

AKKORK

Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher
Education and Career Development

Approved by

Chairman of the Advisory Council

Shadrin V.

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REPORT
on the results of an external evaluation of the educational program
International Management
Master Degree
Russian-Tajik (Slavonic) University (RTSU)

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SUMMARY OF THE PROGRAM

The programme International Management is implemented within the framework of specialization 38.04.02 by the Department of Management and Marketing and leads to the obtainment of a Master of Management qualification. The programme is managed by Dilbar Subkhonovna Amonova, Doctor of Economic Science, Associate Professor, Professor, Department of Management and Marketing, RTSU.

An online visit within the framework of the external evaluation of programme was conducted by AKKORK experts from 20.10.2020 to 22.10.2020.

Strengths of the program under evaluation

During the analysis of the self-evaluation report and the online visit, the following strengths of the programme under analysis were identified.

1. The structure and content of the programme meet modern market requirements.
2. Training is aimed at developing the necessary competencies in students (these competencies are reflected in the competence model).
3. When forming the content of the program, the opinion of not only university staff, but also employers and students is taken into account (stakeholders are invited to chair meetings and participate in surveys).
4. In addition to compulsory subjects, students have the opportunity to study elective subjects, as well as additional free-of-charge courses (for example, foreign language courses for those who want to study under academic mobility programs at partner universities) and an opportunity to study abroad (academic mobility programs at partner universities).
5. The highly qualified teaching staff, whose qualifications allow to implement the educational process using approved educational technologies and methods (45 members of the teaching staff), also allows to implement the educational process in an efficient manner.
6. The educational institution has all the necessary resources for carrying out educational activity (material and technical resources, information resources such as the university's website, electronic library, student and teacher personal accounts, etc.).
7. Students are given opportunities to take active part in extracurricular activities (science and research, sports, volunteering, culture).
8. There is a stable connection of the Department of Management and Marketing with graduates of the program, who are invited to conduct training sessions, offer senior students a base for internship and predegree practice.

Weaknesses of the program under evaluation

During the analysis of the self-evaluation report and the online visit, the following weaknesses of the programme under analysis were identified.

1. Lack of an e-learning system in the learning process (the material and technical resources of the programme that allow implementing e-learning are currently at the implementation stage).
2. Lack of an internal teaching staff activity monitoring system.

The main recommendations for the program under evaluation

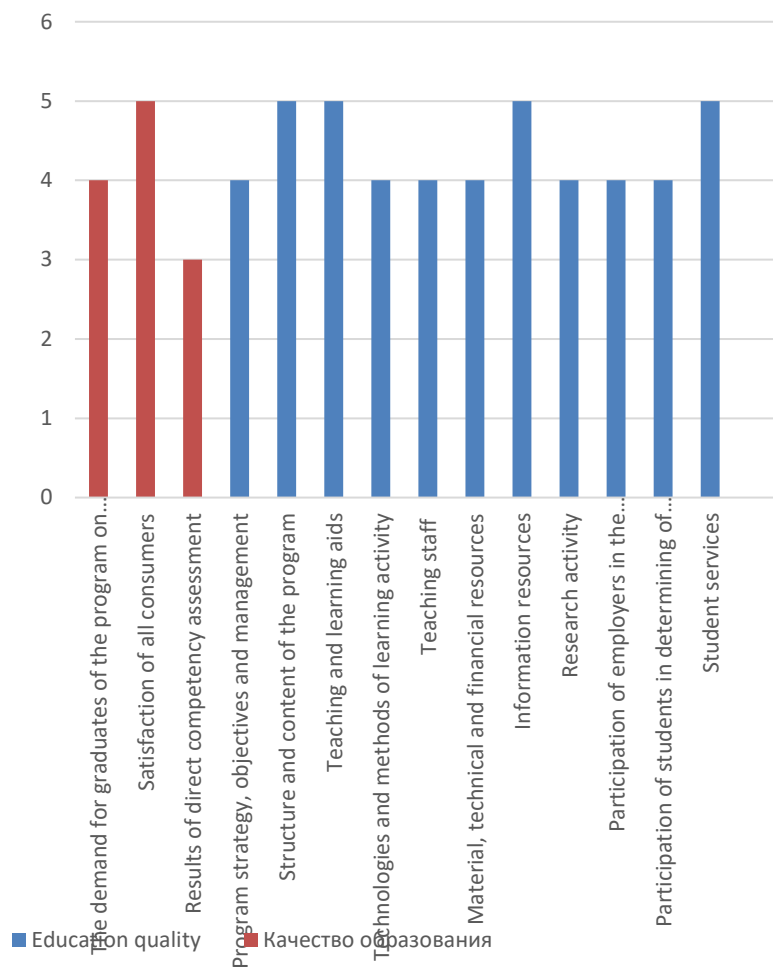
During the analysis of the self-evaluation report and the online visit, the following recommendations were identified.

