

Approved by

Chairman of the Advisory Council

 V. Shadrin

2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2020



**REPORT**  
**on the results of an external evaluation of the educational program**  
**Cultural Studies**  
**Bachelor Degree**  
**Russian-Tajik (Slavonic) University (RTSU)**

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## **SUMMARY OF THE PROGRAM**

The *Cultural Studies* programme is implemented as part of 51.03.01 Cultural Studies by the Department of *Cultural Studies* and leads to the awarding of a Bachelor degree. The programme is managed by the *Head of the Department of Cultural Studies, Doctor of Philosophical Science, Associate Professor Olga Ladygina*.

An online visit as part of the external evaluation of the programme was conducted by AKKORK experts in the period from October 20 to 21, 2020.

### ***Strengths of the program under evaluation***

- Availability of information on electronic resources, in particular on the official website of RTSU [www.rtsu.tj](http://www.rtsu.tj);
- active interaction with employers, their participation in the development and implementation of programmes;
- satisfaction with the quality of educational services as reported by students, graduates, and employers;
- active research activities;
- relevant GQW topics meeting the region's needs;
- student involvement in community life where students can put their skills into practice;
- the programme trains multi-discipline professionals who can find employment in related fields.

### ***Weaknesses of the program under evaluation***

- lack of a quality management system for educational services at the level of the higher educational establishment;
- insufficient monitoring of the demand for graduates of the program;
- a relatively low level of competency formation among graduate students.

### ***The main recommendations for the program under evaluation***

The programme takes into account the trends and prospects of development of the domestic labor market, industry trends and requests of potential employers.

For further improvement of the programme, it is recommended to

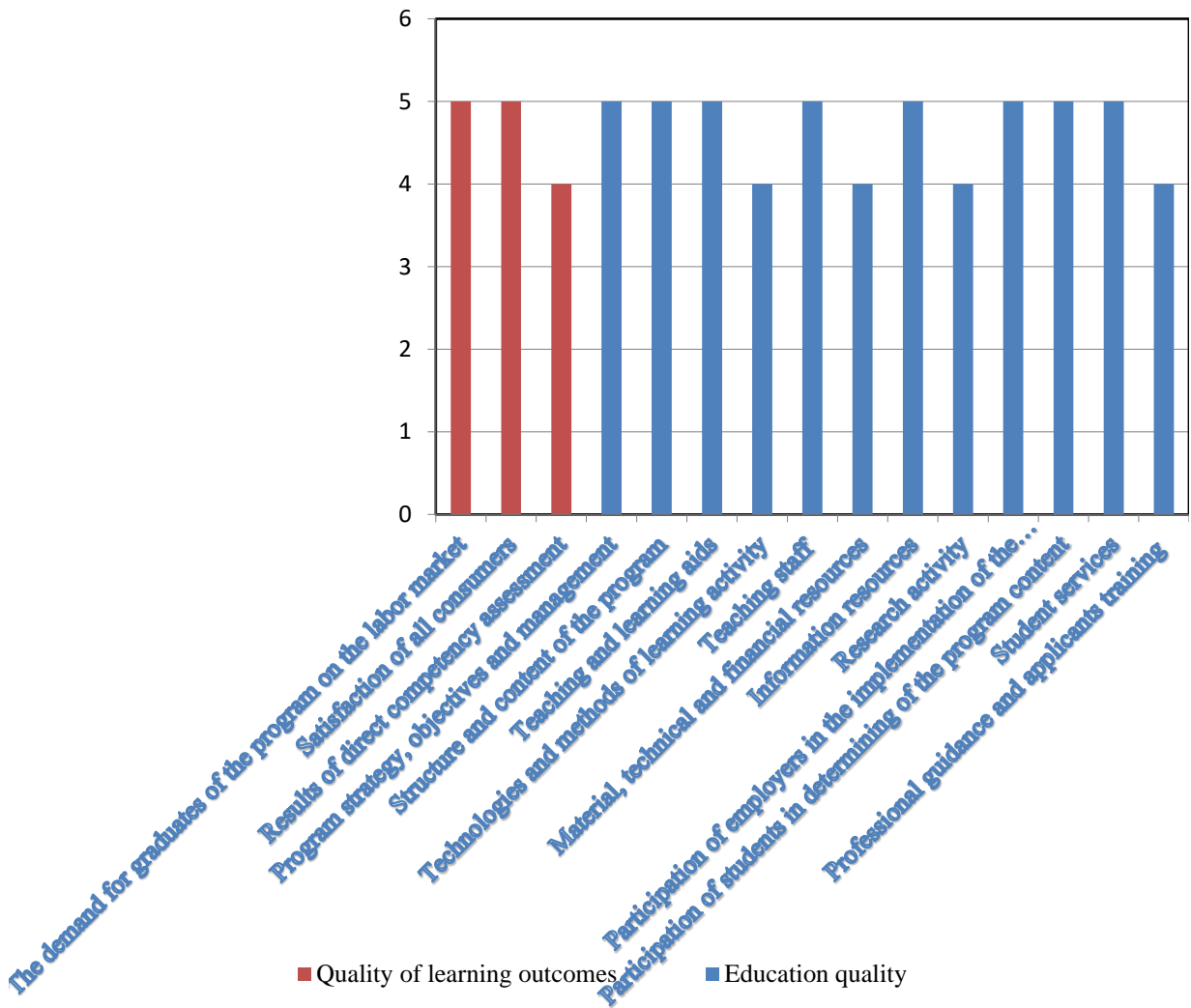
- Promote a direct connection between the quality and level of education and the career growth of graduates as illustrated by specific examples of successful graduates. Interviews with graduates showed them to be sought-after and successful in career development. Make greater use of modern information and communication technologies to monitor the employment and future careers of graduates. Creating an alumni association can help achieve this goal.
- Continue to improve the process for forming core competencies, including personal and communicative competencies, taking into account the differences in their manifestation in the educational process and in the professional environment. Employers provide specific recommendations on the inclusion of academic disciplines and the need to develop skills in certain professional areas, for example, focusing on the development of tourism or the study of the culture of certain regions.

