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FOR THE

INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

OF THE JSC "ORLEU"

NATIONAL CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THE ACCREDITATION IS VALID UNTIL 30TH OF SEPTEMBER 2029.

BAYREUTH, 2 JULY 2024



PROF. DR. SEBASTIAN KEMPGEN
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ИНСТИТУТ АККРЕДИТАЦИИ, СЕРТИФИКАЦИИ
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ИНСТИТУЦИОНАЛЬНАЯ АККРЕДИТАЦИЯ

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ПРОФЕССОР, ДР. СЕБАСТЬЯН КЕМПГЕН
ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЬ АККРЕДИТАЦИОННОЙ КОМИССИИ

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Final

Accreditation Report

Institutional Accreditation of
National Center for Professional Development "Orleu"
Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan

I Procedure

Date of contract: 22 August 2022

Date of the submission of self-assessment report: 9 March 2023

Date of online visit: 03 - 04 April 2023

Attendance by ACQUIN office: Yuliya Balakshiy

Accreditation decision: 07 July 2024

Peer review experts:

- **Prof. Dr. phil. Barbara Gant**
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- **Azat Sapargaliyev**
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- **Prof. Dr. Christoph Schöberl**
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The **Assessment Report** of the peer-review experts is **based on** the self-assessment report of the National Center for Professional Development “Orleu” and extensive discussions with the management, the board of trustees, representatives of the holding company, deans, heads of study programmes, lecturers, staff representatives, students, and alumni.

The basis of the **Assessment Criteria** is part 1 of the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” (ESG) in the current official version. Further, the assessment considers criteria for the institutional accreditation of non-state higher education institution of the German Council of Science and Humanities (WR) („Guidelines for the accreditation of non-state higher education institutions” Section B.IV). At the same time the national context, particularly the national regulations regarding the establishment of study programmes, are taken into account.

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II Introduction

The experts would like to thank the representatives of The National Center for Professional Development "Orleu" as well as students that they have taken part in the discussions and willingly shared information and their views during the site visit. The discussions are valuable not only for the assessment of the institution, but also for a better understanding of the legal and sociocultural context of the local higher education system.

Evaluation basis for the peer-review experts is the self-assessment report of Orleu as well as intensive discussions during the site visit with the management, board of trustees, representatives of the holding company, deans, head of study programs, study programme coordinators, teachers, lecturers, administrative staff, students, and graduates.

Main objective of the accreditation procedure is to assess the quality of the study programmes and compliance with the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG). The ESG standards are applied as main assessment criteria in the international accreditation procedure. They are completed with criteria for the institutional accreditation of non-state higher education institution of the German Council of Science and Humanities (WR) („Guidelines for the accreditation of non-state higher education institutions" Section B.IV). In addition, the respective country-specific criteria and standards are taken into account.

A group of experts was set up, which ensured that all areas relevant to the accreditation procedure (e.g., legal, structural, social etc. aspects) as well as the ESG, the WR criteria, and national criteria were considered. The peer-review experts include professors, representatives of the professional practice and the student representative. A certificate with the ACQUIN seal is awarded upon accreditation of the institution.

1 Short profile of institution

The Joint Stock Company "Orleu" National Center for Professional Development was established in 2012 with 100% state participation and is under the sole ownership of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan. It is located at 18 Dostyk str., BC "Moscow", Astana city. The institution focuses on developing the professional level of teachers in Kazakhstan through regular conduct of full-time and online professional development courses and follow-up support for teachers. It has 16 branches in the regional centers of the country and in Astana, Almaty, and Shymkent cities, as well as 4 representative offices in three newly created regions and Turkistan region. The institution also engages in research activities and international cooperation to improve the qualifications of teachers.

In the 1940s, curriculum offices were established in regional centers of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR), which were later transformed into regional institutes for the advanced training of teachers. After the Republic of Kazakhstan gained independence in the early 1990s, these institutes were reorganized into institutes for the professional development of educators and were placed under the jurisdiction of the regional offices of the akim (the chief executive of a region or city in Kazakhstan).

In 2022, a total of 114,632 people were trained, including 81,806 heads and teachers of organizations of preschool education and training, secondary education, and 32,826 heads and teachers of organizations of preschool education and training, secondary, technical, and vocational education.

III Implementation and assessment of the criteria

1 Institutional Profile and Strategy: Strategic Planning, Mission and Vision

Implementation

The mission and vision of Orleu is to promote excellence in teachers' continuous professional development to ensure students' high academic performance, holistic development, and excellent life skills. This mission reflects a strategic vision of establishing a high-quality education system in Kazakhstan, where teachers and leaders have the greatest impact on students' educational growth and holistic development.

Orleu's strategy is focused on developing the professional level of teachers in Kazakhstan through the regular conduct of full-time and online professional development courses and follow-up support for teachers. The National Center for Professional Development aims to respond to the public demands of the region, maintain a high degree of interaction between Orleu and scientific educational organizations, and implement joint projects in education. Additionally, the strategy includes the development of an evidence-based approach to the creation of educational programs that meet the needs of teachers and other key beneficiaries, as well as the continuous improvement of the quality of education through the improvement of pedagogical skills and professional competencies of teachers.