1. Create an e-learning system in the learning process (distance learning as part of the full-time programme).
2. Create an internal teaching staff activity monitoring system to enable estimating the potential for teaching staff development.
3. Create an association of RTSU graduates and employers in order to maximize involvement in the educational process.
4. Expand interaction and cooperation with foreign universities (including implementation of double degree programmes with international universities).
5. Introduce of the practice of corporate scholarships for the best students of the university.

Assessment of learning outcomes and quality assurance of education

No	Criterion	Assessment	
<i>I</i>	<i>Quality of learning outcomes</i>		
	1.	The demand for graduates of the program on the labor market	<i>Good</i>
	2.	Satisfaction of all consumers	<i>Excellent</i>
	3.	Results of direct competency assessment	<i>Satisfactory</i>
<i>II</i>	<i>Education quality assurance:</i>		
	1.	Program strategy, objectives and management	<i>Good</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>Good</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>Good</i>
	10.	Participation of students in determining of the program content	<i>Good</i>
11.	Student services	<i>Excellent</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: Good

Analysis of the role and place of the program

The assessment showed that graduates in Management are in high demand in the labor market. In the discussions with the head of the programme and representatives of the employer community, experts found that the success of the programme is based on effective cooperation between the employer representatives and the programme managers. The programme takes into account the needs and requirements of the labor market.

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*

The analysis of the survey (questionnaire) showed that basically, according to the results obtained, out of 49 working graduates: 2017 - 9 people (18.4%), 2018 - 25 people (51%), 2019 - 15 people (30.6%):

- work according to the training profile in the region - 38 graduates (77.5%);
- work on the profile of training outside the region - 2 graduates (4.1%);
- not employed according to the profile - 4 graduates (8.25%) (2 - postgraduate studies, 1 person in business, 1 person - on the territory of the Russian Federation);
- not employed in the field of study – 7 graduates (14.3%) (2 graduates find it difficult to get a job and 5 people have low wages).

- *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*

From 2017-2019 all graduates of the program were able to find a job in their specialty within 3 to 6 months.

- *The share of the contingent of graduates employed at the request of enterprise*

The survey results indicate that 83.7% received job invitations (or continued work) as a result of internship.

- *The proportion of students enrolled by order of employers, for example, on the basis of tripartite (targeted) agreements*

None.

- *The share of the contingent of graduates working in the field of training in the region*

38 people work in the region. (77.5%)

- *The share of the contingent of graduates working in the training profile outside the region*

2 people work according to the field of study outside the region. (14.1%)

- *Number of complaints on graduates*

None.

- *The number of positive feedback from organizations about the work of graduates*

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

Additional Material

According to the results of self-evaluation conducted by the educational organization, data on the distribution of graduates are presented. The data provided by the university was confirmed through examination of the relevant documents.

