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## **SPECIFIC APPROACH TO FOREIGN STUDENTS TRAINING AT THE NATIONAL AVIATION UNIVERSITY**

*The main approach to foreign students training at the National Aviation University is based on the International Quality Standards ISO 9001:2008, and is oriented to full satisfaction of requirements and expectations of employers and students.*

The right to education is a fundamental right of human being. Education is the key to sustainable development of the world and stability of relations among countries. There exist necessary means for effective participation of people in social life and in economy of the twenty-first century, under the conditions of accelerated globalization. UNESCO recognized that "Policy is aimed at fight against poverty, protection and improvement of human health, reduction of child mortality, improvement of international mutual understanding and enrichment of ethnic cultures. This policy will not be effective without responsible strategy in the field of education. Efforts, which are focused on ensuring of competitiveness in the field of advanced technologies will be unsuccessful" [1].

However, over recent years people more and more often speak about global crisis of education. The assertion of this fact had already exceeded from scientific literature into official documents and statesmen's utterances. In particular, in the report of UNESCO "Global monitoring report. Education for all. The hidden crisis" (2011) some alarm of a state of affairs in the field of education is felt: "Six aims of general and a variety of specific tasks were formulated in "Dakar Framework for Actions in Education for All", which were accepted by governments in 2000. These aims should be realized till 2015. Today, ten years after the event, the main conclusion is that the governments do not realize their collective responsibilities all over the world. Inability to achieve the Dakar aims will have serious consequences. The acceleration of educational advancement has the most important meaning for achievement of extended aims, formulated in Millennium Declaration in such fields as alleviating of poverty, ensuring acceptable food, children survival and mother health" [2].

The essence of education world crisis is seen, first of all in orientation of existing system of education (so called supporting education) to previous experience but not the future. Modern development of society demands conceptually new paradigm of innovative training. This innovative training should form the student's ability to project future determination, to understand and take personal responsibility for it, to obtain professional abilities to meet challenges of the future.

The permanent expansion in the number of foreign residents, who study abroad is another defining trend in functioning of the world education market of today. For example, 3.7 million foreign students studied in all countries all over the world in 2011. It is indicative that the increase is 77% in comparison with the year of 2000.

Different numbers of foreign citizens are accepted by higher educational establishments of the USA (18%), Great Britain (10%), Australia, Germany, France (7%), Canada (5%), Japan, Russia (4%), Spain, Ukraine (2%).

It is necessary to note that students' academic mobility (as well as instructors') belongs to the area of Bolognese Declaration provisions together with the main target. It includes the necessity of graduates' competitive growth by improvement of quality of European higher educational system. Among provisions of Bolognese Declaration a relatively modest position is designated to the quality problem. The Declaration states that assistance to the European collaboration in the field of quality rating can be achieved with the help of development of comparative criteria and methodologies". There are no doubts that the quality of European higher education is in the centre of attention of initiators and participants of the Bolognese process. The main substantial task is the increase of education quality, while other provisions, including mobility, determine only basic mechanisms of the most important fields of realization [3].

In 2011, according to State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, 2.5 million students are being



trained, among them 48 thousand – foreigners, which is 2 percent of the total number of students in the country. In comparison with the previous year 2010 the amount of foreign students in Ukraine has increased by 2.6 thousands. The greatest number of foreign students in Ukraine are from China – approximately 6 thousands, Turkmenistan – 5.5 thousands, Russia – 4 thousands, India – 3 thousands.

The National Aviation University (NAU) – is a multicultural higher educational establishment which has a longtime experience of specialists training for many sectors of national economy. One of the well known University activities is a training of aviation specialists not only for Ukraine but also for the aviation sphere all over the world. The first foreign students came to the Kyiv Institute of Civil Air Fleet in 1949. From that time more than 7300 aviation specialists from 148 countries have been trained, 250 persons asserted postgraduate and doctoral dissertations.

