



**NATIONAL CENTER FOR
EDUCATIONAL QUALITY
ENHANCEMENT**

Suggestions on the evaluation of the methodology for determining the threshold number of student quotas on a higher education institution /educational programme of a certified medical doctor



Introduction

Defining the threshold of student quotas is one of the important components in the process of elaboration of the strategic development plan of the higher education institution and therefore, it represents an integral part of the institution's management. When planning/determining the threshold number of student quotas both on the one-level educational programme of the certified medical doctor and at the university as a whole, it is important for the institution to ensure, on the one hand, the creation of appropriate conditions for the success of students and on the other hand, the implementation of the mission of the HEI and programme goals, the achievement of the intended outcomes and the compliance with the requirements stipulated by the subject benchmarks. Therefore, when determining the number of student quotas on the programme, it is important to fully evaluate/analyze to what extent the appropriate conditions for the success of students, as well as the environment for them to carry out appropriate quality educational, research and practical activities will be provided in the conditions of determining/increasing the threshold number of students in the educational programme and higher education institutions.

The mentioned methodological suggestions can be used by the higher education institution during planning, by the experts of the authorization of the higher education institution/accreditation of the educational programme in the evaluation process, as well as by the members of the Authorization Council of the Higher Education Institution/Accreditation Council of Educational Programme when making decisions, and by other interested persons.

Activities to be considered and/or key questions to be addressed by the institution's planning, expert evaluation and council decision-making process in order to increase the threshold number of student quotas in the programme are the following:

1. How the HEI determines the number of students on programme/programmes and how it plans and develops the programmes/programmes; How effectively the students will be prepared according to the labor market requirements in terms of increased threshold number of students.
2. In the application form for increasing the threshold number of student quotas, the institution can also describe how students with relevant knowledge and skills are selected under the conditions of increasing the threshold number of student quotas; To what extent are the admission requirements of the programme related to the content of the educational programme, the learning outcomes and the qualification(s) awarded; To what extent the teaching-learning and evaluation methods used in the programme take into account the specifics of the field and ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes provided by the programme within the framework of the increased number of students;
3. How the institution ensures the management and professional development of the staff employed in the institution, in order for the educational, research/scientific/creative/performing and administrative processes to be carried out effectively in the conditions of increased threshold



number of student quotas and to make it possible to achieve the outcomes and goals envisaged by the educational programme/programmes and the strategic plan of the institution;

4. How the institution will provide/implement student support services effectively in the face of increased threshold number of students;
5. To what extent the material, library, information and financial resources of the institution ensure the effective and efficient functioning under the increased threshold number of students at the programme.

Additional activities and/or key questions in terms of institutional assessment, for the purpose of determining/increasing the number of student quotas:

1. Assess the extent to which the institution's increase in number of students is related to the mission and strategic development plan of the HEI.
2. Evaluate the organizational structure and efficient management of the institution in the face of an increased threshold number of students, including how the institution determines the number of students in the programmes, how many students it will accept each year given the increased number of students, and with what preconditions, etc.
3. Assess the extent to which the number of academic/administrative/scientific personnel of the institution (including the ratio of students to staff) and their qualifications enable the institution to effectively conduct educational, research/scientific/creative/performing and administrative processes, under the conditions of an increased threshold number of students;
4. Assess the extent to which the institution ensures the strengthening of its own research function, the creation of favorable conditions for research and the raising of the quality of research activities in the conditions of an increased number of students;

Additional activities and/or key questions in terms of programme assessment, for the purpose of determining/increasing the number of student quotas on the educational programme of a certified medical doctor:



1. How the planned number of student quotas take into account the human resources involved in the implementation of the programme, their qualification requirements established by legislation and subject benchmarks, and the educational/scientific/administrative workload, as well as the results of research on labor market requirements;
2. How the planned number of student quotas is based on the methodology of determining the threshold number of students of the educational programme;
3. To what extent the increased threshold number of students takes into account the requirements of the subject benchmark, the specifics of the programme itself and the resources of practice facilities/laboratory/clinical bases; Please also note that in a university/teaching clinic and/or affiliated clinic (based on contract), the patient/student ratio during the training course/curation should be: - in the therapeutic profile departments - no more than 10 students per 1 patient - in the surgical profile departments - no more than 10 students per 1 patient - in the obstetrics-gynecology department - no more than 10 students per 1 patient - in the pediatrics department - no more than 10 students per 1 patient - in the resuscitation/intensive care departments - no more than 6 students per patient;
4. How the institution plans to announce the admission of students to the programme in the following years (during the accreditation period) and the quantitative distribution, taking into account the number of students, staffing and other necessary resources;

