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REGULATORY AND LEGAL PROVISION OF INTERNAL CONTROL AND EVALUATION OF THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN GENERAL SECONDARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OF UKRAINE

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Rezumat: *Articolul analizează prevederile normative și legale de control intern și evaluarea calității instituțiilor de învățământ secundar general din Ucraina. Sunt analizate legislația de bază a Ucrainei privind educația, actele normative care reglementează raporturile juridice în domeniul învățământului școlar și funcționarea sistemului intern care asigură calitatea învățământului în instituțiile de învățământ secundar general. S-a ajuns la concluzia că Ucraina a format un sistem integrat de prevederi normative și legale de control intern și evaluare a calității învățământului școlar. În același timp, instituțiile de învățământ au o autonomie destul de largă în ceea ce privește crearea și funcționarea propriului sistem intern de asigurare a calității.*

Cuvinte-cheie: *calitatea educației; sistemul de asigurare a calității instituției de învățământ secundar general; suport normativ și legal al sistemului intern al calității educației.*

Abstract: *The article analyzes the regulatory and legal provision of internal control and quality assessment of general secondary education institutions in Ukraine. The basic legislation of Ukraine on education, normative acts that regulating legal relations in the field of school education and the functioning of the internal system that provides the quality of education in institutions of general secondary education are analyzed. It was concluded that now Ukraine has formed an integrated system of normative and legal provision of internal control and evaluation of the quality of school education. At the same time, educational institutions have a fairly wide autonomy regarding the creation and functioning of their own internal quality assurance system.*

Keywords: *quality of education; quality ensuring system of general secondary education institution; regulatory and legal support of the internal education quality system.*

The level of education is one of the main indicators of the quality of life and well-being of society, an instrument of the country's economic growth. According to the Law of Ukraine "On Education" (2017) [2] ensuring the quality of education and educational activity determines the principles of state policy in the field of education in Ukraine and the principles of educational activity (Article 6).

The components of education quality are: (1) the quality ensuring system in educational institutions (the internal system of education quality assurance); (2) the system of external assurance of the quality of education; (3) system of quality ensuring in the activities of management bodies and institutions that provide external ensuring of the quality of education (Article 41) [2].

The internal system of ensuring the quality of education (internal control and evaluation of the quality of education) is "a set of conditions, procedures and measures in an educational institution that ensure the effectiveness of educational and management processes that directly affect the quality of the learning outcomes of students, ensure the formation of key competencies in them, and also contribute to the comprehensive development of the personality of the acquirers" [5]. That is, such characteristics of schools as their type, location, operating conditions (personnel, financial, material and technical and other potentials) etc., directly or indirectly affect the quality of educational activities and the quality of education in this school. The introduction of an internal quality ensuring system at the school (observation and follow-up of its components, making management decisions to improve its indicators etc.) allows: (1) to increase the quality of education and educational activities, the quality of educational services, confidence in learning results; (2) constantly improve the educational environment, student evaluation system, pedagogical activities, management processes; (3) to ensure the transparency of the activity of the educational institution and its readiness for changes in the interests of the participants of the educational process etc. [5].

Therefore, by studying and constantly improving the components and procedures of the internal system of ensuring the quality of education, the educational institution can improve the quality of its activities.

The list of components that make up the internal system of ensuring the quality of education is defined in the Law of Ukraine "On Education" (Article 41): strategy (policy) and procedures for ensuring the quality of education; system and mechanisms for ensuring academic integrity; published criteria, rules and procedures for evaluating of education seekers, pedagogical (scientific-pedagogical) activities of pedagogical and scientific-pedagogical workers, and managerial activities of heads of educational institutions; ensuring the availability of the necessary resources for the organization of the educational process and

information systems for effective management of the educational institution and other procedures and measures [2].

At the same time, an important component of the internal system of education quality is defined by the fact of systematic implementation of internal monitoring of education quality by educational institutions.