Nowadays 1316 foreign residents from 49 countries of the world are being trained at the National Aviation University, among them students from CIS and Asian countries compose 89% of all foreign students. The largest groups are from Uzbekistan (408 persons), China (209 persons), Turkmenistan (140 persons), Azerbaijan (127 persons), Iran (107 persons), Turkey (103 persons) and Russia (81 persons).

It is known that CIS and Asia countries being main providers of foreign students to the National Aviation University are characterized by complicated period in their development, by variability of socioeconomic and political situations. Social standards of living are greatly different in comparison with European standards. Some other challenges are dictated by rather long distances between the leading scientific and educational centers in Ukraine. Transportation costs essentially reduce educational mobility of young people. Existing differences in educational systems of different countries put forward additional problems.

It becomes evident that economical, political, ethnonational, psychological and other reasons play a very important role in choosing the University to study at. Because of these reasons young people, do not risk to go to another city or country, choosing one or another higher educational establishment.

So, if a student chooses the National Aviation University, it means that he must know and evaluate all the attractive reasons. What are these reasons?

- The opportunity to get higher education in prestigious higher educational establishment with the diploma recognized all over the world for further training at post-graduate courses. It can be also a chance to get a good job in the native country.

- The opportunity to choose the education in the fields and professions which are not available in the native country.

- The opportunity to realize a chance of getting the second profession at a time. For example, a future mechanical engineer can get the diploma of a lawyer, an aviation psychologist or a computer engineer.

- The opportunity to study using official languages of International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) (Russian or English) and to get the certificate which confirms the level of English.

- Additional certificates in aviation safety can be obtained after participation in the courses realizing ICAO standards and recommended practices.

- The opportunity to live for a few years in a city or country which is different in educational, scientific, ethnical and social senses. As a result everyone can get a higher level of his self-estimation as an individual.

- Reasonable tuition fees, acceptable living conditions, physical, legal and economic safety in a place of residence.

Obviously, fulfilling the abovementioned wishes and meeting the expectations of young people is a problem that includes many components. There may be a question: 'Is the National Aviation University able to fulfill such a great deal of wishes and meet the expectations of young foreign students?' The answer is: 'We try our best to do this'. Certainly, we have a lot of things to do and we know how to reach the goals like that.

The objective of the University activities is to establish the constant and stable relationships with Ukrainian and foreign students. There should be short-term, middle-term and long-term strategies for these relationships to give us an opportunity to settle facing problems, make and implement effective decisions, take actions to increase the quality of training and to improve living standards of students.

The experience of new educational technologies implementation has been gained by the



University. It shows that educational process requires understanding and practical application in order to combine the current elements and the elements to come in future. The purpose of combining those elements is to create new educational interconnected systems to guarantee increasing of theoretical and practical training level of the higher education experts.

Considering the global labour market trends it is necessary to underline that only competitive experts can get a job due to the main criteria like: high professionalism, knowledge of modern methods and technologies innovations, decision-making, ability to work in world information environment, speaking one or several foreign languages fluently, understanding of the main principles of relationships, creativity, communicability, high efficiency, ability to obtain positive results.

That is why the authorities of the University have implemented the Quality Management System (QMS), based on ISO 9000 standards, into the educational process which is one of perspectives to increase training quality and competitiveness of the experts. That system was developed, applied and certified at the University in 2008. QMS certification was performed by Veritas Certification Bureau (international office of certification). In accordance with the established procedures, the recertification was performed in 2011 which confirmed the University compliance with international standards of quality ISO 9001:2008. We would like to mention that the National Aviation University has become one of the first higher educational establishments in Ukraine which implemented the QMS into the educational process and researches in accordance with international standards of quality ISO 9001:2008.

The customers' requirements are regarded as the main component included in the QMS. The educational process of the University is developed in order to assist a student to receive knowledge and skills which comply with an employer demands.

Besides the customers' requirements there are some additional issues of the QMS such as terms and forms of training, possibility of having some practice given by an employer. For example, most airlines want the staff to know aviation regulations, to have good knowledge in Aviation English at a professional level in compliance with ICAO standards as well as special regulations of Eurocontrol and other international aviation organizations.