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 - **95% of employers rated the level of possession of the necessary competencies at 5 on a 5-point scale,***

- *in general correspond to modern requirements for specialists in this field, but there are minor comments - **5% of employers rated the level of possession of the necessary competencies at 4 on a 5-point scale,***

- *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 – **100%***

3. Direct competency assessment by experts

Criterion grade: Satisfactory

During the site visit, the expert conducted a direct assessment of the competencies of the graduate students. 2-year students in the amount of 5 people took part in the direct assessment.

During the direct assessment procedure, test and exam materials (funds of evaluation tools for Business Ethics) developed by the educational institutions were used, since these materials had been recognized as valid by the experts.

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:
 - readiness to act in non-standard situations, to bear social and ethical responsibility for the decisions made (OK-2);
 - inclination to learn;
 - quick learning;
 - flexibility and ability to make the right decision in different situations.
- Evaluation of direct assessment of social competencies aimed at the development, maintenance and improvement of communication
 - willingness to lead a team in the field of their professional activities, tolerantly perceiving social, ethnic, confessional and cultural differences (OPK-2);
 - communication skills;
 - the ability to observe the situation and analyze it;
 - creativity;
 - orderliness.
- 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
 - result-orientedness;
 - analytical thinking;
 - time management.

Students were asked the following questions and presented with one case study for the purpose of direct assessment of competencies:

Questions:

1. For what purposes does a company use strategic planning and what role does it play in determining the future of the company? What elements does strategic planning consist of? Please list the elements of strategic planning in order of importance and provide a brief description of each element.
2. What is SWOT analysis and what is its purpose?
3. Your company's management has asked you to prepare a plan and vision for the company's entry into a new foreign market. Please describe the stages of this plan for entering that new foreign market and what actions you will take to implement this plan.

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

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			
20%	+		
80%		+	
The results of direct assessment of social competencies aimed at the development, maintenance and improvement of communication			
40%	+		
40%		+	
20%			+
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			
40%	+		
40%		+	
20%			+

When conducting the education quality assessment, the experts got acquainted with 5 of 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.	100%
2.	The tasks and contents of the GQW are aimed at confirming the competencies formation of the graduate.	100%
3.	The degree of use of the materials collected or received during the pre-graduation practical	100%

	training and the preparation of term papers in the independent research units of the GQW.	
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.	80%
5.	The results of GQW find practical application in the industry.	60%
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.	60%

Conclusions and recommendations of experts

Conclusions

The results of the direct assessment showed that students in the International Management programme have insufficient knowledge in subjects such as Marketing, International Marketing, Marketing Research and Strategic Management. None of the students were able to provide a complete and detailed answer to the tasks offered as part of personal competence assessment. Only 3 students provided incomplete answers, and the remaining 2 students did not answer the questions at all during the direct assessment of competencies. This resulted in the expert rating this aspect satisfactory.

In our opinion, the main weaknesses of the programme are the lack of interest or desire of students to study key subjects given their specialization, as well as the possible lack of need for the above-mentioned competencies on the part of employers.

Recommendations

1. Ensure regular involvement of employers to conduct workshops in such subjects as Effective Business Management, Strategic Planning, Market Segmentation, Marketing Research, etc.
2. Include practical classes in key subjects in the curriculum.
3. When students complete a professional internship in companies, make it a common practice to make up a business plan, strategic plan, market analysis, vision for entering a foreign market, followed by the students' presentation of the documents they have developed.

QUALITY ASSURANCE OF EDUCATION

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

Criterion grade: Good

Program strengths

Competitive advantages of the programme include:

- consistency of its goals with the needs of the national labor market,
- effective programme administration and presence of an internal programme audit system at the higher educational institution (Educational Activity Monitoring Department),
- awareness (more than 90% of respondents) of the main stakeholders (teachers and students) about the goals and strategy of the programme's development.

Recommendations

1. Based on the self-evaluation report and interviews with different groups of stakeholders (administration, teachers, employers, graduates), reviewers consider it appropriate to create a division at the higher educational institution the main purpose of which will be to monitor the quality of education at various stages of the programme's implementation. This will enable the implementation of measures to increase the attractiveness and quality of RTSU programmes.