- It is necessary to make greater use of modern information and communication technologies in the implementation of the educational process, including the possibilities of e-learning, to study platforms and technologies currently in use, make a choice in accordance with the goals of the programme and implement e-learning technology in the educational process.
- Involve entrepreneurs in the development and improvement of a set of programme graduate competencies.
- Fully implement the procedures of the quality management system for systematic linkage of learning outcomes with the requirements of the labour market. One of the most popular QMSs currently is the ISO 9001:2015 system; it is one of the most popular and well-established quality management systems at Russian universities. This system allows you to observe, evaluate, and report the results of the educational process to internal and external stakeholders, as well as to structure and audit the educational process at all levels of education, aiming to improve the quality of education, the demand for graduates and employer satisfaction.

*Assessment of learning outcomes and quality assurance of education*

№	Criterion	Assessment	
<i>I</i>	<i>Quality of learning outcomes</i>		
	1.	The demand for graduates of the program on the labor market	<i>Excellent</i>
	2.	Satisfaction of all consumers	<i>Excellent</i>
	3.	Results of direct competency assessment	<i>Good</i>
<i>II</i>	<i>Education quality assurance</i>		
	1.	Program strategy, objectives and management	<i>Excellent</i>
	2.	Structure and content of the program	<i>Excellent</i>
	3.	Teaching and learning aids	<i>Excellent</i>
	4.	Technologies and methods of learning activity	<i>Good</i>
	5.	Teaching staff	<i>Excellent</i>
	6.	Material, technical and financial resources	<i>Good</i>
	7.	Information resources	<i>Excellent</i>
	8.	Research activity	<i>Good</i>
	9.	Participation of employers in the implementation of the educational program	<i>Excellent</i>
	10	Participation of students in determining of the program content	<i>Excellent</i>
	11	Student services	<i>Excellent</i>
12	Professional guidance and applicants training	<i>Good</i>	

## Assessment of learning outcomes and quality assurance of education



## QUALITY OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

### ***1. Demand for graduates of the program on federal and regional labor markets***

#### ***Criterion grade: Excellent***

– Graduates of this programme are mostly in demand in the regional labor market, mainly in the public sector. The demand for graduates of this programme is ensured in particular by the fact that it trains multi-discipline professionals who can implement their skills not only in the respective field of study. At the same time, most graduates are employed in their field of study. Also, the demand for professionals in the field of socio-cultural activities is consistent with the prospects for the development of the national labor market. 2018-2021 has been declared the years of tourism, rural development, and folk crafts. Implementation of the state cultural policy is impossible without professionals who have professional competencies in the field where the cultural, educational and project analytical activities are to be carried out.