In order to ensure that the graduate students' level of speaking English complies with ICAO standards and to increase their level of competitiveness at the global labor market, so called 'English project' is implemented at the University. Within this project the whole educational process is performed in English and includes 16 specialties. It gives an opportunity to prepare experts that comply with the requirements of Ukrainian and foreign employers. The English speaking groups consist of citizens of Ukraine, countries of the former Soviet Union and other countries. The graduate students of 'English project' receive the University Diploma and a certificate which confirms their professional level of speaking English.

One of the main tasks of the University is facilitating foreign students' adaptation to new living and training conditions in Ukraine. The young foreigners' adaptation process consists of some components:

- Adaptation to climate conditions of Ukraine and time difference.
- Social and cultural adaptation to living and sanitary conditions, solving social and religious problems, spending leisure time and so on. Foreign students have to communicate with native speakers in different languages and to adapt to different cultures, life and study in the multicultural society. It is necessary to take into account that foreign students have lived under the influence of some ethnical and cultural factors. They have their own world outlook, goals, convictions and behavior that depend on their cultural peculiarities and national traditions.

- Language adaptation. After arriving in Ukraine, due to insufficient level of speaking Russian, Ukrainian or English foreign students have got difficulties in communication. It is complicated for them to solve the problem of speaking and that is why they spend a lot of time with their countrymen or working with computers. It is so hard to study in a different language. There may be some psychological discomfort, suffering, anxiety, frustration, longing for the native country because all foreign students may pass through emotional overload. It is necessary to mention that during last ten years some students coming to the University from the countries of the former Soviet Union are not able to speak either Russian or English. In that case their situation can be very critical, because they are not able to speak any language of international communication.



- Academic adaptation. Foreign students have to adapt to the Ukrainian educational system, Ukrainian standards of education, educational process, teachers and methodological aspects of training. A negative aspect is that some of students arriving to study at the University do not have sufficient knowledge and skills in math, physics, and chemistry which are very important and required for receiving higher education in engineering.

Our experience of work with foreign students shows that Chinese students are the most prepared for the studying at the National Aviation University. They are followed by students from some African countries (Nigeria, Congo, Ghana), Iran, and Turkey are the next.

In response to this, the preparatory training system, and, namely, the training division of the foreign students study department, plays a significant role in the knowledge level “stiffening”, from poor to sufficient, for students from other countries who came to study at the University. And it functions quite well. It can be proved by the average results of the entry tests and final tests after a ten-month program study by newcomers to the University. In accordance with the University criteria of evaluation the results are the following (table 1):

*Table 1*

Subject	Input test	Final test
Mathematics	85%	94%
Physics	81%	92%

Unfortunately, not all the foreigners are keen to become highly qualified specialists. Some of them are not interested in academic achievements. There are those, who just are unable to learn the University studying material because of the very low level of school knowledge. As a result, during the whole studying period, from the first till the fifth-sixth year of study, we have to dismiss up to 25% of the initial amount of the first-year students. And this happens in spite of the fact that much attention is paid to foreign students from the administration and the teachers of the University. Individual tutoring, small number of students (12-15) in academic groups, highly qualified teachers are among the measures taken to help foreign students.

We cannot act differently, as the name and the achievements of the University are very valuable for us. Successful foreign graduates are our brand, recognition in the world, competitiveness, rating and all the other following issues.

### **Conclusions**

The dynamics of the National Aviation University development based on the concept of transforming it into a higher education institution which is achieving a full compliance with the international educational standards allows to make a conclusion that the University will successfully integrate into the international educational and scientific space.

The implementation of the Quality Management System, based on the International Quality Standard ISO 9001:2008 stimulates the process of attraction, competitiveness and prestige of the University among Ukrainian and foreign citizens.

The main assignments of the University in the context of work with foreign students is providing the appropriate environment for their adaptation – adjustment to new unusual living and studying conditions and upgrading their knowledge level up to the proper and sufficient one for studying at the University.

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