The Law of Ukraine “On Comprehensive Secondary Education” (2020) [1] specifies the provisions of the basic legislation with an emphasis on comprehensive secondary education. In particular, it is noted that: 1) the internal system of ensuring the quality of education is formed by the school and should include mechanisms for ensuring academic integrity, in particular, the procedure for identifying and establishing the facts of violations of academic integrity by teaching staff and students, as well as the types of academic responsibility for specific violations of academic integrity; 2) methodological recommendations on the formation of the internal system of ensuring the quality of education are developed by the central executive body for ensuring the quality of education [1].

Methodological recommendations on the formation of an internal system for ensuring the quality of education in institutions of general secondary education (2020) [5] (hereinafter – Methodological recommendations), which were approved by the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, provided a definition of the concept of “internal system for ensuring the quality of education”, outlined its significance for the institution of general secondary education (school) and three stages of formation of the internal system are stated: (1) determination of the components of the internal system; (2) ensuring the functioning of internal system components; (3) self-evaluation of educational and management processes of the school for their further improvement.

The Methodological Recommendations emphasize that each school must create its own Regulation on the internal system of education quality ensuring (hereinafter referred to as the Regulation), which prescribes the goals of the internal system and its components, the necessary conditions for the functioning and development of the components, and the self-evaluation mechanism. The Regulation must necessarily contain information on the frequency of self-assessment.

Not only the school directorate (principal and his deputies) and teaching staff, but also students, parents or other legal representatives of students, experts in the field of general secondary education and management, representatives of the local community etc., should participate in the development of the Regulations.

The regulation is approved by the pedagogical council of the school and approved by the order of the director. It is expedient to acquaint all participants of the educational process with the content of the Regulation. It should be posted on the school’s website.

In the Methodological Recommendations, the components of the internal system of ensuring the quality of education are grouped into four directions of

the educational activity of the school: (1) educational environment; (2) student evaluation system; (3) pedagogical activities of teachers; (4) management processes [5]. They correspond to the four areas of evaluation of the educational and management processes of the educational institution and the internal system of ensuring the quality of education (paragraph 6), defined in the “Procedure for conducting an institutional audit of institutions of general secondary education” (2019) [3].

This was done so that the school’s self-evaluation was carried out in accordance with the directions, requirements/rules, criteria, indicators used during the institutional audit (external evaluation) [5], so the results of the external evaluation and self-evaluation could be compared.

The Methodological Recommendations emphasize the autonomy of the educational institution as to determining the components of the internal quality system. However, it is emphasized that its mandatory component should be mechanisms for ensuring academic integrity.

The second stage of the formation of the internal quality system (ensuring the functioning of its components) involves the development of a strategy (policy) for ensuring the quality of education, during which the criteria, mechanisms, rules and procedures for ensuring the functioning of the internal system components and procedures for studying their effectiveness are determined. Self-assessment is the third and final stage of internal quality system formation. The Methodological Recommendations emphasize the importance of self-evaluation for the school (studying and evaluating the effectiveness of the functioning of the internal system for the purpose of improving educational and management processes, in particular for making appropriate management decisions regarding the improvement of the internal system, determining priority directions for improving educational and management processes, analyzing trends in educational school activities and adjusting its annual work plan and/or development strategy, analyzing the dynamics of evaluation of the educational activity of the school by teaching staff, students, and parents (by comparing the results of the survey of the participants of the educational process over several years) [5]). At the same time, emphasis is placed on the autonomy of the educational institution regarding self-evaluation mechanisms.

The rules of self-evaluation and the models of its implementation are also defined (annual or periodic comprehensive, for certain areas of educational activity or for individual levels of education, or other models). It is emphasized that a comprehensive self-assessment should be conducted a year before the planned institutional audit of the school, which, in turn, is conducted no more than once every 10 years. The methods of collecting information and processing its results are described.

Attention is drawn to the fact that the results of the self-assessment should be considered at a meeting of the pedagogical council, discussed with representa-

tives of students and parents, and published on the school’s website (to ensure the transparency and informational openness of the educational institution).

Regulatory and legal provision of internal control and evaluation of the quality of education in educational institutions of Ukraine is also regulated by the “Procedure for monitoring the quality of education” (2020) [4], approved by the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. This document contains information about internal monitoring, which is initiated and conducted by the educational institution, the school, in particular. The stages of monitoring, methods of collecting and processing information, forms of monitoring etc. are specified.