– The programme is modified to meet the needs of the modern labor market.

Interviews with employers confirmed the interest in graduates in this field, as well as the the fact that the recommendations of employers are factored in directly when adjusting the programme's Teaching and Learning Materials (TLM). One competitive advantage of graduates of the programme is their knowledge of foreign languages, including Russian.

#### ***Analysis of the data submitted by the university (conclusions)***

– *The proportion of students who combine study at a university with work in the specialty profile – 11,25%*

– *The proportion of the contingent of graduates employed within one year after graduating from a public educational institution in the field of training (specialty) obtained as a result of training on the educational program – 69,23%*

– *The share of the contingent of graduates employed at the request of enterprises – no information available*

– *The proportion of students enrolled by order of employers, for example, on the basis of tripartite (targeted) agreements – no information available*

– *The share of the contingent of graduates working in the field of training in the region – 69,23%*

– *The share of the contingent of graduates working in the training profile outside the region – no information available*

– *Number of complaints on graduates – no*

– *The number of positive feedback from organizations about the work of graduates – 100%*

– *Proportion of students in the EP enrolled in Master programs who have completed Bachelor programs – 72,7%*

Data on the demand for graduates have been presented according to the results of a self-evaluation conducted by the educational organization. The data for evaluating the criterion were obtained during interviews with graduates and employers during the visit to the HEI.

## **2. *Satisfaction of consumers with learning outcomes***

***Criterion grade: Excellent***

- *The proportion of employers who believe that the competencies of the graduates of the program:*

- *fully meet the requirements for modern industry experts – 75%*
- *in general correspond to modern requirements for specialists in this field, but there are minor comments – 25%*
- *few graduates whose competencies correspond to modern requirements for specialists in this field – 0%*
- *do not meet the requirements for specialists in this field – 0%*

- *The proportion of graduates satisfied with the learning outcomes – 84,62% are fully satisfied with the structure of the program, 15,38% are mostly satisfied with the structure of the program.*

## **3. *Direct competency assessment by experts***

***Criterion grade: good***

The online visit included a direct assessment of final year students' competencies. 4th year students took part in the direct assessment, namely a total of 8 people, which is 100% of the final year.

During the direct assessment of graduates, test and exam materials prepared by experts were used.

In order to analyse the development of competencies the expert chose the following one:

- Evaluation of direct assessment of competencies that characterize the personality and that are an integral part of his / her professional competence:

- **OK-1** the ability to use knowledge to form a worldview;

- Evaluation of direct assessment of social competencies aimed at the development, maintenance and improvement of communication

- **OK-5** the ability to communicate orally and in writing in Russian and foreign languages in order to solve problems of interpersonal and intercultural interaction; **OK-6** the ability to work in a team, tolerantly perceiving social, ethnic, religious and cultural differences;



- Evaluation of professional competencies (“core competencies”) including competencies which reflect the demand (needs) of the federal and/or regional labor markets depending on the major employers of the graduates of the program
  - **GPC-3** the ability to solve standard problems as part of professional activity on the basis of information and bibliographic culture with the use of modern information and communication technologies and taking into account fundamental requirements of information security.

When performing direct assessment of competencies, the experts used the following test and exam materials:

A case was offered to the students for analysis.

