Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union
TRIGGER: 617309-EPP-1-2020-1-SK-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

WP3: Establishment/Enhancement of the Careers, Employability and Enterprise Services (CEES)

D 3.1 Report on graduate's employability support through careers, employability and enterprise services at Namangan Institute of Engineering and Technology in Uzbekistan

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Acknowledgement: TRIGGER is co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union under Grant Agreement № 617309-EPP-1-2020-1-SK-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

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1. General information on Namangan Institute of Engineering and Technology

Namangan Institute of Engineering and Technology (NIET) is a public higher educational institution which is one of 3 HEIs located in Namangan city of Uzbekistan.

NIET consists of 6 faculties and currently pursuing education in 3 cycles: 31 bachelor programs, 18 master programs, and 8 PhD programs. Studies are held in 8 study building in 2 campuses. Except 6 study buildings, the main campus also contains a stadium, a sports hall, 2 canteens and a student dormitory.

The institute has been expanding rapidly over the last 3 years and as of 2021 the figures are as follows:

Students

Bachelor students – 6623

Master students – 308

PhD students - 62

Teaching staff

Doctors of Sciences (DSc) – 25

Doctors of Philosophy (PhD) – 125

Senior teachers – 81

Assistant teachers - 87

Rector stands on the top of NIET's hierarchy, assisted by 4 vice-rectors in educational, scientific, youth, and financial issues. Each faculty has a dean who has 2 vice-deans in educational and in moral issues. Faculties consist of several departments formed stemming from the speciality and subjects. Departments' staff consist of a department head, professors and technical staff.

The establishment was first founded as a branch textile institute in 70s and in 1992 became independent with the title of Namangan Institute of Engineering and Economics. As a result of reforms in higher education in Uzbekistan, the institute received the current name. Since the beginning of the establishment, the textile and light industry sphere of the institute has been unique in Fergana Valley (Fergana, Andijan and Namangan regions), and one of three in Uzbekistan.

Because of the governmental support to develop textile and light industry sphere in Uzbekistan with the purpose of increasing the ready products from cotton instead of exporting it as a raw material, the number of textile enterprises has increased in Namangan region as well.

2. Information on audit.

Number of persons involved – 18

The job position and experiences of persons involved (experienced in the CEES or not...) – 8 deans and vice-deans, 4 administrative personnel, 6 teaching staff.

The duration of audit (start and end of implementation) – 1 month

The description of audit realisation (Was it just a survey, or did you organize focus group/ interviews to gather information....) – The questionnaires have been presented in person to each respondent within required category.

The main observation form audit and recommendations for further steps – The experience of conducting survey with questionnaires showed that respondents found the questionnaire to be longer i.e. have more questions than expected. It was recommended that for further improvisation of the survey, questionnaire should have less number of questions for the staff and professors to accomplish the answers without feeling extra burden but feeling interested instead.

3. Analysis of graduate's employability support through careers, employability and enterprise services and HEI-business cooperation.

3.1 Framework of Careers, Employability and Enterprise Services in Republic of Uzbekistan on country level

Q.1. Labour ministry is on top of the structure in this sense. It has offices in all regional centres and districts. All enterprises and companiesare supposed to give information on vacancies on regular basis to a governmental body of statistics, and this info is used by employment system in the country. People can address to employment offices in their districts and can get directed if there is available vacancy or can get registered for the office to inform them upon the availability of related job vacancy. Nowadays reforms are taking place in the country in this regard as well.

3.2 Current Careers, Employability and Enterprise Services in HEIs in the country on HEI level

Services and activities relating to enhancing student and graduate employability

Organisational structure, number of staff, scope and main activities of the career and liaison office of the NIET

Activities related to or similar with career services at NIET are carried out by the "Department for the formation of a portfolio of orders, distribution of graduates for work and monitoring" deals with issues related to career services. The department was previously called (and still known to most) as "Marketing" department. 3 staff are engaged in the department: head of department, and 2 assistants. There main responsibility is to form portfolio of orders for specialists, announcing job vacancies for graduates, and conduct statistics of employment of fresh graduates. Starting from 2022, similarly with other public HEIs in Uzbekistan, NIET established career centre, whose plans/activities has yet to be developed. TRIGGER experience could have a great contribution in this sense.

HEI strategy on matters of employment and career of students and graduates

NIET has relations with textile and other industries. Students carry out their practical studies (internships) in those enterprises, which give them the opportunity to get to know the company closer, and to show their abilities in order to get employed after graduation. As NIET is expanding year by year, graduates, who wish to continue their studies, can join master's or PhD studies and start their activities as a teacher of NIET upon completion of their studies.

- Support offered to students and graduates on their professional development

NIET organises information sessions for graduates on available job positions. It is mainly at local level. Nowadays, there are websites on job vacancies on country level. Institute's Marketing department regularly makes posts on news/announcement board about new vacancies.

NIET gives consultations to students and graduates, which is usually done by teachers of their department. Professional consultants with the knowledge of psychology are not yet available at the institute. As mentioned earlier, career centre has been established and its personnel content and activities should be formed up. TRIGGER experience could be highly used.