2. Structure and content of the program

Criterion grade: Excellent

Program strengths

- A document analysis showed that the structure and content of the programme fully are substantially compliant with the needs of the labor market.
- Subject syllabi are 100% agreed with employers.
- The training materials are based on the assessment of students' competency skills.
- Special attention is paid to matching the structure and content of the programme with the expectations of students. For these purposes, a survey is conducted among students.

Recommendations

1. Carry out regular analysis (at least once a year) and ensure compliance of the structure and content of the programme with the needs of the labor market and the requirements of employers (including employers in other sectors of the economy)

2. Study and use the experience of leading higher educational institutions for further development of the programme.

3. Cooperate with employers to develop a list of core competencies and professions that are in demand in the labor market and use them to determine/improve the programme.

Additional material

During the online visit, the experts held meetings with students and graduates in the programme. One of the issues discussed was whether the structure and content of the programme meets the expectations of students as its direct consumers. Based on the results of the meetings, the experts concluded that students are satisfied with the content of the programme and the structure and content of the programme are 100% in line with their expectations.

3. Teaching and learning aids

Criterion grade: Excellent

Program strengths

- The educational and methodological support of the programme in Management corresponds to the Federal State Educational Standard of Higher Education.
- The higher educational institution has developed a standard for compiling a set of teaching materials.
- The quality of teaching and learning materials for the programme (96,5%) is evidenced by external reviews of representatives of the academic and business community.
- Students have an opportunity to gain practical skills at the Technopark and the center for the development of professional competencies, as well as during various internships and practices.

Recommendations

1. For the purpose of programme development, we recommend involving an industrial partner in the programme (including the creation of a Basic Department at the higher educational establishment). This will increase the practical orientation of the programme and promote the employment of graduates in their field of studies while reducing the run-in period for newly employed professionals.

4. Technologies and methods of learning activity

Criterion grade: Good

Program strengths

- The strengths of the programme include the use of real professional situations, organizational and activity games, group discussions, and trainings in the educational process (International Business – 45%, Research Methods in Management – 10%, National Economy – 20%, International Marketing – 15%, Business Ethics – 10%).

Recommendations

1. RTSU has started implementing a project titled "Improvement of Electronic Information and Educational Environment" (EIEE) in order to improve the quality of education and develop professional competencies of RTSU graduates." It is recommended to include it in the higher educational institution's development strategy. This will increase the accessibility and quality of training.

2. Provision should be made for training the teaching staff, creating a center for the development of electronic educational resources and a technical support service at the higher educational institution.

These measures will contribute to the gradual introduction of new technologies in the educational process and reduce the degree of resistance to innovation on the part of the teaching staff of the programme.

Additional material

The self-evaluation report of the educational programme and interviews with students and teachers showed that distance learning technologies (DLT) are not used.

5. Teaching staff

Criterion grade: Good

Program strengths

- During the conversation with the programme management and students, it was noted that RTSU teachers show high levels of professionalism, skill and quality of teaching as well as the ability to create and use modern technologies in the educational process.

- The university encourages the most efficient teachers through funding for additional training and study trips abroad.

- The analysis of documents showed that the teaching staff consists of 45 highly qualified professionals whose competence is confirmed by relevant certificates.

- Among the strengths of the teaching staff, we should also note the high interest of the teaching staff in improving the level of students' knowledge, developing their personal skills and competencies.

Recommendations

1. Regularly (twice a year) monitor and evaluate the competence of teachers, in particular through student surveys.
2. Create a service for professional development and competence development at the premises of the RTSU and encourage teaching staff to engage in further training on a regular basis.
3. Encourage teachers to actively participate in research and methodological work as well as the University's creative life.
4. Implement a system for students to evaluate the quality of teaching at least once a semester. Based on the evaluation results, identify the teacher's strengths and weaknesses in terms of teaching skills. The results of the assessment should help to increase the teacher's competence and improve his/her teaching skills.
5. Motivate teachers through the establishment of a Teacher of the Year award.