Due to the fact that upon increased of the student quotas the HEI is evaluated according to all seven/five standards of authorization/accreditation, preparation of application on the increasing the number of student quotas will be impossible without the involvement of representatives of respective structural units. It is also important to involve students, employers, alumni and other stakeholders in the process of preparing the application form.

Description of the compliance of institution and programme with each standard shall be done according to PDCA cycle. The use of the PDCA-cycle format in the application form allows the institution to better represent the culture of internal quality within the institution and the mechanisms for continuous improvement. Respective documentation as the evidence shall be attached to the evaluations made in the application.

Suggestions for experts and council members for the assessment, preparation of reports and decision-making regarding the determination of the threshold number of student quotas by the institution:

Determining the threshold number of student quotas and admitting students to the programme must be in accordance with the mission of the University, and the strategic development plan and the goals of the programme. In addition, when filling out the application form for increasing the number of student quotas, it is recommended to focus on how the institution plans to maintain the necessary conditions for students and staff, in the conditions of the increased number of students.



The report of the expert panel is appropriate to reflect the following information regarding the determination of the student quotas:

1. Be interested in which services/structural units/persons are involved in the process of determining the number of students in the institution;
2. Analyze information about the existing threshold number of student quotas and the institution's requested number. (If necessary, information about the number of active/suspended students, indicators of completion of the programme by students, number of international students, etc.);
3. Check the ratio between the number of students and the available spaces in the institution (learning space, library, laboratories/laboratory resources, clinical base, etc.);
4. Check the ratio between the number of students and human resources (academic, including affiliated, visiting, scientific, administrative staff);
5. Find and verify information about practice facilities/clinics where students undergo practice/clinical training.

It should be noted that the report of the expert panel is written according to the standards for the authorization of higher education institutions/accreditation of higher education programmes, however, the assessment should include the analysis of all the components of the standard that are directly related to the methodology of determining the student quota, including, if any, the requirements/ratios/quantities specified within the subject benchmarks.

In addition, the final evaluation marked by the expert in the report form does not evaluate the current situation regarding meeting the requirements of the standard, the expert in this regard makes the evaluation report directly in relation to the increased number of students requested; For example, a negative report ("does not meet with the requirements") under the standard does not in itself imply that the higher education/educational programme is not in compliance with the requirements of the authorization or accreditation standard.

In determining the staff-to-student ratio, it should be ensured that students have access to the resources of the University according to their individual needs, both administratively and academically, as well as for extracurricular activities; educational, material, library, research, scientific and other resources should be sufficiently and equally distributed among them; Quality mechanisms, including the learning outcomes monitoring system, should be adapted in time in relation to the increased or decreased number of student quotas. A lot of attention is also paid to the demand related to the various specialties in the labor market, at the local or regional/international level. Increasing the number of student quotas may lead to, for example: Revision of teaching and learning, evaluation methods and criteria used in the programme, as well as student appeal mechanisms, student support measures and other processes, the need to update resources and reflect in the action plan.

In addition, sufficient attention should be paid to the specifics of individual programmes, e.g., natural sciences, health care, computer science engineering majors, in addition to adequate student access to practice inventory, laboratory resources/facilities, to clinical placements, clinical skills center simulators, university/affiliated clinic patients or other software resources. On the other hand, in art



programmes, for example, music and other performing areas, it is usually necessary to consider the opportunity for the student to have a direct individual level relationship with a mentor-teacher/individual work.

In the process of determining/increasing the threshold number of places for students at institutions and programmes, it is appropriate to analyze international experience, what kind of ratios exist between students and the staff of the institution (administrative, academic, invited, scientific and support), what is the minimum study space that should be allocated to one student.

It is important to assess the extent to which the institution will ensure the fulfillment of the target benchmarks presented in the authorization and accreditation processes in case of an increase in the number of students, as well as whether the increase in the number of students leads to a revision of these target benchmarks.