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**EXPERIMENTAL DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION
OF APPLIED BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM**

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Abstract

The article is devoted to modern research in the field of Russian standards of professional education. The experience of conducting educational events is discerned as in the case of the Moscow Banking College of Russian Academy of National Economy and Public Administration under the President of the Russian Federation. In addition, statistics of psychological testing and the results are described. The article contains the main guidelines for extracurricular activity. It considers specifics of professional education in view of the Russian cultural and historical trends as well as scientific progress and modern educational techniques. The pilot project will be used as practically oriented educational standards which meet employers' requirements.

Keywords

Creativity – Educational standard – Professional education – Practical education

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Introduction

Social worldview is rapidly changing. Institutional processes imply “building and development of a civil society through shaping social relationships which are most favorable both for each individual and the nation as a whole, all this involves formation, already on the level of basic education, of present-day vital competences of innovative behavior, development of flexible individual programs. In a broad sense, education means a process or a product “that has a formative effect on the mind, character or physical ability of an individual. In its technical sense, education is the process by which society deliberately transmits its cultural legacy – accumulated knowledge, values and skills – from one generation to another”.¹

Current reforms in the Russian educational system are innovative by nature and aimed at matching the requirements of domestic economic development and employers’ demands on the one hand, and the results of vocational training on the other. In addition, their implementation contributes to the integration of Russia into the international educational community. Since the Russian Federation joined the Bologna Process, the national educational policy has become oriented towards integration into the global educational environment.

A significant part in estimation and prediction of the newly formed models is played by the federal authorities such as the RF Government and the RF Ministry of Education and Science. This process combines both international integration and internal unification tendencies. Vocational training is a wide sphere of education aimed at practice-oriented professional training in the fields of producing material and immaterial goods. An illustration of such a combination may be a Cooperation Agreement between the National Research University - Higher School of Economics and the Moscow Banking School (College) of the Bank of Russia. It was signed in March 2010 with the goal to establish partnership and cooperation while carrying out the experiment in introducing applied baccalaureate degrees. The project participants were chosen through a selection process initiated by the Russian Governmental Regulation #667 “On carrying out an experiment to develop applied baccalaureate degrees in vocational educational institutions and universities” (August 19, 2009).² The RF Ministry of Education and Science Order # 463 from May 4, 2010, listed 30 winners – educational institutions that became part of this pilot project.³

New standards of Russian education

Analysis of higher vocational education has revealed the need for Russia to join the Bologna Declaration in 2003. Among one of the outcomes, our educational community has got new Federal Educational Standards of higher vocational education (3rd generation) followed by their first results. Starting from the 1st of September 2011, Russian education system has been working in accordance with the third generation standards. From 2000 till 2011, higher educational institutions in the Russian Federation based their activity on the Federal Educational Standards of higher vocational education (2nd generation standards)

¹ G. F. Kneller, Introduction to the Philosophy of Education (N.Y.: John Wiley and Sons, 1971).

² Official website of the National Observatory on Vocational Education and Training of the Russian Federation. Retrieved April, 21, 2020 from: URL: <http://www.cvets.ru/materials>

³ Official website of the Ministry of education and science of the Russian Federation. Retrieved April, 21, 2020 from: URL: <http://mon.gov.ru>

which included the following requirements to basic academic programs in undergraduate (bachelor) and graduate (master) training of specialists: qualification description of a graduate in accordance with the requirements listed in the Qualification Directory of managers, specialists and other types of employees No 37 approved by the RF Labor Ministry of 21st of August 1998; a set of materials of basic academic programs including the syllabus, course and practice plans, regional component, and final state attestation.⁴

For the time being, such a structure was a step forward from the previous educational pattern, though it lacked mobility. The “renewal”, introduced by the third generation standards, has a number of major prerequisites such as: up-to-date requirements to college and university graduates within the frameworks of Russian and International labor organization; adjusted didactic units which determine the conceptual content of humanities, social and economic disciplines; increased necessity of interdisciplinary definitions in state requirements to the level of graduates’ qualification; exclusion of requirements to students’ knowledge and skills determined on the level of intermediate (course) evaluation and transition to interdisciplinary cluster requirements to the graduate; necessity to adjust the content of didactic units related to humanities, social and economic disciplines, and later – to description of basic conceptual content of liberal education through the thesaurus of social and humanitarian knowledge; lack of university academic freedom in designing academic programs while creating possibilities for compatibility of first two years of education in related academic programs for the sake of increased academic mobility for students.⁵