6. *Material, technical and financial resources of the program*
Criterion grade: Good

Program strengths

- Sufficient material and technical resources to ensure effective and efficient organization of the learning process (12 buildings and structures, including dormitories, catering facilities, 943 personal computers, an electronic library, etc.). 69.5% of the classrooms are equipped with resources that ensure the availability of information necessary for effective work of parties to the educational process.
- Access to education is provided for people with disabilities (ramps and wheelchair-friendly elevators).

Recommendations

1. In order to expand learning opportunities, it is necessary to implement distance learning (e-learning). This will allow students to participate in the educational process if they have no opportunity to study full-time. In addition, distance learning will allow students from other regions and countries to enter and study.

Additional material

During the online visit, the experts interviewed students and teachers participating in the programme to assess their satisfaction with the quality of the classrooms equipment. The data obtained allow us to conclude about the students and teachers are generally satisfied with the material and technical resources of the higher educational institution.

7. *Information resources*
Criterion grade: Excellent

Program strengths

- A functional electronic educational environment (<http://www.rtsu.tj/ru/>, <https://eiosrtsu.ru/>).
- Students' access to such scientific information resources as LAN ELS and URITE ELS.
- There are virtual workrooms for teachers and employees, and students also have personal accounts that allow them to work with personal data, such as displaying current progress, monitoring class schedules, and using an electronic library.

Recommendations

1. In order to quickly collect up-to-date information, it is recommended to use information and communication technologies, in particular in the collection of feedback from students, graduates and employers. To this end, it is recommended to implement an online survey via personal accounts of both students and teachers.

8. Research activity

Criterion grade: Good

Program strengths

- Teachers who teach classes in the programme participate (with involving 100% of students of the programme) in research projects funded from the budget of the Republic of Tajikistan, the budget of the RTSU and funds of commercial organizations, together with students.
- 5 scientific clubs functioning at the premises of the higher educational institution in relevant areas of science, involving over 12% of students.
- Involving students enrolled in the programme to participate in national and international research and practical conferences.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the programme self-evaluation report and interviews with students, we consider it appropriate to conduct the following activities aimed at developing the research component of the programme and improving the quality of education.

1. Set up an annual international research and practical conference with the participation of students in the programme.
2. Train students in technologies for commercialization of intellectual activity results.

9. Employer participation in the program implementation

Criterion grade: Good

Program strengths

- Effective cooperation of programme managers with representatives of employers.
- When developing the curriculum and determining the list of subjects, the wishes and needs of employers are taken into account.
- The content of the internship programme is coordinated with employers in order to develop practical skills in students, improving their personal competencies and knowledge.

Recommendations

1. In our opinion, there is a need to create an employers' association at the RTSU. The main purpose of the association is to create a community of employers representing various sectors of the country's economy. Currently, the number of companies that the RTSU cooperates with is insufficient, and almost all of these companies represent the field of professional services. It is necessary to increase the number of companies in other sectors of the economy. This will help the RTSU improve and strengthen the quality of the programme and create confidence among students regarding the future of the university.

10. Students' participation in the program contents determination

Criterion grade: Good

Program strengths

- Active participation of students in determining the content of the program, documents regulating these processes have been developed at the university level.
- Students are involved in chair meeting; a regular survey is also carried out (every 2 to 3 months). The survey "Teachers as Viewed by Students" enables the university to take into account the opinion of students when evaluating the quality of classes (in case of dissatisfaction with the quality of classes, students can also contact the dean's office with a request to replace the teacher). The survey shows general student satisfaction (45,5% reporting "excellent" and 45,5% reporting "good").

Recommendations

1. In order to increase the involvement and participation of students in determining the content of the programme and the organization of the educational process, it is recommended to offer department and faculty incentives to students. These measures will help involve more students; the content of the programme and the organization of the educational process will therefore meet the current needs of students. As incentive measures, accrual of additional points can be offered to increase the social rating of students; letters of gratitude/diplomas can also be awarded to the most active students.