The mission corresponds to Orleu's capabilities, personnel and scientific capacity, and also meets the requirements of the labor market. To implement the mission, strategic purposes and objectives, Orleu has modern information and communication technologies, material and library resources that fully meet the needs of the teacher trainers, administrative and managerial staff and course participants of professional development courses.

The professional development of managers and teachers of Orleu National Center for professional development branches is carried out in accordance with the state assignment for the relevant budget programs: 007 «Professional development and retraining of personnel of state organizations of preschool education» and 008 «Professional development and retraining of personnel of state organizations of secondary education». The contingent of professional development course participants is distributed by branches in accordance with the needs of the region teacher training (region, city of republican significance), as well as with reference to regional data about the teacher trainers of the National Educational Database.

All branches work according to common educational programs, ensuring equal development of teachers in their field, when teachers regularly improve their qualifications, knowledge and skills. While the regional specifics are considered, the customized educational programs can

be developed upon the receipt of requests from stakeholders. The profile of the organization is fully consistent with regional conditions.

Assessment

Orleu is a young national center for professional development of teachers in Kazakhstan, founded 2012. It is a Joint Stock Company with 100% state participation. Thus, it exists a clear state defined profile for the tasks of the institution in six points. Based on this profile Orleu worked out a mission statement as well as the strategy 2023-2027. The strategy forces an evidence and research based program along the individual needs of teachers, which is realistically implementable. It corresponds to Orleu's capabilities, personnel and scientific capacity, and also meets the requirements of the labor market. It does not include special programs for the needs of schools and the procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of educational programs on a student level. The different areas (teaching, learning, research) are part of the strategy. The strategy does not present a detailed action plan with timeline and responsibilities in order to implement the strategy from 2023-2027. The implementation work is conducted by the Academic Council on a yearly base. It is a kind of general assembly, where the central office and all branches are represented by a relatively large number of 39 members. During the reporting period four documents were published to ensure the quality of the defined goals in the strategy. The strategic goals of Orleu are based on the analysis of current activities, identifying directions for further development of the organization, with regard to current trends in education and science. Both management and employees are involved in setting goals at all levels. Also the interviews with the staff confirmed this participative procedure. Orleu offers a lot of digital communication tools to publish mission and strategy (e.g. the official website, blogs, facebook, instagram, microsoft intranet platform), but also the structure of the organisation with 16 branches and 4 representative offices located at different places in Kazakhstan is suitable for the dissemination.

Orleu has defined clear objectives in teaching and learning, including the development of educational programs using the latest teaching methods, structured in a modular format focusing on the development of professional skills (see chapter 3).

Orleu has set objectives in research, including the development of modern approaches to research in the field of teachers' continuous professional development, the development of applied recommendations to improve the quality of education through analytics and empirical research, and the building up of the research capacity of the organization's employees (see chapter 4).

Orleu has defined objectives related to international cooperation and partnership. The institution aims to integrate the national system of professional development into the global educational space by cooperating with foreign organizations to improve the qualifications of teachers (see chapter 7).

All objectives relate to the profile of the HEI.

Orleu's quality assurance system is applied in the areas of management, teaching, education, and research. While the self-documentation report does not explicitly mention the specific quality assurance system for checking the achievement of objectives in internationalization, it may be inferred that internationalization falls in the scope of general management activities.

Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

Recommendations:

- The strategy of the National Center for Professional Development should investigate the needs of schools and the procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of educational programs on a student level.
- The strategy should include a detailed action plan with timelines and responsibilities for implementation and it should respond quickly to legislative and regulatory changes governing its sphere of activity.

2 Governance, Organization and Administration

Implementation

The organization and management structures are designed to be adequate to the tasks and objectives of the institution and to assure freedom in teaching and learning. Orleu's management system has a functional nature, with a Central Office at the top level and branches and representative offices at the lower level. The Central Office ensures the efficiency of the entire organization, while the branches provide operational management with a certain degree of autonomy and corresponding responsibility. The organization has developed a set of regulations that regulate the operation of the entire infrastructure of the professional development system, meeting the uniform standard requirements of modern management.

The Academic Council, consisting of various stakeholders including the Chair of the Board, directors of departments, and leading teachers from each branch, is established to develop and approve internal policies aimed at improving the educational process. The Academic Council coordinates the work of six committees, including the Committee for Educational Programs and the Academic Quality Committee, which are responsible for ensuring the quality of teaching and learning. The document also emphasizes that Orleu guarantees equal access to quality educational services and ensures freedom in teaching and learning, based on the principles of academic honesty and vigilance against academic fraud.

The responsibilities of various structural divisions, committees, and academic bodies within Orleu are outlined. These responsibilities include academic issues, ensuring the quality of educational services, financial and economic planning, state procurements, payroll management, and more. The responsibilities are regulated by statutes and internal regulatory documents of Orleu, ensuring clarity and accountability.