Appendix 1 to the “Procedure for conducting an institutional audit of institutions of general secondary education” (2019) [3] contains criteria and indicators for evaluating the educational and management processes of the educational institution and the internal system of ensuring the quality of education. In particular, for each of the four areas of evaluation of the educational activity of the educational institution, the following are defined: 1) requirements/rules for the organization of educational and management processes and for the internal system of ensuring the quality of education; 2) evaluation criteria; 3) evaluation indicators; 4) methods of information collection. These criteria can be useful during the preparation and implementation of internal control and evaluation of the quality of education in the school.

Thus, today Ukraine has formed an integrated system of regulatory and legal support for internal control and evaluation of the quality of education in schools, the structure of which is shown in figure 1.

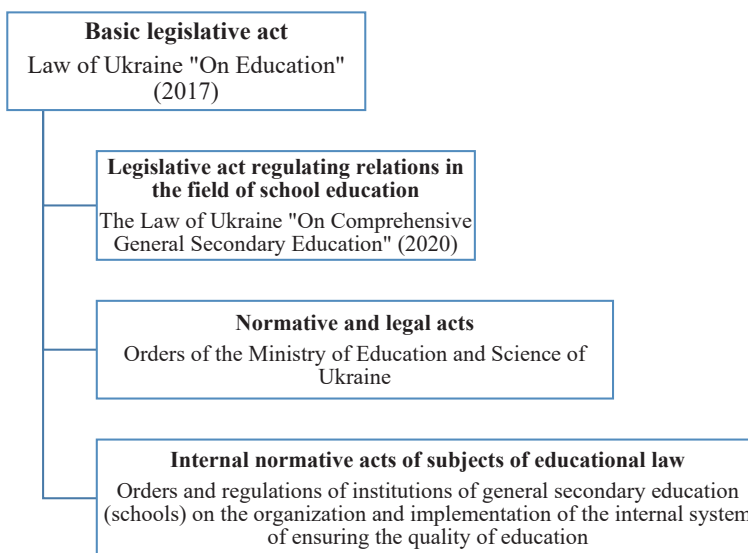


Figure 1. System of regulatory and legal provision of internal control and evaluation of the quality of education in schools of Ukraine

The Law of Ukraine “On Education” (2017) is a basic legislative act that regulates the procedures for ensuring internal control and evaluation of the quality of education in schools of Ukraine. It defines the organizational and legal principles of the internal system of ensuring the quality of education, specified by special laws. In particular, the Law of Ukraine “On Comprehensive General Secondary Education” (2020), which notes the importance of formation by each school of an internal system for ensuring the quality of education and emphasizes the development by the central executive body that in charge of ensuring the quality of education - the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine of methodological recommendations regarding issues of formation of the internal system of ensuring the quality of education.

Methodological recommendations on the formation of the internal system of ensuring the quality of education in general secondary education institutions (2020) clearly prescribe the procedure for the creation and functioning of the internal system of quality of education in schools of Ukraine.

Ukrainian state regulatory legal acts emphasize that each school has its own choice as to approach to the formation of an internal system for ensuring the quality of education (independent selection of internal system components and self-evaluation mechanisms).

According to the data of an experimental study by Snizhana Reznik (2022) [6], the average level of readiness of general secondary education institutions to ensure the quality of education is observed in educational institutions of Ukraine. 100% of managers and 84% of teachers do not doubt the feasibility of implementing a self-assessment of educational activities and an internal system for ensuring the quality of education in the school, although some of the respondents noted that they consider it as one of the manifestations of the bureaucratic system, which will bring more paper work to the employees of the educational institution. 61% of managers indicated that they adapted the criteria of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine to the working conditions of their school, 28% – use exclusively the recommendations of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, 17% – develop their own criteria. Despite the importance of annual self-evaluation by the school, 57% of the interviewed school leaders did not conduct self-evaluation of educational activities in their institution [6, p. 70-71].

Therefore, the internal system of ensuring the quality of education is a dynamic mechanism that functions in the legal field and is constantly being improved. The efficiency of the work of both a specific educational institution and general secondary education as a whole depends on its effectiveness.

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