Additional material

During the visit, experts analyzed the participation of students in student self-government bodies and scientific clubs as well as determining the content of the programme and organization of the educational process.

Having analyzed the data provided, the experts concluded that students actively participate in determining the content of the programme and the organization of the educational process and recommended implementing student incentives at the department and faculty levels.

11. Student services at the program level ***Criterion grade: Excellent***

Program strengths

- Active multi-faceted activities at the Department of Education and Youth Policy of the RTSU with the aim of increasing the spiritual, moral, cultural, aesthetic, intellectual, and physical potential of students. Students are provided with ample opportunities for comprehensive self-development; there are 18 creative clubs and studios.
- At the programme implementation level, there are various mechanisms for student support (financial aid, awards, trips, recreation camps, targeted payments to students, etc.) and encouraging students for achievements in extracurricular activities (accrual of additional points, certificates of appreciation, and cash prizes).
- In addition, students have the opportunity to take additional courses and programs, such as internships abroad, including language and computer courses, various seminars and trainings.
- Computer classes, a library with a reading room and subscription, canteens and cafeteria, as well as a sports hall and a medical center are freely available.
- There is an internal recruitment agency for students and graduates.
- Students are given the opportunity to transfer from paid to free-of-charge education for excellent performance in studies and research as well as active engagement in community life.

Recommendations

1. In addition, in order to update the content of programmes and interact with university students, it is recommended to create a graduate association. It will allow the higher educational institution to keep in touch with its graduates, taking their opinions into account when forming the programme and organizing the educational process, as well as to create a dedicated environment for exchanging experience between graduates. To do this, it is necessary to analyze the existing experience of establishing similar associations and develop steps to create the most appropriate system of interaction between university graduates within the graduating department and the university as a whole.

Additional material

During the visit, the experts were provided with documents confirming the students' attendance of additional courses and programmes.

Having analyzed the data provided, the experts concluded that a wide range of student services are provided to students, and recommend implementing measures to expand interaction with foreign universities and create an association of university graduates.

Curriculum Vitae of Experts

Name of expert: Maxim Ponomaryov

Job location, title	Plekhanov Russian University of Economics State Federal-Funded Educational Institution of Higher Professional Training, Dean of the Faculty of Management
Academic rank and degree	Candidate of Economic Science, Associate Professor
Honored titles, degrees	
Education	higher, Plekhanov Russian University of Economics, specializing in Economics and Labour Sociology, qualification: Economist
Professional achievements	Opening of English-language Bachelor and Master's degree programmes, opening of double degree programmes
Area of expertise	Management, Educational Institution Management
Practical experience in the field of the program under evaluation	Director of the Russian-Chinese Youth Business Incubator, Director of the Russian-Belarusian Youth Business Incubator, expert of the Russian Youth Union

Name of expert: Ismat Tukhtaev

Job location, title	Research and Consulting Company "M-Vector Tajikistan", Country Director
Academic rank and degree	Master Of Business Administration
Honored titles, degrees	
Education	Higher education (specializing Finance and Crediting, Tajikistan State University of Law, Business, and Politics, Khujand 2004 (cum laude)
Professional achievements	
Area of expertise	Master of Business Administration (international Management and Business Management, School of International Business and Entrepreneurship, STEINBEIS UNIVERSITY, Stuttgart, Germany
Practical experience in the field of the program under evaluation	

Name of expert: Anna Bilinkina

Job location, title	Graduated from Plekhanov Russian University of Economics, Moscow
Academic rank and degree	
Honored titles, degrees	
Education	- Bachelor degree programme (Management, Plekhanov Russian University of Economics, Moscow, 2018 (cum laude);
Professional achievements	- Master's degree programme (Management, Plekhanov Russian University of Economics, Moscow, 2020 (cum laude);
Area of expertise	Launch of the Moscow Central Diameters project in 2019
Practical experience in the field of the program under evaluation	Project management, international management, IT projects