The decision-making processes within Orleu are structured and regulated by the Board of Directors, Academic Council, and various committees. The Board of Directors is the governing body of the organization and carries out general management activities to achieve the goals. The Academic Council and its committees coordinate the activities of the organization to ensure the quality of educational programs, teaching activities, and research. The decision-making processes are organized and conducted by the secretary of the Board, and the regulations for preparing materials for meetings are clearly defined.

The Board of Directors, Academic Council, and various committees are tasked with decisions related to academic issues, ensuring the quality of educational services, and managing the organization's activities. The competencies are approved and integrated into the statutes and regulations of Orleu, ensuring that decision-making processes are carried out by competent authorities.

The responsibilities, decision-making processes, and competencies are integrated into the statutes and regulations of Orleu, ensuring that they are clearly defined and regulated by official documents. The statutes and regulations provide a framework for the organization's governance, decision-making, and operational activities.

Assessment

The tasks of the National Center for Professional Development are clearly defined and made binding by the higher-level regulations and statutes. The responsibilities are derived from the tasks of the state. The given organizational and management structure tries to reflect the overall institution with its main organization and the branch and representative offices in the best possible way. In doing so, the institution strives both to fulfill the hierarchical and structural tasks specified by the public sector and to be able to tap into its own internal institutional development potential.

The processes for involving all the necessary organizational units and committees are very complex. Of particular importance for the further development of the National Center for Professional Development is a well-functioning communication between the individual areas and departments, especially at the interface of the branch offices and representative offices to the main organization. Only through intensive cooperation will it be possible to achieve the goals that have been set. However, the focus should once again be increasingly on development work in terms of content.

This makes clear and comprehensible descriptions of the organization and its processes even more important. It is vital that these organizational charts are kept up to date. Changes, such as the establishment of a committee, should be incorporated into the chart as soon as possible.

Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

Recommendations:

- The National Center for Professional Development should update its organigram following any changes, e.g., launching of committees for specific purposes.
- The National Center for Professional Development should consciously support the flow of information and closer cooperation between departments and branches.

3 Teaching and Learning

Implementation

Orleu has defined objectives in teaching and learning, including the development of educational programs using the latest teaching methods, structured in a modular format focusing on the development of professional skills. The programs emphasize hands-on learning experiences and are designed to align with current education trends. The institution also provides free follow-up support for teachers to apply what they learned in their courses through various forms such as workshops, webinars, and lesson observations. Orleu aims to ensure the quality of educational services in professional development courses and follow-up support for teachers, as well as to provide conditions to meet the needs of teachers in developing professional competencies and high-quality performance of job tasks.

The development of educational programs is aimed at forming the professional competence of teachers, corresponding to the qualification framework of education levels and meeting the needs of the educational labor market, as well as the requirements of the state educational policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The educational programs are described as being well-structured and modular, providing flexibility and variability of training. The workload for course participants is clearly defined, with a daily course participant workload of 8 academic hours and a weekly workload not exceeding 40 academic hours. The programs also provide for both full-time and online learning modes, which are implemented depending on the specifics of the state order and the request of the National Center for Professional Development “Orleu”.

The procedures for the development, coordination, and approval of educational programs for professional development courses for teachers are clearly defined and regulated by specific rules and regulations.

The programs are developed using the latest teaching methods, structured in a modular format, and are designed to align with current education trends. The process of creating study programs involves a three-stage expert evaluation procedure, which includes examination at the branch level, the Republican Educational and Methodological Council of Orleu, and the Educational Programs Committee of the Academic Council of Orleu.

The implementation of study programs involves providing conditions to meet the needs of teachers in developing professional competencies and high-quality performance of job tasks. Additionally, the institution conducts regular studies to determine the needs of secondary school teachers for professional development to ensure that educational programs achieve their purpose and meet the needs of teachers.

The revision of study programs is based on the analysis of the results of international research, competency-based and personalized approaches in the content of educational program materials, and the andragogical approach in teaching. The programs are regularly reviewed with the involvement of experts and stakeholders, and the collected information is analyzed to improve the programs in accordance with changed requirements or pedagogical conditions.

Assessment

Objectives and content of study programmes are in accordance with Orleu's mission and strategy. In the talks, it became clear to the experts that Orleu has a very clear goal in furthering Kasachstan's teachers' competences. The way to achieve said goal are courses – in attendance or online – that take place over the course of two to three days. With 184,568 students that have completed one or more programs in 2020-2022, Orleu is experienced in caring for their needs, in the short, as well as the long term. The content of the courses offered is of adequate academic standard, ensured through adherence to the ESG standards (1.2).

The courses are firmly structured, which is natural if they take place in a span of a couple of days. Workload-wise, the requirements are overall adequate. For long-term support, Orleu offers their students to keep in contact with their respective teachers even years after the course took place, as the experts were told in a meeting with students that had already graduated. In this same vein, the feedback and revision systems for study programs are clearly defined and well implemented. Although this system seems to work well, as told by our partners during the discussion rounds, Orleu should think about implementing a quasi-curricular approach to offering their courses. Instead of only offering stand-alone courses for one or two weekends, these courses could be embedded into modules, which lead up to a micro-credential system or some other kind of certification for the participants who complete the whole modules.

