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## **STUDENTS PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL: THE PRACTICAL ASPECT**

The present paper investigates the necessity of students performance appraisal in higher education institutions. The practical aspect is accentuated and the system of rating control in the foreign language teaching process, its benefits and drawbacks are described.

**Keywords:** foreign language teaching, basic professional educational programs, students' competences formation, student' performance appraisal, the rating system of control.

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## **ОЦЕНКА УСПЕВАЕМОСТИ УЧАЩИХСЯ: ПРАКТИЧЕСКИЙ АСПЕКТ**

В данной статье рассматривается необходимость проведения оценки успеваемости учащихся высших учебных заведений. Особое внимание в данной статье уделяется практическому аспекту данного вопроса, а также достоинствам и недостаткам рейтинговой системы контроля успеваемости в процессе обучения иностранному языку.

**Ключевые слова:** обучение иностранному языку, основные профессиональные образовательные программы, формирование компетенций студентов, оценки успеваемости учащихся, рейтинговая система контроля успеваемости.

The quality of education directly influences the effectiveness of future professional activity and is intended to provide the necessary level of training specialists who are able to apply the received knowledge for solving professional tasks. One of the factors of improving the quality of education is the monitoring and assessment of students' competencies (knowledge, skills, and personal qualities) [2]. Assessment of level of students' competences formation should be undertaken throughout the period of study, including entrance testing, all types of intermediate

control and final examination. To conduct various types of monitoring and students' and graduates' knowledge evaluation the fund of assessment tools is developed. The fund of assessment tools is a complex of methodical materials for estimating the level of students' competences formation at various stages of their training for compliance or non-compliance of their training level with requirements of the federal state standards in the field of appropriate educational programs.

The learning process implies the existence of goals and outcomes as well as the necessary tools for measuring the degree of conformity of the achieved results with planned targets. The content of assessment tools depends primarily on the applied evaluation system and criteria for evaluation.

The traditional grading system does not always reflect the qualitative changes in students' knowledge and skills. In recent years, in the educational process of Universities, a system of rating control as a way of the objective assessment of students' competences formation is applied.

The rating system has long been used in European countries. In our country the issue of assessment rating system introduction in higher education institutions was studied and analyzed by V.P. Bespalko, A.F. Guseva, M.T. Gromova, R.J. Kasimov, A.V. Levin, N.K. Gaidai, V.I. Ogorelkov, A.F. Safonov, etc. In the context of students' competences formation, the rating refers to the system of assessing the quality of academic work of cumulative type, which reflects the student learning outcomes for a certain period of training.

The purpose of the developing and implementing the rating system of knowledge and skills control in high school is a comprehensive, timely, systematic and objective assessment of the academic work quality and achievements of the students mastering the basic educational programs of higher school.

The main task of the rating system is the creation of a complex of stimulating factors for enhancement of students' motivation to mastering the educational programs by way of higher differentiation of estimating the knowledge level at each stage of the learning. Currently there is no consensus about how to shape the rating. Different authors propose different approaches when calculating the rating. But a

common approach is that the evaluation scale on the subject (or module) should be developed in the framework of the basic professional educational program with the account for motivational incentives and requirements for knowledge and skills, in accordance with the program material. The English Language Department of the Siberian Transport University (STU) has already been successfully practicing the control rating system to assess the level of foreign language competence for 20 years. To implement this system in each term, «Student's Activities Structure» was composed (see Figure 1).

This goal was accomplished as follows:

1. The entire course of study in each discipline includes several structural-logical modules, and all training activities for the development of these modules in the term were grouped into four categories: Session Activity, Tests, Homework, Language Laboratory.

2. In each category the activities on which it is necessary to conduct student's performance appraisal were identified. The choice of activities subject to control depends on the program and training material. Examples of such so-called 'control points' for the discipline 'Professional English Language' (major 'Economics', specialization 'International Business', term 6) are Topic Presentation, Case Study, Terminology Test, Reading Comprehension Test, Computer Testing, Essay and Project Work. 'Control points' in the student's activities structure are aimed at implementing of a certain competence formation control.