Thus, the 3rd generation standards should be oriented towards the following goals:

to ensure unified federal requirements to academic programs and conditions of their realization throughout Russia, continuity of various levels of academic programs and their consistency in the historically established culture of academic programs design; to be more demanding when developing the content of academic programs by all types of educational institutions, and also develop the ways of more objective evaluation of their activity; to expand academic freedoms for educational institutions and take into consideration the peculiarities of designing academic programs for research and teacher training.⁶

The new educational standards distinguish common cultural competencies and professionally-oriented objectives in each type of professional activity. The fundamental difference between the 2nd and 3rd generation standards is that the latter are oriented towards educational outcomes. The goals reflect educational demands of the individual, society and state. The standards define “competence” as ability to apply knowledge, skills and personal qualities to act effectively in a specific area. Common (universal) competences are necessary both in professional area and beyond it. Professionally oriented (special) competences are required for professional activity.

Educational outcomes are determined by the following basic areas: personality development – to advance individual moral, emotional, aesthetic and physical values and

⁴ Shaping political and historical awareness of future economists: experience, problems and prospects: scientific papers. Moscow. Finakademiya. 2010.

⁵ O. N. Oleynikova; A. A. Muravyova; Yu. V. Konovalova y E. V. Sartakova, Modular technologies: educational programs design and development. 2nd edition, revised and extended (Moscow. Alfa-M., 2010).

⁶ A. G. Asmolov, “Social changes vector”, Educational policy, num 1 (2010): 2-4.

qualities; social development – to bring up civil, democratic and patriotic beliefs as well as acquire basic social norms; general cultural development – to study fundamentals of sciences, home and world culture; intellectual development – to develop intellectual qualities, acquire methodology of cognition, strategies and ways of learning and self-learning; communicative development – to shape the ability and readiness of fluent communication in Russian, native and foreign languages, master modern ways of verbal and nonverbal communication.⁷

We emphasize the importance of common competences which will contribute to raising educated, moral and industrious people. The list of common competences (which is not yet complete) includes the following: ability to raise general and professional level, to explore, without assistance, new methods of research; ability to change one's professional qualification; ability to acquire, without assistance, new knowledge and skills; ability to make organizational and management decisions as well as assess their consequences; to be fluent in one or several foreign languages as means of professional communication; to have skills of public, business and scientific communication.⁸

By realizing educational projects, national research universities gradually move away from the traditional formal way of teaching (by means of lectures and seminars). Practical outcomes of an educational process demand such active ways of teaching and learning as master classes, research workshops, participation in students' research, student mobility programs.

However, the traditional way of teaching systemic knowledge by offering a certain amount of course material is not to be entirely excluded. In terms of knowledge systematization, it is quite sensible to develop integrated sets of academic disciplines (subjects) with their respective competences.

The academic curriculum of higher vocational education includes theoretical series of disciplines in humanities, social sciences and economy, as well as in mathematics and sciences, it also includes a number of professionally-oriented courses. The curriculum includes teaching philosophy, history, law, foreign languages, psychology, sociology, the Russian language and speech standards, mathematics, informational technologies, economics, etc. Each of these disciplines, depending on the content of an academic program, is aimed at development of both common and professional competencies of the future graduate. The total number of defined competencies in the Russian educational standards is about 50.

The range of competencies is not fixed and determined by each university in the competence-based academic syllabus of the basic academic program. A certain share of competence formation is linked to practical modules. A more detailed description of required competences may be found in course and practical training plans.

We will see the gap between the declaration of the necessity and the reality expressed in a set of competencies where ten out of fifteen competencies are related

⁷ I. A. Chuklebova, "Basics of pedagogical supervision in education and upbringing process of higher educational institution", Standards and monitoring in education, num 3 (2010): 57-60.