Also, the expert panel recommends the consideration of introducing courses for the whole staff of schools in the sense of a *Whole-School-Approach*. Often, if a single member of staff at a school has innovative ideas, the implementation may prove difficult because they need to convince the whole rest of the staff as well. However, if the minds of the whole staff were opened towards new ideas during seminars for all, implementation or negotiation could be improved and sped up. Partnerships between schools and the National Center for Professional Development, as a model project in a certain region perhaps, could be a way to initiate seminars in line with the *Whole-School-Approach*. Such a proposal might also receive funding or at least

approval of the Kazakh Ministry, as it was indicated during the discussion rounds that relatively direct connections between Orleu and the Ministry exist.

Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

Recommendations:

- The National Center for Professional Development should consider a possibility of introducing a comprehensive curriculum-based approach in addition to the currently applied separate courses approach, to the extent possible, e.g., creation of micro credentials.
- The National Center for Professional Development should consider a possibility of introducing courses for schools to redefine the goals and encourage school partnerships within a region. If possible, it should be suggested as a pilot project with Ministry approval.
- The National Center for Professional Development should use a variety of examination types that correspond to the specified learning outcomes.

4 Research

Implementation

Orleu has set objectives in research, including the development of modern approaches to research in the field of teachers' continuous professional development, the development of applied recommendations to improve the quality of education through analytics and empirical research, and the building up of the research capacity of the organization's employees. The institution also aims to strengthen analytical and research work on topical areas of development of Kazakhstani education, such as preparing recommendations for projects like the "Modernization of secondary education" and the "Digital Teacher" project.

Research topics correspond to the profile and general strategy of Orleu and include a wide range of research projects related to the issues of teachers' continuous professional development. In addition to research aimed at identifying teachers' needs and evaluating the effectiveness of educational programs, consistent research is carried out aimed at studying and improvement of the teaching profession and pedagogical practices.

The research activities of Orleu are carried out mainly through the work and coordination of the Department for Research, Innovations and Analytics (DRIA). This structural unit was first formed on 25.05.2021 based on the decision No. 88-SD of the Board of Directors dated 24.05.2021.

The emergence of the DRIA in the structure of the central office of Orleu made it possible to expand the range of research functions, primarily as part of the development of an evidence-based approach in the preparation and implementation of educational programs.

Assessment

In recent years Orleu has made great efforts to strengthen the research to offer a higher quality standard competing with other training institutes for professional teacher development in Kazakhstan. Several points are worth mentioning in this regard: First, in September 2021, the Department for Research, Innovations and Analytics (DRIA), was established, as part of the development of an evidence-based approach in the preparation and implementation of educational programs. Secondly, the new organizational unit was given its own strategic profile (Appendix_2.4.1 the Regulations on the Department for Research, Innovations and Analytics of Orleu), which fits very clearly with the mission of Orleu, especially in identifying the needs of teachers and in analysing the effectiveness of programs. Thirdly, the cooperation between DRIA and the "Monitoring Committee and the Committee for Research and Academic Ethics", regulating the processes for organizing and conducting empirical research, is anchored in the

organization. And fourthly Orleu received a state license to conduct research activities which entitles the organization to participate in competitions for research projects.

In 2022, the branches of Orleu were implementing 17 scientific research projects, 9 projects of which are internal (within the branches) (53%), 2 projects are in cooperation with other branches (11%), 2 projects are in cooperation with external organizations (11%), 4 projects are in cooperation with international organizations (22%). All projects reflect the research mission and agenda of Orleu.

The personal research capacity consists of 36 employees with an academic degree, including 4 doctors of pedagogical sciences, 27 are candidates of sciences (7 – in Philology, 14 – in Pedagogy, 2 – in Technical Sciences, 2 – in Physics and Mathematics), – and 5 PhDs, three of them have a special PHD in Teaching, graduated from foreign universities or Nazarbayev University in Kazakhstan. Therefore, there is an acceptable staffing level in the central office, but an insufficient research capacity in Orleu branches, which needs to be built up. The means to strengthen research in the centre as well as in the branches are well chosen: a bonus system for the publication of research papers in international editions, a higher salary by reaching an academic degree of doctor or PHD, protected time for research for teacher trainers and the inclusion of teachers themselves in research activity. (Self-assessment report, p. 80-82)

Research is financed either by a global state budget, which allows Orleu a certain autonomy in the allocation of resources, or by third party funds. The internationalization effort of Orleu gives the opportunity to establish the implementation of joint research programs.

The dissemination of the research results is done through publications and the courses themselves offered by Orleu. 2018 to 2022 3,972 articles were published, most of them applied practice-oriented publications about methodologies and classroom conduction on regional and republican level, 112 scientific articles in research journals recommended by the Committee for Quality Assurance in the Sphere of Education of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan and 35 publications in journals included in the international scientometric bases like Scopus, Web of Science and Russian Science Citation Index. The outcome on a peer-reviewed international level with impact factor should be increased.

Based on these premises and descriptions, it can be concluded that the structures and general conditions support research activities adequately in Orleu and it enables an even better future positioning in this field.

Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

Recommendations:

- The National Center for Professional Development should extend and reinforce its research strategy and strengthen the link between the research and training.

5 Resources

5.1 Human resources

Implementation

Orleu's academic staff include 238 full-time teachers. The average age of teachers is 49.

There are 494 teachers involved, 9 of them have a Ph.D. degree. The average age of the involved teachers is 39.

When selecting staff, the teacher trainers take into account the compliance of applicants with the qualification requirements established by the order No. 89 of the Chair of the Board of Orleu "On approval of qualification requirements for administrative, pedagogical and other positions of the branches of JSC "Orleu" National Center for Professional Development" dated May 23, 2022 (hereinafter referred to as the Qualification Requirements).

In turn, the above Qualification Requirements are developed in accordance with the Qualification Guide for the positions of managers, specialists and other employees, approved by the order No. 553 of the Minister of Labor and Social Protection of the Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated December 30, 2020, Standard qualification characteristics of course instructor positions, approved by the order No. 338 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated July 13, 2009, the Qualification Requirements for professional accountants, approved by the order No. 455 of the Minister of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated December 13, 2007.

The qualifications of full-time course instructors are verified during the recruitment process prior to the conclusion of an employment contract. During the employment period, time is also devoted to the development of the teacher trainers (Learning through practice - EdCrunch). Currently, it is planned to develop draft Rules for professional training and professional development of Orleu employees.

The appointment of full-time instructors is carried out in accordance with the Regulations on the procedure for conducting the competition for filling vacant positions of the teacher trainers of the branches of JSC "Orleu" National Center for Professional Development".

The core subject areas offered in the courses are covered by full-time course instructors and professors.

The teaching workload in the main subject disciplines is carried out by full-time instructors and internal part-time instructors. If necessary, external part-time instructors are involved with those who have the civil contract concluded.

The educational programs are sufficiently and equally developed for full-time faculty.

The full-time teacher trainers cover 86% of the total teaching workload planned for the year.

In 2020, 81,5 % was provided by fulltime teacher trainers, 2021 89,3 % and 2022 85,9 %.

On average, 14.4% of the annual workload is transferred to the department's hourly fund as vacant hours over the past three years. While fulfilling the state task, according to the approved plan, full coverage of the annual workload is ensured by attracting part-time teachers on an hourly basis.

Part-time employees are hired on hourly basis before training sessions start. Hiring these instructors is carried out after the corresponding order and course instructor's individual plan have been released. When planning and accounting for the faculty work on a part-time basis, the total volume of their workload is calculated in proportion to the share of the teacher trainers rate they occupy.

The working time of the teacher trainers is determined by the amount of time for conducting all types of educational work. Orleu employees engaged in pedagogical activities have a normalized working time of no more than 40 hours per week within which teachers perform educational, methodological, research, organizational, and other types of educational and methodological work.

Assessment

Now, the centre has sufficient human resources, but this may not be enough in the future. Less than 50% of the teaching staff are full-time employees. The rest of the trainers the centre invites from schools for the duration of the courses. Currently, teachers must take courses every three years, not five as before. Thus, the demand for teacher courses will only increase, which means that the centre needs to hire new full-time staff, full-time trainers. A full-time teacher will be more involved in the course and she or he will have more time to develop in this area than guest trainers.

The Ministry requires employees to work as teacher-researcher or master teacher. The requirements to be hired by the centre as new employees, include higher pedagogical education, master's degree, and experience in the field of education. New staff go through a three months' probation period. There is an algorithm of actions when hiring employees, such as interview, knowledge test, trial lesson, etc.

Compared to 2020, the average salary of the centre has increased by 83%, but the salary is still not competitive. Teachers in secondary schools receive equal or (sometimes much) higher pay, which seems disproportionate to the requirements of the employment at a research center. This is considered a serious obstacle to the recruitment of qualified staff for the institution.

5.2 Financial Resources

Implementation

The institution's financial resources are derived from various sources, including the state budget, income from the offer of paid educational services, funds received from the budgets of the subjects of the Republic of Kazakhstan and local budgets, funds received from the implementation of research work and grants, funds received from publishing activities, and other sources such as research projects and foundations.

The total budget of the institution for the reporting period is 20,429,398 thousand tenge, with the share of funding from the republican budget at 82% and other sources at 18%.

The activities of the institution for research and implementation of educational programs are carried out in accordance with the development plan approved by the decision of the Board of Directors. The development plan accounts for income received from various sources, including funds received for the implementation of the state order, funds from the provision of paid educational services, and other sources.

The institution's research activities are financed based on orders from the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as from alternative sources such as project and grant funding. Research activities related to monitoring and analysis of the effectiveness of educational programs are carried out within the framework of these orders from the state budget.

The Department of Finance and Public Procurement carries out the process of formation and control of the implementation of the consolidated budget of the institution in accordance with the Development Plan. Responsibility for control over the execution of the budget in compliance with the budget items of the relevant structural unit is borne by its head.