A Conflict Over an Ethnic Relic In 1993, a mummy of a woman dating back to the first century BC was discovered in Republic N. It was a unique find. Thanks to this discovery, scientists led by archaeologist Tatyana Volosyuk were able to study in detail "the clothing of ancient representatives of the so-called Pazyryk culture." The mummy was moved to the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, located in the city of Z. For several years, scientists researched it understand the origin of the so-called Princess and the cause of her death. After the mummy was moved to the Institute of Archeology and Ethnography, a scandal broke out between scientists and local residents. The thing is that the locals consider the "Princess" to be their ancestor. When the scientists took the mummy away, an earthquake started, and the locals considered it "the wrath of the Princess" and demanded for it to be brought back. The community wrote a letter to the local authorities with the following requirements: "We, the indigenous people of the mountainous republic, are pagans and worship nature. Any excavations that have been and are being conducted in our territory cause us irreparable damage. Our priceless treasures and spiritual heritage have been exported regardless of the people's opinion. For example, a burial mound has been excavated, where there was a tattooed young woman of noble origin. For the inhabitants of our land, it was a sacred relic, the guardian of the peace and greatness of our 206 people. Now the Princess is kept in the Museum of the city of Z. As pagans, we have no doubt that the soul of the Princess is in revolt and demands calm for her ashes at last. This fact is related to the tragic events of the recent months. We, the residents of the village of Oroktoy, encourage the people of the Republic of N to support us and demand the return of the sacred relic." Scientists have refuted the fact that the Princess belongs to the Mongoloid race. After conducting a genetic analysis, they concluded that the Princess does not belong to any of the known Mongoloid races that inhabit the Earth. It cannot be the ancestor of the people of the Republic of N. Her appearance was rather European. Also, according to scientists, there was no specialized place to store this unique find where it was found, so the transportation of the Princess was out of the question. Otherwise, the historical find would be gone. As a result, several years later, both parties reached a consensus with the help of regional and federal

authorities — the Princess was to be transferred to the National Museum of the Republic. In 2009, an oil company donated 250 million RUB for the reconstruction of the Museum. A mausoleum in the form of a burial mound was to be built in this building. In September 2013, the "Princess", accompanied by shamans, was returned to her "homeland". Now the sarcophagus is kept in the National Museum. The Museum building has undergone major reconstruction, and a separate extension has been built to accommodate the "Princess". All this was sponsored by an oil company. At the museum reopening ceremony, grateful representative of the local community awarded the head of the company the highest order of the Republic and presented him with a horse. Singers performed an ode in the local language dedicated to the oil workers to music played by an orchestra.

### Assignments

1. Analyze the objective elements of the conflict's structure.
2. Identify the stages of the conflict's dynamics.
3. Analyze and classify the strategies and tactics of behavior of the parties to the conflict.
4. What cross-cultural and religious aspects should be taken into account during the tour?

According to the results of a direct assessment of competencies, experts identified

Level Students ratio	Sufficient level (have managed to solve 80% of the proposed tasks)	Acceptable level (the percentage of solved tasks from 50 to 79%)	Low level (percentage of solved tasks is less than or equal to 49%)
The results of direct assessment of competencies that characterize the personality and that are an integral part of his/her professional competency			
50%	+		
50%		+	
0%			+
The results of direct assessment of social competencies aimed at the development, maintenance and improvement of communication			
50%	+		
50%		+	
0%			+
The results direct assessment of professional competencies ("core competencies") including competencies which reflect the demand (needs) of the federal and/or regional labor markets depending on the major employers of the graduates of the program			
0%	+		
100%		+	
0%			+

When conducting the education quality assessment, the experts got acquainted with GQW. The experts concluded that the examined GQW meet / do not meet all the requirements stated below.

### GRADUATION QUALIFICATION WORK

№	Objects of estimation	Comments of experts
1.	The topic of GQW corresponds to the field of degree and the current level of development of science, equipment and (or) technology in the field of the program.	Yes
2.	The tasks and contents of the GQW are aimed at confirming the competencies formation of the graduate.	Yes
3.	The degree of use of the materials collected or received during the pre-graduation practical training and the preparation of term papers in the independent research units of the GQW.	80%
4.	The topic of GQW is defined by the requests of the industry organizations and the tasks of the experimental activity solved by the teachers of EI.	Yes
5.	The results of GQW find practical application in the industry.	Yes, 9,8%
6.	The degree of use of the results of the R&D of the Chair, faculty and third-party research and production and/or research organizations in the implementation of independent research parts of the GQW.	70%

#### *Conclusions and recommendations of experts*

##### **Conclusions**

- The demand for graduates of the programme at the labor market is shown by a fairly high percentage of graduate employment.
- The satisfaction of all stakeholders, such as students, graduates, and employers, as reflected in the self-evaluation report as a result of the survey, was confirmed during the interview.
- A direct assessment of competencies showed an acceptable level of proficiency in general cultural and general professional competencies.