⁸ O. N. Oleynikova; A. A. Muravyova; Yu. V. Konovalova y E. V. Sartakova, Modular technologies: educational programs design and development. 2nd edition, revised and extended (Moscow. Alfa-M., 2010).

strictly to “economic knowledge”. Does this educational institution (institution of higher education) offer additional possibilities to acquire competencies within the framework of academic programs? Yes, for example:

- research workshops, project-based training laboratories and research laboratories in liberal arts;
- students’ theoretical and applied science conferences (including international conferences), general academic electives, winter and summer schools and field trips;
- competitions, discussions, panels involving Russian and foreign colleagues, students’ ratings (based on credits and grades), individuals consultations given by the faculty.

Overview of Research

The most important indicator determining the long-term development of society in one direction or another is the quality of education. The quality of education determines the image of any university, its competitiveness, the ability to attract intellectual and material resources and to create the necessary conditions for further improvement of the quality of education. The sphere of education has become one of the main directions of development of the leading countries of the world, reflecting the educational needs of individuals, society and the state, allowing a person to achieve a high position in society, improve the intellectual resource of society, which is a basic component of social and economic well-being of the state.⁹ Globalization of undergraduate education changes the key characteristics of the university, placing different requirements on it.¹⁰ Modern education systems require to learn to transform themselves and society.¹¹ Researches of authors have shown importance of education for development of modern skills in sphere of digital economy, ecology, culture.¹² Analysis of management of higher education institutions shows the need to pay attention to the applied skills of students.¹³

An important point is the renewal of educational standards, the creation of new areas of Bachelor's and Master's training taking into account national policies.¹⁴ Deem, R.,

⁹ O. Urzha; V. Kataeva y T. Evstratova, Sociology of governance as a methodology for developing scenarios for simulation case studies in the governance training system. Economic and Social Development Book of Proceedings, edited by Editors: A. Maloletko, N. Rucpic, Z. Baracska. 2018. 627-636.

¹⁰ P. G. Altbach y J. Salmi, The Road to Academic Excellence: The Making of World Class Research Universities (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 2011).

¹¹ Angel Deroncele Acosta; Mercedes Nagamine Miyashiro y Daniela Medina Coronado, “Bases epistemológicas y metodológicas para el abordaje del pensamiento crítico en la educación peruana”, Revista Inclusiones Vol: 7 num Especial (2020): 68-87.

¹² T. V. Fomicheva; V. I. Kataeva; Ju. O. Sulyagina; T. A. Evstratova y M. G. Chardymsky, “Digitization of the population in Russia: technologies and levels of interaction”, International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering num 2 (2019): 4728-4731; M. S. Baynova; A. V. Petrov y E. A. Vetrova, Modern estimate of environmental ethics and sustainable development issues. In Ecological Agriculture and Sustainable Development, edited by M. Radovich. 2019: 9-16 y M. Baynova; P. Palekhova; A. Petrov y A. Petrova, “Cultural globalization, consumer society and fashion industry in Russia: new socio-historical trends”, Wisdom, Vol: 13 num 2 (2019): 146-154.

¹³ M. Kozyrev; T. Bogacheva; E. Jukova y P. Palekhova, “Analysis of Management of Higher Education Institutions”, European Journal of Contemporary Education num 8(4) (2019): 801-809.

¹⁴ I. Bleiklie y R. Hostaker, “Modernizing research training-education and science policy between profession, discipline and academic institution”, Higher Education Policy, Vol: 17, num. 2 (2004): 221-236 y A. F. Galimullina; F. G. Galimullin; V. Y. Meliksetyan y G. F. Kayumova, The Role of

Mok, K. H., & Lucas, L. analyze the restructuring of the existing higher education system by governments in Europe and Asia to create a "world-class" university.¹⁵ Frank, D. J., D. J., & Gabler, J. believe that the legitimate path to power and access to resources within an increasingly professional and formally organized society lies through mandatory educational activities.¹⁶

Materials and Methods

The project of Applied Baccalaureate Program in banking college has began from 2010. On September 1, 2010, 50 young people (20 men and 30 women) were enrolled in the pilot applied baccalaureate program in accordance with the quota granted by the Bank of Russia. They were selected in accordance with their test results, called Unified State Exams (introduced on the nationwide scale and known as EGE), which in itself is an example of innovative changes in the Russian educational policy¹⁷. The rate was 2.3 potential students per one place.