It can be stated that Individual consultations the service is available at certain level for talented and language-skilled students and graduates. However, it still is not a service where any student can address in order to get answer to their questions. Thus the service needs development.

NIET only has informational database of partner employers at different academic departments. Department of sciences usually sums up this information. It is not a platform or a database with a possibility of providing students' or teachers' access to it online. NIET has to concentrate on the issue and develop an online database of employers.

NIET holds seminars for students and graduates to support their development academically and professionally. Organizing additional courses, and competitions in order to support and stimulate students and graduates is carried out very rarely.

Support offered to students and graduates on their educational development

NIET provides information to students and graduates on postgraduate programmes at national universities through the department of sciences and at international Universities through international relations department.

NIET keeps students informed about scholarships at national and international level.

Most answers show that NIET holds seminars for students and graduates to support their development academically and professionally. Minority answers pointed out that the institute organizes additional courses, and competitions in order to support and stimulate students and graduates.

Measures of tracking academic and professional progress of students and graduates

NIET currently does not have alumni database or a platform, although some alumni information can be found in "Marketing" department. Based on requirements the Marketing department keeps record of graduates who get employed in order to show the necessity for the fields of studies. In general, the activity needs improvement.

NIET alumni with high achievement is invited to the institute for meeting with students. The activity needs improvement.

Additional information of services currently offered by the HEI on Careers, Employability and Enterprise cooperation

NIET and company relations should be developed further: companies' demands should be studied, more internships should be organised, more meetings should be held with companies to exchange views.

Services and activities relating to development of employability skills

Activities on employability skills development of students and graduates as part of organised social activities

Career days are organized at NIET where students can have communication with business representatives. Respondents' views differ in terms of which companies are invited normally. In any case, companies are invited through official letters, and/or calls if they are close partners.

Marketing department has some activities related to labour market i.e. in touch with statistics office of the region. It can be part of research. Professors of the academic department of "Marketing" occasionally publish their scientific articles with relevance to labour market. But regular research and publication on labour market is not yet provided at NIET.

Support offered to students and graduates on national or international mobility programmes

Department of sciences and international relations department usually spread information on mobility opportunities. Stemming from the needs to increase the number of mobilities, management board gives instructions to relevant departments to support its students in preparing their documents for mentioned programs.

- **Services and activities relating to development of innovation and entrepreneurial skills**

NIET has a unit for supporting students with innovative and entrepreneurial ideas. NIET has different departments which can serve in this regard: department of science and innovations, department of working with talented students, department of innovation and transfers. These all departments have been rendering support to students in innovation and entrepreneurship through stimulating their participation in competitions.

There are no workshops are organised at NIET on regular basis on innovation and entrepreneurship matters.

NIET organises competitions for students on entrepreneurship or innovation ideas. The competitions are mainly based on the calls announced by the Ministry of innovations.

NIET provides relevant materials to students and graduates, on issues of innovation and entrepreneurship. Positive answers differ in pointing out how the mentioned materials are communicated. Students in economics spheres have it in their subject, while for others the communication is through involvement in projects. Improvement is needed in communicating mentioned materials to students in non-economics spheres.

NIET needs improvement in supporting business efforts of students and graduates.

Organisational structure, number of staff, scope and main activities of innovation and entrepreneurship office

There is no department at NIET under this title. The department of talented students work with them by involving their participation in start-up and other scientific projects.

Services offered to students and graduates to develop their entrepreneurial skills

There are no specific services offered to students to develop their entrepreneurial skills. Entrepreneurial education for spheres in economics and announcement of calls for projects offered by the Ministry of Innovation can be the activities at NIET which can be related to this service..

- Activities to support innovation and entrepreneurship of students and graduates

Organizing competitions based on calls for projects offered by the Ministry of Innovation.

Services and activities relating to establishing cooperation relationships with businesses

Liaison activities of the HEI with employability organisations

NIET's marketing department is approaches statistics office, regional offices of the Ministry of labour, while academic departments also communicate with partnering companies.

Networking activities with businesses

NIET participates in networking actions with business entities through different exhibitions. NIET needs improvement in networking actions with businesses, and disseminate those activities widely among the staff.

NIET regularly organises educational visits to companies and enterprises.

NIET facilitates the networking between students/graduates and business representatives by organizing meetings, seminars and trainings.

Mentoring programme offered by the NIET

Students are selected through interviews depending on the speciality of the student.

Services offered to employers

NIET organises meetings between students and employers and provides employers with the information on students. There is a need for a platform with partner employers for organizing internships and other activities. **Additional information on cooperation procedures with companies** Companies should be involved in developing curriculum. Scientific department should be organized at companies which can directly be in touch with NIET in terms of research and innovation.