Assessment

Orleu reports that it has access to qualified personnel for professional planning of finances and income, their use and accounting. It documents the annual financial report after approval of the Board of Directors. The material and technical equipment are excellent and financed adequately.

The National Center for Professional Development is conscious of the strengths and weaknesses, as well as opportunities and threats to the organizational model. Besides financing from the state, the institution succeeds in securing non-state funding, and it is sensitive to the importance of developing research projects to further expand this financial pillar. The institution works on the development of a sustainable financing model, and it is recommended to

strengthen efforts in this direction. It should develop strategic financial planning that can determine how it can ensure the achievement of its goals and objectives for both the short-term and the long-term.

The institution has identified weaknesses and threats associated with its high dependence on the state funding and staff turnover due to low wages. It is trying to address these problems by expanding and further commercialising its activities and reaching a wider audience through online offers. These efforts are commendable and should be developed further to increase financial stability.

5.3 Facilities and Equipment

Implementation

Orleu provides sufficient material and technical equipment in all branches. The premises are adequately equipped in terms of both quantitative and qualitative characteristics for the educational process, teaching and research activities, and facilities are appropriate for work. The equipment, media, information technologies, software available in the classrooms correspond to modern facilities. Course instructors and participants access to educational and material resources necessary for teaching and research activities is provided.

Orleu provides the staff and course participants with necessary literature and handouts. It suggests a modern fund of scientific electronic and printed literature that meets institutional standards and specialized field.

In case Orleu needs external resources (e.g., seminar and lecture halls, information and communication technology, laboratories, literature) in addition to appropriate basic educational and material equipment, access to these resources is provided by contract or another legal basis.

All branches are sufficiently equipped with the material and technical base for organizing professional development courses, including classrooms, offices, as well as furniture, computers and other necessary equipment.

Thus, as an example, we can consider the Orleu Branch of East Kazakhstan region for conducting professional development courses for teacher trainers, equipped with the following modern computer equipment:

- Computer class with 13 computers;
- Computer class with 12 monoblocks;
- Computer class with 24 tablets;

- Language multimedia room includes a course instructor's computer, interactive whiteboard, video projector, headsets (headphones with microphones), laptops in the amount of 15 pieces;
- Three multipurpose interactive rooms, including an interactive whiteboard, video projector, and computer;
- 25 Monoblocks for conducting courses;
- Multimedia educational system (special interactive board);
- 6 Interactive boards with video projectors.

Each branch has 3 three vehicles (1 service passenger car, 1 minibus, 1 small class bus), the total fleet of Orleu consists of 51 vehicles. The vehicles are intended for organizing off-site professional development courses in remote areas.

If required, Orleu has the right, based on a lease agreement (paid or free of charge), to get access to additional classrooms, seminar and lecture halls, etc. within the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Fourteen branches own the buildings, and branches in Nur-Sultan city, Aktobe and Mangystau regions are in rented premises.

The material and technical base of Orleu as of June 30, 2022 amounted to 7,660,874 thousand tenge, including:

- buildings 7,210,242 thousand tenge;
- land 186,039 thousand tenge;
- vehicles 1,670 thousand tenge;
- machinery and equipment 65,367 thousand tenge;
- library fund 171,265 thousand tenge;
- other fixed assets 26,291 thousand tenge.

Assessment

The facilities of the institution are modern and in line with the achievement of its goals in relation to its mission and strategic plan. The center uses its website lms.orleu-edu.kz for internal data and library. There you can find out about new courses or get data about past courses. You can also get analytics on past courses, and according to these analytics you can choose the next course. Before and after each course teachers take a test through the portal, according to the results of which the LMS displays its statistics. It should be noted that some of the

tests do not correspond exactly to the topic of the course and there are questions not related to the course. As a recommendation, it is possible to make the tests more specific and relevant to the course topic. Since the site does analytics on these tests and these tests show a lot: whether the course was useful, how involved the teachers are in the course, what points or topics the teachers find most difficult, etc.

Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

6 Quality Assurance

Implementation

Orleu's quality assurance is a system of comprehensive measures, which is a continuous, holistic process of performance evaluation based on the development of appropriate procedures and mechanisms for quality assurance and further application of the results obtained.

Orleu's quality assurance policy consists of the following documents:

- Orleu Strategic Development Plan;
- Orleu Charter; Rules for the development, coordination and approval of educational programs for professional development courses (Appendix 2.6.1);
- Rules for the development, coordination and approval of educational programs for professional development courses);
- Requirements for the development, coordination and approval of educational programs for professional development courses;
- Regulations on the examination of educational programs for professional development courses;
- Regulations on the Educational Programs Committee (Appendix 2.6.2);
- Academic Quality (Appendix 2.6. 3)
- On Monitoring (Appendix 2.6.4);
- Regulations on ensuring the quality of teaching activities (Appendix 2.6.5);
- Regulations on the Republican Scientific and Methodological Council (Appendix 2.6.6).

A quality management system has been developed, which is implemented through an approved scheme of interaction between management personnel, structural divisions with the division of functions for quality assurance.

Orleu's quality assurance system is continuously improved and developed. Quality assurance methods and processes have been adjusted and modified at various stages of development. In 2018–2020 there was a rating system and monitoring studies of the quality of short-term courses.

