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## Educational Audit as an Imperative of Higher Education Program Competitiveness in the Trans-Border Region

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### Abstract

The imperative of competitiveness of higher education programs in trans-border education is relevant to the requirements of international documents on evaluation and ensuring the education quality guarantees. In connection to this, the content of notions "education", "quality of education", "trans-border education" act as fundamental factors determining the mission and strategy of development of a higher education institution. The paper describes the activity of the higher education institution in the trans-border region (bordering on China and Mongolia) and its preparation to implementing the international principles and approaches to questions of educational audit, independent evaluation of quality of education, and ensuring the guarantee of quality of higher education in line with the new trends of internal and external assessment of quality of education at higher education institutions.

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*Keywords:* educational audit; trans-border education; quality of education; guarantees of quality of education; independent evaluation of educational quality

### 1. Introduction

Directions of higher education development are dictated by the growing internationalization of social and economic relations in all spheres of human activity. The main imperative of Russian higher education in connection with Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization and joining the Bologna process aims to develop evaluation models and methods of common for many countries. General Agreement on Trade in Services (including

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educational ones), international conceptual approaches to problems of evaluating and guaranteeing the quality of education, UNESCO and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) agreements concerning guidelines for quality assurance in the context of education internationalization determine the necessity for higher education institutions to be ready to accept international rules, to learn to carry out educational activity in conditions of growing competition both in the domestic and foreign markets of educational services.

The value of educational audit in the system of independent education quality assessment and education quality assurance consists of its being an effective tool providing the necessary information for improvement of higher education institutions management, education quality assessment and education quality assurance concerning the educational programs being the main subject of activity of a higher education institution.

## **2. Objectives, methodology and research design**

The goal of our research is to define organizational and pedagogical basis for educational audit that would be relevant for design and implementation of high school educational programs under necessity to provide quality of trans-border education.

Research methodology is based on the philosophical justification of quality category (J. Dewey, E. Kant, John Locke, Fr. Engels), systematic and activity approach (V.P. Bepalko, A.I. Subbeto, V.D. Shadrikov), process approach (W. E. Deming, D. Dill, S.Y. Trapitsin) to the educational quality management.

The main objectives of our research include:

- analysis of foreign and domestic traditions, models and experiences in the field of evaluation of quality of education, and trans-border higher education quality assurance;

- organization of internal and external educational audit in accordance with applicability of the concept of quality to education as a "product" or "services" according to ISO;

- revealing the particularities of educational audit of institutional and program accreditation that consider the quality of education through the prism of the following characteristics: opportunity, start, potential for further development.

The internal and external audit as an imperative of competitiveness of educational programs show that education quality assessment and assessment education quality assurance are connected to determining the notion of "education" from the standpoint of ISO 9000 series standards as a "product" or "service", as well as to determining the notion of education as a socially significant good considered in Bologna process documents and the Federal Law "On education in the Russian Federation" dated 12/29/2012 №273-FZ.

## **3. Discussion of the research outcomes**

As Russia entered the global education community and considering social and economic realities of the XXI century alongside with increased competition within the system of higher education, and the pressure of domestic and international labor market on practical aspects of knowledge, new requirements for quality of education are put forward. Taking this into account, one of the main tasks of higher education becomes the new understanding of what is high-quality education. The study of foreign experience and international principles and approaches to education quality assessment makes higher education institutions analyze foreign and domestic traditions, models, experience in quality assessment and education quality assurance in higher education.

This is especially relevant for higher education in the trans-border region of Transbaikal Territory.

### *3.1 International standards, principles and approaches to higher education quality assessment and education quality assurance in trans-border region*

"Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Trans-Border Higher Education" developed by UNESCO and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) based on the UN and UNESCO documents determine the main directions for all countries to understand the importance of education quality assurance in order to resist the challenges of commercialization of higher education. The guidelines contain practical recommendations for protection of students and other parties concerned related to higher education against low quality of educational

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