##### **Recommendations**

- Improve the process for forming core competencies, including personal and communicative competencies, taking into account the differences in their manifestation in the educational process and in the professional environment. Employers provide specific recommendations on the inclusion of academic

disciplines and the need to develop skills in certain professional areas, for example, focusing on the development of tourism or the study of the culture of certain regions. Recommendations of graduates working directly in the respective field can also help in the formation of practical skills to be acquired by graduates in the course of professional activity.

- Involve entrepreneurs in the development and improvement of a set of programme graduate competencies.
- Make greater use of modern technology to monitor the employment and future careers of graduates. Creating an alumni association can help achieve this goal.

The educational establishment provided data based on a survey among students of the programme that was verified by experts during the online visit. The data provided by the educational institution was verified by experts following the online visit.

This allows the experts to rate the quality of education sufficient.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE OF EDUCATION

### **1. Strategy, objectives and program management. Internal quality assurance system**

**Criterion grade: Excellent**

#### **Program strengths**

- The development strategy for the programme is determined by the strategy of socio-economic development of the Republic of Tajikistan.
- The objectives of the programme are consistent with the needs of the national labor market.

#### **Recommendations**

- Fully implement the procedures of the quality management system for systematic linkage of learning outcomes with the requirements of the labour market. One of the most popular QMSs currently is the ISO 9001:2015 system; it is one of the most popular and well-established quality management systems at Russian universities. This system allows you to observe, evaluate, and report the results of the educational process to internal and external stakeholders, as well as to structure and audit the educational process at all levels of education, aiming to improve the quality of education, the demand for graduates and employer satisfaction.

During the visit, the experts interviewed students, teachers, employers, and employees and obtained data that allows the experts to conclude that all participants in the educational process are informed of the objectives of the educational programme and actively participate in adjustments to achieve the objectives.

During the self-evaluation, the educational institution provided data on teachers' satisfaction with the personnel policy and the current motivation system.

During the visit, teachers involved in the implementation of the programme were interviewed.

Based on the results of the interview, the experts conclude that the educational institution has created appropriate conditions for implementing the programme in accordance with the stated objectives.

### **2. Structure and content of the program**

**Criterion grade: Excellent**

#### **Program strengths**

- A competence model of the graduate has been formulated taking into account the regional needs of the labor market.
- The programme is agreed with major employers.

- Compliance of the programme structure and content with the requirements of Federal Standards of the Russian Federation has been confirmed by state accreditation conducted by Rosobrnadzor.

### ***Recommendations -***

During the visit, the experts held meetings with students in the programme. Based on the results of the meetings, experts concluded that the structure and content of the programme meet the expectations of the students as its direct consumers.

### **3. *Teaching and learning aids***

***Criterion grade: Excellent***

#### ***Program strengths***

- A significant percentage of the TLM (more than 50%) has been agreed with social partners representing the labor market.
- Current TLMs are available to stakeholders on the RTSU official website.

### ***Recommendations -***

#### ***Additional information***

The experts familiarized themselves with the teaching and learning materials as well as test and exam materials developed at the institution and used at the educational institution for routine progress control, published on the official website of the RTSU, and concluded that TLM quality is sufficient and the assessment of students' knowledge is carried out in an appropriate manner.

According to the results of the survey submitted by the educational institution, the results of which were confirmed during the visit, most students believe that their opinion is taken into account when developing and updating the TLM.

### **4. *Technologies and methods of learning activity***

***Criterion grade: good***

Due to the fact that the site-visit was held in an online format, there was no opportunity to evaluate the technologies and techniques used in the implementation of the educational program, but interviews with students showed a high degree of satisfaction with the educational process on the part of the students. In addition, a sufficient amount of TLM is posted on the official website of the higher educational establishment and made available at the Department and in the electronic library.

### ***Recommendations***

- It is necessary to make greater use of modern information and communication technologies in the implementation of the educational process, including the

possibilities of e-learning, to study platforms and technologies currently in use, make a choice in accordance with the goals of the programme and implement e-learning technology in the educational process.