Since 2021, the quality assurance has been implemented by the Academic Council and its Committees and is aimed at ensuring the quality of professional development courses for teachers, other forms of continuous professional development, promoting the mission and values of Orleu.

Orleu's quality assurance system is applied in the areas of management, teaching, education, and research.

The development and improvement of the quality assurance system is an important strategic task, defined in its foundational documents: Orleu Strategic Development Plan and Orleu Charter.

The main purpose of Orleu is to improve the quality of education through the improvement of pedagogical skills and professional competencies of teachers. This is reflected in the mission of Orleu: promoting excellence in teachers' continuous professional development to ensure students' high academic performance, holistic development, and excellent life skills.

Orleu's strategy in terms of managing the quality assurance process is focused on gaining experience, testing various quality management methods and finding the most effective ones. Until 2021, quality assurance was carried out through monitoring the activities of branches and rankings based on cluster analysis, which allows expanding the analysis and supplementing it with an analysis of factors that contribute to or hinder the achievement of results: ensuring the quality of coursework, in accordance with the Regulations on the system of rating evaluation of activities branches, Order of Orleu "On conducting monitoring studies of the quality of short-term professional development courses for teachers and their activities in the follow-up period", Diagnostic tools for monitoring the quality of short-term professional development courses for teachers and their activities in the follow-up period.

Since 2021, quality management has been carried out through the activities of the Academic Council, aimed at ensuring the quality of professional development courses for teachers, other forms of continuous professional development, promoting the mission and values of Orleu.

Participation in the Academic Council, in addition to members of the Board, directors of departments and branches, deputy directors and representatives of the teacher trainers, allows the latter to actively participate in decision-making on quality assurance and increase the efficiency of this process.

For the efficient operation of the Committees, divisions of branches and the Central Office, a scheme of their interaction in the processes of quality assurance was developed and approved.

Assessment

The National Center for Professional Development "Orleu" has comprehensive packages of measures for quality assurance. The development and improvement of the quality assurance system is anchored in the basic documents of the institution as an important strategic task. The results of the various measures are collected and serve the goal of scientifically sound

education of the teaching staff. The quality assurance system presented is extremely comprehensive and covers the areas of administration, teaching, education, and research. It is an important pillar of Orleu's academic self-confidence. It will be crucial for the further development of the system and, consequently, of National Center for Professional Development in its entire organization that its staff and researchers have easy access to the results. Intensive exchange on this must be encouraged throughout the organization. This is the only way that the measures put in place can be effective. This exchange can be aided by a database where all process descriptions and QM tools and related information are readily accessible to the employees.

Moreover, Orleu emphasizes that its main purpose is to improve the quality of education through the improvement of pedagogical skills and professional competencies of teachers. However, due to fluctuating workload, the institution makes use of teaching staff that is remunerated on an hourly basis and is not directly employed. To promote the quality of course offerings and excellence in teachers' continuous professional development it is indispensable that also non-permanent teaching staff are involved in all measures and offerings of quality assurance concerning professional development, course evaluations and the survey of student and staff satisfaction.

Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

Recommendations:

- The National Center for Professional Development should ensure continuous professional development to the external trainers as part of its quality assurance.
- The National Center for Professional Development should create a database where all process descriptions and QM tools and related information are readily accessible to the employees.

7 Internationalisation

Implementation

In terms of internationalization, Orleu has defined objectives related to international cooperation and partnership. The institution aims to integrate the national system of professional development into the global educational space by cooperating with foreign organizations to improve the qualifications of teachers. This includes the development of joint research and educational programs with international partners to improve the international image of Orleu. Additionally, the institution is guided by the policy of sustainable partnership and effective cooperation with foreign organizations in the professional development of teachers.

Orleu cooperates with Kazakhstani and international organizations in the main and priority areas, such as the British Council, the European Training Foundation, the US Embassy Regional English Language Programs Office, the United Nations (UNESCO), Tallinn University, Ed Crunch Academy, etc.

The result of joint activities with significant partners is the formation of Orleu as an active participant in international cooperation, the expansion of strategic educational and scientific partnerships.

The objectives of the cooperation are the involvement of international organizations for the development of educational programs and the implementation of scientific projects (by the US Embassy Regional English Language Programs Office); the organization of lectures, webinars, online conferences (Tallinn University, EdCrunch); and the participation in international conferences and events (British Council, World Lesson Study Association).

Regarding international cooperation, over the past 5 years (since 2018), Orleu branches have concluded 77 agreements and memorandums of cooperation with foreign organizations. As part of these agreements, 117 events were held covering 16,946 people (online – 15,523, offline – 1,423), including joint conferences, olympiads, seminars, roundtables, webinars, video and teleconferences, consultation meetings, guest lectures, etc. (Appendix 2.7.2 Information on the organization of international cooperation by Orleu branches over the past 5 years).

The branch of Orleu Institute of Professional Development in Almaty held professional development courses for teachers from Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia and Kazakhstan.

