the needs of students and potential employers and their satisfaction with the quality of the services provided will be carried out through regular surveys, interviews, discussions, questionnaires, benchmarking, testing, etc.
- 5) Partner institutions will be involved in the procedure for external examination of educational products by the industry representatives (JSC "BAYER"), administrative and managerial bodies (Ministry of Agriculture and Trade of the Krasnoyarsk Territory, Altai Territory) Department of Agriculture of the Tyumen region, other institutions and organizations.

The assessment of quality assurance measures will be based on the analysis of qualitative data (compliance with the established deadlines, achievement of goals and indicators) and on quantitative data (number of activities carried out, analysis of assessments of educational products obtained through surveys and questionnaires). Data will be collected from all project partners and key stakeholders.

- 6) Representatives of employers and (or) associations of employers will be involved in the procedure for external examination of educational products (examination of basic professional educational programs; examination of work programs of disciplines, practice programs and SIA; assessment of employers' satisfaction with the level of training of graduates).
  - 7) External independent experts (Annex 2)



#### 3. Processes and tools

This section describes the main processes and tools associated with ensuring the quality of project implementation: working group meetings, feedback mechanisms, benchmarking, adequate marketing strategies, use of ECTS concepts and guidelines.

#### **3.1 Regular meetings of international working groups** (Annex 3).

Regular meetings of working groups on individual stages of the project implementation are to provide for the coordination of actions between partner universities in the project implementation, identify key problems and find the best ways to solve them, including with the support of the EU colleagues and representatives of industry.

#### The role of the international working groups is to:

- ✓ identify the problematic points in the implementation of the project at each stage,
- ✓ correct and up-date the medium-term action plans,
- ✓ search for compromise solutions, in the event of a discrepancy between the requirements of educational standards, internal regulations of the universities of the participants, national legislation,
- ✓ develop the structure and strategy for the implementation of educational programmes,
- ✓ formulate uniformed requirements for the design of modules of educational programmes.

The communication tools are presented in Annex 4

#### 3.2 Feedback mechanism

The feedback mechanism allows students and other interested parties to anonymously express their views on the needs for certain educational products, as well as on the quality of existing programs, is an important part of quality assurance processes.

In the first year of the implementation of IMPROvE\_AGRO, a questionnaire was drawn up that allows one to obtain an objective assessment of **the needs of stakeholders** in the thematic content of the educational programme and the forms of its implementation (Annex 5), the demand for graduates. Students will also be given the opportunity to answer the questions of the questionnaire on satisfaction with the quality of education. After the implementation of the first course of master's programs within the framework of the project, additions were made to the questionnaire, allowing to assess the compliance of the attended programme with expectations, to contribute to the development and transformation of the thematic content of educational products (Annex 6).

#### 3.3 Comparative analysis

Comparative analysis is to be used in implementing WP 2, WP 4, WP 5 and WP 7 To provide for competitiveness of the product and content created in the IMPROvE\_AGRO project requires monitoring programmes that target the same potential candidates and / or share a similar approach to solving the problem of raising awareness and qualification of specialists working in the field of agriculture and forestry. A comparative analysis of similar projects will help identify possible risks and growth points.



A comparative analysis of master's programmes will:

- help to determine the place of educational products being implemented in the ranking of similar programmes;
- improve the quality;
- strive for constant updating and improvement of the content, and the search for new methodological solutions.

#### 3.4 Benchmarking

Monitoring of the educational services market, identifying competing companies and studying their experience of success, in order to constantly improve their own products to maintain competitiveness, is carried out in the process of project implementation at least three times: at the beginning - in order to determine free "niches" for more successful project implementation; in the middle of the project - in order to identify ways to improve the quality of the product and the services provided, and at the end of the project - in order to find the best solutions for the successful implementation of educational programs and product promotion (Appendix 6).

#### 3.5 Using the ICT infrastructure

The system of modern higher education requires the ability to communicate freely and quickly with teachers, students, representatives of professional communities. At present, this can be achieved through the use of information technologies: organization of online and blended learning on an interactive platform, which makes it possible to virtually bring the consumer of the educational service to its 'source', and will make it possible to choose an educational programme, regardless of the territorial disunity of educational institutions.

Online e-learning platform, video conferencing should be used frequently. Therefore, the activity of visiting the platform should become the main criterion for assessing the quality of the use of ICT infrastructure.