- Make greater use of the opportunities for offering "guest" lectures, workshops, and training sessions online.

## **5. Teaching staff**

**Criterion grade: Excellent**

### **Program strengths**

- Most of the programme's teachers have completed further training, which allows them to implement the educational process using approved educational technologies and methods.
- The Department's staff are interested in showing high performance and achieving the set goals.
- Young teachers are provided with methodological and scientific support for career growth so that they can continue their studies in postgraduate programmes.
- Most teachers of the programme's core subjects have experience in the respective field of study.
- Some teachers combine their work at RTSU with professional activities in their respective field of study.

### **Recommendations -**

#### **Additional information**

Analyzing the facts presented by the educational institution in the self-evaluation report, the experts came to the conclusion that the data presented is up-to-date and reliable.

Based on the results of the analysis of the data provided, the experts concluded that the level and qualifications of the program's teaching staff meet the requirements.

## **6. Material, technical and financial resources of the program**

**Criterion grade: good**

### **Program strengths**

- Sufficient material and technical base, as well as financial resources for the implementation of the program. This programme does not require any specialized equipment.

### **Recommendations**

- Development of the material and technical base for the implementation of e-learning in the educational process.

## **7. Information resources**

**Criterion grade: Excellent**

### **Program strengths**

- Open access to electronic information resources for teachers and students.
- Availability and openness of up-to-date information about the university's structure, programmes, teaching staff, etc.

### **Recommendations**

- Use of information and communication technologies for obtaining feedback from students, graduates and employers, in particular for collecting information on the quality of education.

## **8. Research activity**

**Criterion grade: Good**

### **Program strengths**

- The department engages in active research.
- The resulting scientific and methodological developments are implemented in the educational process of the higher education institution, other educational institutions, and in other industries.
- Active involvement of students in research and creative activities.

### **Recommendations**

- Encourage students to participate in international projects that are currently being implemented online.

### **Additional material**

The employment of students in scientific clubs was analyzed. To students in the programme, the educational institution offers 2 scientific club (named Art Creative and Caravan of Cultures). The main purpose of the scientific clubs is to conduct socio-cultural and ethno-cultural research. The number of students who regularly attend the scientific clubs is 42% of the total number of students in the specialization.

Students are also involved in research activities within the framework of the project "Sacred Geography of Tajikistan", where they have the opportunity to participate in expeditions, exhibitions, round table discussions, make documentaries, publish articles, and prepare graduate qualification works. 96 students participated in the Sacred Geography project in 2017 to 2019. The total number of students enrolled in the programme in 2017 to 2019 is 258. GQW materials are implemented in the practice of enterprises:

Materials of A. Azimova's GQW titled "The Jewelry of Central Asia and India (Cross-Cultural Aspects in the Development of Theme Tours)" have been used when



determining the authenticity of jewelry items from the funds of the National Museum of Tajikistan under the Executive office of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan (a certificate of implementation is available);

Materials of T.K. Bahodurova's GQW titled "The Art of Medieval Miniature and Calligraphy: Communication Styles And Schools" have been implemented during the examination of medieval manuscripts from the collection of the National Museum under the Executive Office of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan.

## ***9. Employer participation in the program implementation***

***Criterion grade: Excellent***

### ***Program strengths***

- Active involvement of employers in the development and practical implementation of the program.
- Employers' recommendations are taken into account when determining students' professional competencies.
- Employers participate in the scientific and methodological activities of the university on a part-time basis.
- Workshops by representatives of employers and other members of the professional community.
- Availability of international social partners in the programme.
- Employers have the opportunity to promote the employment of graduates based on their internship performance.

### ***Recommendations***

Involvement of representatives of the private sector of the regional labor market, which the programme is aimed at, in the development and practical implementation of the programme, as well as employment of graduates. Establishing direct contacts with representatives of the private sector at the internship stage and subsequent feedback to determine the satisfaction of future employers can increase the attractiveness of the programme. Posting employer feedback on the RTSU official website will help create a positive image of the programme itself as well as its graduates

### ***Additional material***

The self-evaluation report of the educational institution provides information on the results of a survey of employers estimating their satisfaction with the quality of graduate training.