3.3 SWOT analyses of graduate's employability support through careers, employability and enterprise services at NIET.

STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES**
- The marketing department deals with statistics of employment of graduates by taking information on every single graduate.	- No online database, not enough study of labour market - The marketing department's activities are oriented more towards statistics rather than the interest of students. - At times, at entrance stage applicants chose their specialty not only according to their own interests or in accordance with the labor market, but where the probability is high to join the university. -
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS**
- Online database of vacancies and job opportunities has to be established.	- Consultations based on insufficient information about labour market.

SWOT analyses of HEI cooperation with institutions outside HEI at CA HEIs.

STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES**

- Organizing educational visits to industries. - The marketing department signs agreements on conducting internships at the enterprise between the institute and enterprises. - Some of the students who practiced at the enterprise have the opportunity to show their knowledge and skills, and are hired on a permanent basis.	- Lack of networking actions between students and businesses - Contracts with enterprises on student internships are not fully operational, enterprises are not interested in spending time and resources on student internships. - There is no interest (benefit) for enterprises in conducting practices at the legislative level. - Students choose companies for internships closer to their place of residence, since travel, accommodation costs and other needs associated with internship are not taken into account anywhere. - - There is no sufficient labor market for some specialties.
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS**
- Improvement of mentorship procedures and activities. (where mentor belongs to industry and mentee is a student).	- Preparing specialists with the lack of communication with employers, with the lack of knowledge on surrounding labour market.

3.4 The suggestions for improvement of graduate's employability support through careers, employability and enterprise services at NIET to develop and disseminate a career, employment and entrepreneurship strategy

- Establishing online database of vacancies and job opportunities has to be established.
- Strengthening research on labour market.
- Establishing database on alumni
- The departments structure and activities should be reviewed and enhanced.
- Establishing closer ties with relevant organizations and being aware of news on social networks related to vacancies.

3.5 The suggestions for improvement of HEI cooperation with institutions outside NIET

- Improvement of mentorship procedures and activities. (where mentor belongs to industry and mentee is a student)
- Establishing networking between students and businesses.
- Involving businesses in developing the content of modules.

4. Analyses of Internship

4.1 Institutional framework of internships on country level

There are rules for internships of students at university level and at the national level. University level requirements are based on the national level requirements.

There any mandatory internship requirements set by ministries.

4.2 Current internship programmes on HEI level

Management and administration of internships

Measures and requirements for student internships
Rules at the university level for organizing student practice. Requirements are based on the requirement set by the ministry.
Internships´ duration, focus and credits offered
Duration of internship is usually 1-2 months. NIET is only stepping towards the credit system.
Management of internships
Internship is mainly managed by speciality departments of students. Supervisors are appointed at both institute and a company. Agreement is signed between NIET and company.
Administration procedures

Companies are selected stemming from the specialty, interest and living area of students. And it is carried out on the basis of contract signed between NIET and company. Goals, working program and internship plan is also worked out prior to starting the internship.

Additional information on management and administration of internships (Q B13)

Mentor is appointed from company staff, monitoring is done by university department once a week.

Support given to students

Training activities to support internships

Instructions are given to students before internship.

Support given to students on finding internship positions

Students usually conduct internships at NIET's partner companies, and also at companies towards which the students have interest. Companies do not organize or announce internship positions.

- Development of entrepreneurial skills through internships (Q B9)

Competencies and skills should be developed during the internship. This aspect has not been observed yet although some skills might develop with student during internship.

Monitoring and evaluation of internships

Management procedures during internships

Contact can be established between responsible teacher and company staff, appointed as responsible. Daily monitoring and weekly monitoring is available. Student gives report at the end of the internship.

- Procedures for evaluation of internships

Evaluation is done by supervisor at the institute based on the report provided by the student and feedback provided by the supervisor at company.

4.3 SWOT analyses of internship programmes.

STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES**
- Partnering textile companies are interested in taking interns from the institute to check the student's ability as they are interested in employing them after graduation. NIET is unique in Fergana valley in terms of preparing light industry engineers. - Programs are being developed for internships for students. - There is cooperation between enterprises and the institute. -	- Lack of trainings for supervisors. - The developed internship programs are compiled by teachers who do not take into account the interests and proposals of enterprises. - Cooperation between the institute and the enterprise is mostly on paper, not all tasks are solved in practice.
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREADS**
- Trainings should be organized for supervisors at both sides: university, company. - When developing internship programs, it is necessary to take into account the ideas, proposals and interests of enterprises. - It is necessary to allocate a separate staff for the development of documentation and control of the internship by students. Currently, this is done by teachers who are teaching at the same time.	- Unsafe conditions at industries. Lack of monitoring. - The interests of enterprises do not always coincide with the interests of the institute - A separate staff requires the allocation of additional financial resources, in which the institutions are not interested.

4.4. The suggestions for improvement of internship programmes at NIET

- Internship programs have to be updated regularly depending on the needs of companies.
- Skills gaps should be considered while developing internship program.

- Mentors on both sides have to get in touch regularly regarding the progress of the student.
- If possible, the internship activities of a graduate student has to be directly related to his/her final thesis.
- Mentors have to be in touch with students regularly to learn what they are satisfied and what they are not satisfied with during the internship activities, in order to improve the quality of future internships.

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