The average RNE grade (an equivalent of Grade Point Average) of the Applied Baccalaureate Program students was 73 (out of 100). In this paper, we will focus on the most significant areas of this pilot project or on the so-called "three pillars" namely, 1) students, 2) curriculum, and 3) extracurricular activities. Our students are high school graduates from various regions and provinces of Russia (31 regions), and also from Moscow itself. The main foreign language they study is English.

At the graduation level after four years of studies students are expected to possess certain qualification competences (and meet the following descriptors):

- In general training - to be ready for their professional activities which means being able to set forth goals, to define specific tasks, and to ensure coordination between departments within a company;
- In terms of acquiring certain skills, they should possess such skills as problem-solving, development, implementation, adaptation and optimization of technologies and technological processes, assessment and correction of different components in their professional activities;
- In research-oriented activities, synthesis of professional, including innovative knowledge and practical experience; independent ability to search, analyze, and assess professionally related information.

The specific forms of qualification competences find their reflection in structurally and logically designed syllabi offered to the students. During the first semester they study the following subjects: Microeconomics, Corporate Economics, History, Mathematical Analysis, Linear Algebra, Administrative Documentation Management, and a foreign

Interactive Technologies in Training Future Teachers of Russian Literature. In V International forum of teacher education, IFTE 2019. Edited by R. Valeeva. Kazan. 2019. 181-189.

¹⁵ R. Deem; K. H. Mok y L. Lucas, "Transforming higher education to whose image? Exploring the concept of 'world class' university in Europe and Asia", Higher Education Policy, Vol: 21, num. 1 (2008): 83-97.

¹⁶ D. J. Frank & J. Gabler, *Reconstructing the University: Worldwide Shifts in the 20th Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).

¹⁷ Official website of the Central Bank of the Russian Federation. Retrieved April, 21, 2020 from: URL: <http://www.cbr.ru>

language. During the second term they study Macroeconomics, Accounting, Mathematical Analysis (continued), Psychology, one foreign language (taught for three years), Sociology, Probability Theory and Mathematical Statistics, Statistics, Information Technologies in professional activities, History of Economic Thought, Financial Institutions, and Physical Education. Among the professionally oriented disciplines, microeconomics presented the major difficulty for students. The average final grade in professionally oriented disciplines was 3.2 out of 5. This might be explained by complicity of professional terminology, lack of skills in taking college exams and, obviously, lack of time for proper preparation. The students demonstrated highest results in corporate economics and history; good results were in English. The first term final results showed that 46 students successfully completed the program while four students were expelled.

On the whole, the theoretical part of the program is split into cycles specified by the Federal Educational Standards. The main pilot idea and the challenge were to design such an educational program that will meet the requirements of both higher (university) and secondary vocational educational standards. It became possible due to a certain status of the Higher School of Economics which, being a national research university, has the right to develop and implement its own educational standards.

The academic program of Applied Baccalaureate is a collective innovative product featuring consistent and integrated set of educational components. 20 theoretical courses, 2 sets of optional courses are conducted by the faculty of the Higher School of Economics while the Moscow Banking School is in charge of another 12 theoretical courses, 1 set of optional courses, and 9 professionally oriented modules, and Physical Education. The students should submit two course projects, pass a state exam in the field of Economics, and prepare a graduation paper.

A complete academic program lasts four years and includes 240 credits. Each student gains 60 credits per year. One of the main requirements of the competition is to offer the 50% share of practical training which includes laboratory work, workshops, course projects, field experience (training and practical work according to specialization, including graduation field practice). There are 9 professionally oriented modules: cash accounting, bank deposits accounting, clearing transactions, payments and payment arrangements by means of settlements accounts, credit operations, transactions on the securities market, issuing and cash transactions in banks, internal bank transactions, bank monetary and credit policy transactions. Their total value is 60 credits. Each module includes a theoretical set, training and practical work experience according to specialization (each module ranges from 4 to 8 credits), and an exam at the end.