#### 3.6 Using ECTS concepts and guidelines

The use of ECTS concepts and guidelines is an important part of ensuring the quality of educational practice in higher education in general and joint programs in particular. IMPROvE\_AGRO will strive to follow ECTS best practices as outlined in the ECTS guidelines, especially in the correct use of the ECTS credit concept and in determining the level of competencies acquired in programs and learning outcomes in accordance with the levels of the European Competence Framework.

### 3.7 Development of quality assessment indicators.

An important tool for assessing quality are indicators that give an idea of the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the project implementation and its educational product.

Indicators must meet the following requirements:



**Availability of measurement** - methods should be used that make it easy to measure this indicator, without the use of complex calculation formulas and without the use of technological solutions

**Comparability** - the indicator should be assessed on a uniform methodological basis among all project participants and allow comparing the results of the project implementation over time and with other similar projects or activities

**Possibility of multiple measurements** - the indicator should allow dynamic measurements, including after the end of the project

**Simplicity of interpretation** - the indicator should be understandable for all project participants

Ability to reflect specific aspects of the project implementation.

Indicators for assessing the quality of the project for individual results of the project are included into *Appendix 7*.

#### **ABBREVIATIONS**

ESG - European Standards for Quality Assurance in Education;

ECTS - European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System;

QAS - Quality Assessment Strategy;

EU - European Union;

ICT - Information and Communication Technologies.



Annex 1

### Trans-institutional Quality Assurance Working Group (TQAG)

Project Erasmus+ №609563-EPP-1-2019-1-DE-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP Internationalising Master Programmes in Agriculture via English Medium Instruction (IMPROVE \_AGRO)

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6	Dr Nina A. Bome	TyuSU	Head, Department for Botany, Biotechnology and Landscape Architecture	
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8	Dr Natalia Zherebiateva	TyuSU	Dotsent, Institute of the Earth Sciences	
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26	Elena I. Popova,	TCSS	Senior Researcher, Tobolsk Complex Research Station	



Annex 2

#### **External Experts** (to be completed)

#### The External Expert for QA of the courses:

Dr Tatiana Antyufeeva, Institute of Gas and Oil, Yugra State University, RF

#### The External experts for QA of the project implementation:

Prof. E. Wagner, Freiburg University, Germany Dr Ilia Bondarev, General Director, Llc UGMK-Agro

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Annex 3

## List International Thematic Working Groups

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Annex 4

#### **Project Communication Tools**

Web-based trainer network set up on Instagram

https://instagram.com/improve\_agro\_erasmus

A WhatsApp group has been formed for fast communication between partners Zoom meetings

On-line workshops

The **Moodle platform** accessible to all partners was designed and installed at KSAU <a href="https://agro.kgau.ru/">https://agro.kgau.ru/</a>



# Annex 5 Questionnaire for Employers

## АНКЕТА РАБОТОДАТЕЛЯ потребителя квалифицированных специалистов

Для улучшения системы менеджмента качества, а также с целью интеграции требований рынка труда и образовательного процесса, ликвидации разрыва между содержанием образования и практической деятельностью, *просим ВАС ответить на вопросы предлагаемой анкеты*.

1. Укажите пожалуйста основные	данные l	Вашей организ	ации (предпр	иятия):
Название		_Адрес		
ФИО руководителя		Конт. те	лефон	
2. Вы удовлетворены качеством порганизации?	<b>ІОДГОТОВК</b>	и специалисто	в в образоват	ельной
□ДА				
□ HET				
Если нет, почему?				
востребованы в Вашей организации?:				
4. Выпускники каких институтов на Вашем предприятии (в орг выпускникам 2018; 2019гг. (Ф.И.О.,	анизации	і)? Укажите п	южалуйста ин	- іформацию по
5. Соответствует ли качество под производства?  □ ДА; □ НЕТ			требованиям	 современного
Оцените по степени: высокий, сре	едний, ні		~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~	
		высокий	средний	низкий