As part of the implementation of the international project by the branch of Orleu Institute of Professional Development in Almaty, together with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) on the methodology of multilingual education and upbringing in preschool organizations in Almaty, 10 pilot sites were organized.

For the TS and staff of branches with a total coverage of 121 people, within the framework of international cooperation, online training courses and seminars were held. Orleu trained 70 people as part of the ED Crunch Academy program with the goal of enhancing the teacher trainers's professional abilities and developing new educational programs for professional development. The Republican Institute for Professional Development of Managers and Scientific and Pedagogical Workers of the Education System of the Republic of Kazakhstan, together with the Office of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), organized pilot professional development courses for deputy directors for educational work of colleges and schools in 2020 and 2021 covering 200 and 250 people, respectively.

Assessment

There are many international activities at the Orleu Institute of Professional Development. These take place in various forms at different levels and relate to different objectives in the background. There are formalized cooperation agreements as well as individual measures. The activities are to be welcomed and demonstrate Orleu's great endeavors with regard to internationalization. However, there is no clearly defined internationalization strategy.

The international activities correspond to the financial possibilities or the objectives underlying the respective funding. The promotion of a clearly defined internationalization strategy requires a financing plan that secures the objectives and associated measures of the strategy in the long term.

Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

Recommendations:

- The institution should extend and reinforce its internationalisation strategy.

IV Recommendation to the Accreditation Commission of ACQUIN

1 **Assessment of compliance the Standards and Guidelines in the Higher European Area (ESG) in the actual official version and the German Council of Science and Humanities (WR),**

The institutional structures and performance were assessed on the basis of the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG), criteria for the institutional accreditation of non-state higher education institution of the German Council of Science and Humanities (WR) („Guidelines for the accreditation of non-state higher education institutions" Section B.IV), and the national or other relevant regulations.

The expert group concludes that **WR examination areas** 1 (Institutional profile and strategy), 2 (Governance, Organization and administration), 3 (Teaching and Learning), 4 (Research), 5 (Resources), 6 (Quality Assurance), and 7 (Internationalization) are **fulfilled**.

2 **Accreditation Recommendation**

The peer-review experts recommend **accreditation with recommendations** of Orleu National Center for Professional Development.

The peer-review experts recommend the following **recommendations**:

Recommendations

- The strategy of the National Center for Professional Development should investigate the needs of schools and the procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of educational programs on a student level.
- The strategy should include a detailed action plan with timelines and responsibilities for implementation and it should respond quickly to legislative and regulatory changes governing its sphere of activity.
- The National Center for Professional Development should update its organigram following any changes, e.g., launching of committees for specific purposes.
- The National Center for Professional Development should consciously support the flow of information and closer cooperation between departments and branches.

- The National Center for Professional Development should consider a possibility of introducing a comprehensive curriculum-based approach in addition to the currently applied separate courses approach, to the extent possible, e.g., creation of micro credentials.
- The National Center for Professional Development should consider a possibility of introducing courses for schools to redefine the goals and encourage school partnerships within a region. If possible, it should be suggested as a pilot project with Ministry approval.
- The National Center for Professional Development should use a variety of examination types that correspond to the specified learning outcomes.
- The National Center for Professional Development should extend and reinforce its research strategy and strengthen the link between the research and training.
- The National Center for Professional Development should ensure continuous professional development to the external trainers as part of its quality assurance.
- The National Center for Professional Development should create a database where all processes descriptions and QM tools and related information are readily accessible to the employees.
- The National Center for Professional Development should extend and reinforce its internationalization strategy.

V Decisions of the Accreditation Commission of ACQUIN

Based on the evaluation report of the peer group and the statement of the institution the Accreditation Commission of ACQUIN decided on 02 July 2024:

The JSC National Center for Professional Development “Orleu” is institutionally accredited without conditions. The accreditation is limited until 30 September 2029.

The following recommendations are given for the further development:

- The strategy of the National Center for Professional Development should investigate the needs of schools and the procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of educational programs on a student level.
- The strategy should include a detailed action plan with timelines and responsibilities for implementation and it should respond quickly to legislative and regulatory changes governing its sphere of activity.
- The National Center for Professional Development should update its organigram following any changes, e.g., launching of committees for specific purposes.
- The National Center for Professional Development should consciously support the flow of information and closer cooperation between departments and branches.
- The National Center for Professional Development should consider a possibility of introducing a comprehensive curriculum-based approach in addition to the currently applied separate courses approach, to the extent possible, e.g., creation of micro credentials.
- The National Center for Professional Development should consider a possibility of introducing courses for schools to redefine the goals and encourage school partnerships within a region. If possible, it should be suggested as a pilot project with Ministry approval.
- The National Center for Professional Development should use a variety of examination types that correspond to the specified learning outcomes.
- The National Center for Professional Development should extend and reinforce its research strategy and strengthen the link between the research and training.
- The National Center for Professional Development should ensure continuous professional development to the external trainers as part of its quality assurance.

- The National Center for Professional Development should create a database where all processes descriptions and QM tools and related information are readily accessible to the employees.
- The National Center for Professional Development should extend and reinforce its internationalization strategy.