The optional set (with the total of 17 credits) includes the courses which supplement the core academic program by offering up-to-date specialized bank technologies such as personnel management in the Bank of Russia, banking risk management, practical work on applied economic research, etc. Practically oriented part of the academic program includes work experience (according to specialization) – 15 credits, and graduation field practice – 6 credits. Having successfully presented the graduation paper and passed “Economics” as a required state exam (final state attestation – 9 credits), such students are awarded a degree in economics, the qualification of Bachelor of Economics, a specialist in banking. Courses, which are oriented towards practice, are of special interest since they are aimed at professional practically oriented competences’ development. 50 educational programs constitute the didactical provisions of the experiment.

The didactical provisions description of the applied baccalaureate program will not be complete if we do not mention the opportunity (which is now being created) for the students (especially in the practically oriented part of the program) to make use of the “STUDY BANK” educational software complex which is kind of a controlled banking activities simulator. It imitates (in the study mode) operational, informational, and analytical banking processes to help students consolidate their theoretical knowledge and develop professional competences. The faculty consists of doctors and candidates of science, PhD holders, and senior lecturers with extensive experience in banking business, as well as practicing instructors. The immediate customer and the potential employer of the graduates of Applied Baccalaureate Program – the Central Bank of the Russian Federation – shows a lot of interest in this experiment. Based on the results of the program, its graduates will gain priority in getting a job in the system of the Bank of Russia. All this demonstrates the efficiency of the modern labor market model, which prefers practically oriented specialists who are, while working professionally, at the same time constantly expanding high-quality theoretical knowledge obtained in a higher vocational educational institution. And finally, the “third pillar” of the project, which is related to extracurricular activities and carried out at both university and college, level, ensuring students’ mobility. Last school year our students took part and presented papers at the International students’ conference on the topic, “The role of the Central Bank during the world financial crisis and development tendencies of financial market, banking system, labor market, and industries” which was held in Moscow, in the conference hall of the Central Bank of the Russian Federation (March 17-19, 2011).

We also wondered what the students of our program thought about studying here. To find out, we spread out a questionnaire, and the result was very similar to our expectations. The students find the program rewarding, they have made friends; half of the students imagined the classes exactly as they found them in reality. However, though the faculty present the material in an understandable and accessible way and the students find answers to the questions asked to them, the students say that studying here is not easy, and they have to find additional time to get ready for classes and workshops. Last winter term exams showed that the students experienced more problems with the university instructors.

An opinion of students about the University:	An opinion of students about the College:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unique learning environment which depicts the motto, <i>We are studying for our sake, not for the sake of the school.</i> - The library with electronic resources typical for world renowned universities. - Wonderful instructors, demanding in their teaching but always fair. - Optional courses and electives, interesting extracurricular students’ events. - Delicious pastries and coffee at the university cafeteria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Home-like environment, an excellent dormitory. - Practically oriented education, highly qualified faculty. - A chance to present at an international conference and to visit the Central Bank museum of monetary history. - Participation in the students’ sports competition of banking schools. - Winter camps. - Field practice in Germany for our best students; “Summer baccalaureate School” in St. Petersburg, our northern capital. The school will include lectures of the leading banking experts as well as tours to the “banking” sites, to the Mint House, St. Petersburg centralized cash settlement center.

Table 1
Responses from the students about the education
Source: authors research

The project organizers created the most favorable conditions for the students to get maximum benefit from the educational program, to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills, and evaluate their own growing professional capital in a specific social environment.

Conclusion

University education implies a certain set of competencies, which meet a number of social requirements to train and develop a qualified specialist. Indeed, common competencies are present and even expanded in university academic programs. However, moral education should remain a constant process of personality formation in family, social and other forms of education.

The majority of university students are young adults with diverse social characteristics including problems of moral development and upbringing that are vital for the social life of the modern Russia. The youth is that social stratum that inherits the society's socialization and value-based guidelines (including professional ones). In conclusion, let me repeat one more time. We do hope that the results of this pilot project will be widely used as practically oriented educational standards which meet employers' requirements.

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