Уровень профессиональной,	
общетеоретической и практической	
подготовки выпускников	
Уровень знаний современного	
производства	
Готовность выпускников Красноярского	
ГАУ к самостоятельной работе по своей	
специальности (направлению подготовки)	
Коммуникабельность, способность	
работать в команде, личностные качества	
Работоспособность, активность,	
инициативность	
Эмоциональная устойчивость	
Уровень владения ПК, знание	
необходимых в работе программ	
Нацеленность на карьерный рост и	
профессиональное развитие выпускника	
<ul><li>Университета?</li><li>□ повысить уровень теоретических знаний;</li></ul>	
□ улучшить уровень практической подготовки	
□ повысить навыки производственной дисципа	
□ повысить навыки саморазвития и самообразо	ования;
□ повысить уровень общей культуры;	
□ другое:	
7. Как изменилось за последние 2-5 лет	качество подготовки выпускников?
□ значительно улучшилось	•
□ скорее улучшилось, но не значительно	
□ не заметили изменений	
□ скорее ухудшилось, но незначительно	
□ ухудшилось	
8. Отметьте на визуальной оценочной ш в образовательной организации	кале уровень подготовки специалистов

2 3 4 5

0 1



9.	Намерены	ЛИ	Вы	В	дальнейшем	принимать	на	работу	выпускников
об	разовательн	ой ор	ганиз	аци	и?				
	ДА; □ НЕТ								
M	П								
					(Должност	<b>гь,</b> Фамилия, І	Імя, (	Этчество)	



# Annex 6 Questionnaire for students

### АНКЕТА обучающегося

1.	Ф.И.О
2.	Дата рождения
3.	Институт
4.	Специальность (направление подготовки)
5.	Основа обучения:
	целевая подготовка
	(укажите организацию, район, город)
	общие основания;
	с полным возмещением затрат
6.	Место жительства родителей (адрес):
<del>7.</del>	————————————————————————————————————
8.	Уровень полученных теоретических знаний:
	удовлетворен;
_ T	настично удовлетворен;
	не удовлетворен;
	ватрудняюсь ответить.
9.	Уровень приобретенных умений и навыков:
	удовлетворен;
_ T	настично удовлетворен;
	не удовлетворен;
	ватрудняюсь ответить.
10.	Соответствие уровня подготовки современным требованиям рынка труда:
	удовлетворен;
_ T	настично удовлетворен;
	не удовлетворен;
	ватрудняюсь ответить.
11.	Уровень учебно-методического обеспечения занятий:
	удовлетворен;
_ T	настично удовлетворен;
	не удовлетворен;
	ватрудняюсь ответить.
12.	Качество профессорско-преподавательского состава:
	удовлетворен;
_ T	настично удовлетворен;
	не удовлетворен;
	ватрудняюсь ответить.
13.	Удовлетворены ли Вы организацией учебного процесса:
	ДА; □ НЕТ, если нет, то почему



14. Организация самостоятельной работы студентов			
□ удовлетворен;			
□ частично удовлетворен;			
□ не удовлетворен;			
□ затрудняюсь ответить.			
15. Организация контроля знаний студентов			
□ удовлетворен;			
□ частично удовлетворен;			
□ не удовлетворен;			
□ затрудняюсь ответить.			
16. Оцените следующие параметры по шкале:	высоки	ий, средн	ий, низкий
- оснащенность учебного процесса учебной литературой			
- оснащенность техническими средствами обучения			
- оснащенность учебных аудиторий и лабораторий			
- оснащенность компьютерной техникой			
ВАШИ ПОЖЕЛАНИЯ И ПРЕДЛОЖЕНИЯ ПО УЛУЧШІ ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНОЙ ПРОГРАММЫ	ЕНИЮ КАЧ	<b>ЧЕСТВА</b>	<b>L</b>
Ваш телефон (контактный)			
Я даю свое согласие на обработку персональных данных в соответствии с тр. №152 – ФЗ от 27.07.2006г. «О персональных данных» для внесения их в элект Передача моих персональных данных иным лицам может осуществляться толь	ронную базу да	анных, вкль	очения в спискі
Дата «»20г.			
Ф.И.О.		под	цпись



#### Annex 7

#### **QUALITY ASSURANCE PLAN**

$N_{\underline{0}}$	Activity	Level	Outcome	Indicator	WP/	Responsible
					stage of the	actor
					project	
	$\mathbf{Q}\mathbf{U}_{A}$	ALITY OF THE PR	OJECT IMPLEMENT	<b>TATION</b>		
1	Regular contacts with the National Erasmus+	Internal and	Meetings, telephone	Number of	Throughout	PCI
	offices;	external	contacts, email	methodology online	the project	coordinators,
				meetings		Heads of
				Number of		IWGs
				methodology online		
				meetings		
2	Checking and analysing the existing QA	Internal	Report/summary	Feedback from all key	WP 7,2, Year	PCI
	procedures at each PCI			project partners	1	coordinators,
				Objective information		members of
				publication on the		the IQAWG
				project		
				implementation		
				progress on the official		
				websites of the		
				organization (project		
				participants)		
3	Presenting Quality control report in the Interim	Internal and	Texts of reports	Number of Reports	WP7,9, Year	EU and PC
	and Final reports on the project	external		from project partners	3	coordinators,
						members of
						the IQAWG