The survey showed that 100% of feedback from organizations employing graduates of the department was positive.

## ***10. Students' participation in the program contents determination***

***Criterion grade: Excellent***

### ***Program strengths***

– The availability of feedback from students through regular surveys, as well as a strong involvement of students in the research work of the department's teaching staff.

### ***Recommendations -***

#### ***Additional material***

To take into account the opinion of students, an annual teacher rating survey is carried out, titled "Teachers as Viewed by Students."

Students periodically take part in intra-university surveys conducted by the Department for Monitoring Educational Activities under the Educational and Methodological Department.

Students are involved in research through the activities of the students' scientific club titled Caravan of Cultures, as well as through a laboratory for ethnoculturology and socio-cultural research. Students take part in research expeditions and in the implementation of the Sacred Geography of Tajikistan project.

During the visit, the experts analyzed the participation of students in student self-government bodies and scientific clubs.

Having analyzed the data provided, the experts conclude that there is an opportunity for and fairly intense involvement of students in determining the content of the programme.

## ***11. Student services a the program level***

### ***Criterion grade: Excellent***

#### ***Program strengths***

- At least 10 times a year, cultural events are held where students can show their skills and abilities.
- The university offers free creative workshops in various fields.
- Students are entitled to counseling services.
- A high-performing students obtaining paid education can be transferred to the free-of-charge department.
- There is a system for rewarding students for certain academic achievements.
- Access to benefits and special equipment for studying the subjects for students with disabilities.

#### ***Recommendations***

- It is recommended to establish a rector's scholarship (allocate appropriate funds in the budget) for the University's top 3 students so that students are better motivated to perform better. The scholarship may be annual, but it must be higher

than the regular one. The awarding of the scholarship can be implemented by holding an award ceremony for the University's top 3 students at an all-student meeting.

## ***12. Professional guidance and applicants training***

***Criterion grade: Good***

### ***Program strengths***

- Applicants can enroll in the RTSU by successfully passing the test provided by the National Testing Center.
- Applicants who have certain school achievements (such as gold medals and wins in academic Olympiad) enjoy an advantage.
- The university provides annual training for students to pass final exams and has developed special methodological literature in various fields and subjects.
- Open door days are held annually.

### ***Recommendations***

- It is recommended to develop a school to university programme creating specialized classes in participating schools, where the number of subjects required for admission to the faculty of journalism at the RTSU will be increased and workshops by teachers from the university and other events aimed at preparing schoolchildren for enrollment in the universities will be held. This will increase the number of applicants and raise the rating of the university.

## Curriculum Vitae of Experts

Name of expert: Tatiana Lapochkina

Job location, title	State Higher Educational Institution Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University, Deputy Head of the Department of Educational Process Organization and Inter-Agency Cooperation
Academic rank and degree	Candidate of Physical and Mathematical Science
Honored titles, degrees	-
Education	higher
Professional achievements	Certificate of the Guild of Professional Training Experts (Moscow, Russia, 2014) AKKORK expert certificate (Moscow, Russia, 2014) Expert certificate of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic on Licensing and Accreditation of Educational Activities (Republic of Kyrgyzstan, Bishkek, 2018)
Area of expertise	-
Practical experience in the field of the program under evaluation	direct involvement in the preparation for accreditation and preparation of the selfevaluation report, cooperation with experts during the accreditation and licensing procedures, working as experts in the commissions of the KR Ministry of Education and Science and the EdNet Agency.

Name of expert: Elena Sharina

Job location, title	Interpreter guide, tour guide
Academic rank and degree	-
Honored titles, degrees	-
Education	higher
Professional achievements	-
Area of expertise	-
Practical experience in the field of the program under evaluation	Work in leading museums of the Russian Federation: the Hermitage, the Russian Museum, Peterhof and Tsarskoe Selo Museums

Name of expert: Karina Nesipbaeva

Job location, title	Student specializing in Journalism, State Higher Educational Institution Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University
Academic rank and degree	
Honored titles, degrees	
Education	Incomplete higher education
Professional achievements	
Area of expertise	
Practical experience in the field of the program under evaluation	