4	Consulting the EU partners on the QA	International	Training workshops	Number of training	WP 7,2 ;	EU and PC
	mechanisms and standards at their institutions		on CLIL and EMI		Year 1	coordinators,
			methodology/	and EMI methodology		Heads of
			Information	Minutes of meetings		IWGs
			resources availability	Number of participants		
			for the project	• •		
			participants	workshops		
5	Comparative analysis of the QA mechanisms	International	Summary/report	Number of online	WP7,2;	EU and PC
	in RU, KZ, MN and EU			meetings with project	Year 1	coordinators,
				partners (working		Heads of
				group meetings)		IWGs
				Number of participants		
				online meeting		
6	Development of QA instruments in	National, local		Number of	WP7,2;	PCI
	conjunction with the key stakeholders in the		Up-dated QA plan	stakeholders surveyed	Year 1	coordinators,
	Agriculture and Forestry (A&F) Sector			stakeholders in the		members of
				Agriculture and		the IQAWG
				Forestry (A&F) Sector		
				Ratio of		
				positive/negative/		
				neutral feedback on		
				the project		
				Corrective events		
				(actions) by results of		
				external assessment		
				procedures of the		
				programs		
				implementation		
				progress		



	QUALITY OF PRODUCT (course and teaching material developed)							
1	Quality analysis of existing courses at all PCIs	Institutional	Report/summary	Qualification level adequacy of teachers (academic degree, academic title, advanced qualification) Academic staff participation in the project training events (number of persons) Feedback from all key project partners	WP 7,2 ; Year 1	PCI coordinators, members of the IQAWG		
2	Development of qualifications descriptors and quality indicators on the basis of the needs analysis	International	Regional Qualifications framework for A&F sector	Number of Information resources List of descriptors List of quality indicators	WP7,2; Year 2	EU and PC coordinators, Heads of IWGs		
3	Establishing correlation of the methodology of course description based on ECTS and qualifications framework with official standards and requirements at each PI	Local	Minutes of consultations	Number of methodology meetings with project partners (working group meetings) Information resources availability for the	WP7,2 ; Year 2	PCI coordinators, members of the IQAWG		



4	Producing an acceptable level for each PI model of the QA standard eveluation for the courses to answer the needs of the employers and at the same time to be recognised officially		Summarising document	project participants about course description  List of documents  Management staff participation in project the project training and management events (number of persons)	WP7,2; Year 2	PCI coordinators, Heads of IWGs
5	Getting approval of the designed curricular for the A&F staff professional development by the local QU units and other relevant structures (e.g. the ministries of education where necessary).	National, local	Permission to implement courses	Ratio of positive/negative/neut ral feedback on the programmes	WP7,2; Year 2	PCI coordinators, Heads of IWGs
6	Monitoring the quality of the syllabi and the courses developed through regular contacts with the industry and governmental partners via consultations, surveys and staff retraining courses delivery. Analysis of the feedback and disseminataing it to all partners.	International, national, local	Summaies of surveys available	Number of positive/negative/neut ral feedback from all key project partners Number of events on quality assessment of the syllabi and the courses developed	WP7,2; Years 2-3	EU and PC coordinators, members of the IQAWG
7	Organising external expert monitoring of the quality of the developed courses (representatives of A&F industry and appropriate governmental bodies, EU partners, national Erasmus+ officies, etc.)	External	Feedback from NEO, EACEA and external stakeholders	Number of feedback from external experts, Number of external experts	Throughout the project	EU and PC coordinators, Heads of IWGs



					Qualification level of external expert		
				_	monitoring		
8	Regularly getting and analysing feedback from	Local,	Questionnaires ar	ıd	Number of surveys by	Throughout	EU and PC
	the courses' participants, recent graduates and	international	interviews		the courses'	the project	coordinators,
	senior students, to constantly improve and up-				participants		members of
	date the content and the lists of the courses				Ratio of		the IQAWG
	offered				positive/negative/		
					neutral feedback on		
					the programmes from		
					students		
					Number of events on		
					up-date the content		