3. Each 'control point' is given its maximum 'value' (score), and the maximum score that a student can get is 100. All the 'control points' and the score are reflected in the table 'Student's Activities Structure'. Students get this structure at the first lecture. The structure offers students the algorithm of activities for a certain period of training, helps to organize their work and determine its pace and intensity. Thus, students have the ability to create their own educational activity trajectory, and a rating system of performance appraisal becomes an important tool for the implementing a systematic approach to the study of the discipline [4].

Student's Activities Structure  
 Major 'Economics' Specialization 'International Business, Discipline 'Professional English Language'  
 Year: 2017-2018. Term 6

Student's Name	Group											Teacher's name							Total score					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17							
<b>Session Activity</b> (topic presentation, role play, case study)					TP1	CS1		TP2		TP3		TP4		CS2	TP5	PW	TP6			<b>56</b>				
<b>Tests</b> (achievement test, grammar test, vocabulary test, listening test, language usage tests, business correspondence, contracts, reading comprehension)			RCh 1			VT1			VT2	VT3			RCh 2		RCh 3		VT4		VT5	VT6	<b>35</b>			
<b>Homework</b> (essay, workbook, abstract writing, paper writing)				E1									E2							E3	<b>9</b>			
<b>Language laboratory</b>																								
Class performance																								
Creative work																								
Scores per week			3/	3/	10/	10/	26/	6/	3/	7/	6/	6/	28/54	10/	9/	10/	10/	6			<b>46/100</b>			
<b>Case Study (CS)</b>				7 x 2 = 14			<b>Essays and Topics</b>																	
<b>Reading Comprehension (RCh)</b>				3 x 3 = 9			1. Accounting (E1 + TP1)																	
<b>Project Work (PW)</b>				10 x 1 = 10			2. Banking						Scores:											
<b>Essay (E)</b>				3 x 3 = 9			3. Exchange Rate						90 – 100 – “5”											
<b>Vocabulary Test (VT)</b>				3 x 6 = 18			4. Securities: Shares (E2+TP4)						76 – 89 – “4”											
<b>Computer Test (CT)</b>				4 x 2 = 8			5. Securities: Bonds						60 – 75 – “3”											
<b>Topic Presentation (TP1, TP2, TP4, TP5) (TP3, TP6)</b>				6x 4 = 24 4 x 2 = 8			6. Futures and Derivatives. (E3+TP6)						Менее 60 - “2”											
<b>Creative work</b>				Scores			Project Work:																	
<b>Participation in conferences (STU)</b>				3/5 (Winners)			Where to invest: Financial-economic analyses of financial documents																	
<b>Participation in interuniversity events</b>				5/7 (Winners)			Regional banking system																	
<b>Scientific publications</b>				7/9 (RINC)			Where to invest: analyses of financial markets in Russia																	
<b>Participation in the festival and competitions (STU)</b>				3/6			Academic Performance			Rendering (R-E)			Listening			Vocabulary			Topic			Final Mark		

Figure 1 – Student’s Activities Structure

4. For each type of educational activity evaluation criteria were defined. They are summarized in methodological guidance published by the English Language Department in STU. At the end of the term, these criteria help translate the accumulated final scores to the traditional five-point mark: all scores for the ‘control points’ for the entire period are summed. If the student has 86-100 scores, he receives an excellent mark, 71-85 scores – a good mark, 60-70 scores – a satisfactory mark, less than 60 scores - an unsatisfactory mark. The end-of-term test or an exam includes the assessment of several aspects of foreign language training (Listening, Terminology Test, Rendering, Topic Presentation). The overall rating mark on the current control is also one of the aspects (Academic Performance – see Fig.1) and significantly affects the final mark on the exam, that is an additional motivating factor of learning.

5. Stimulating scores for preparing scientific publications and participation in conferences, competitions and festivals (Creative Work) [5] are introduced.

While implementing this performance appraisal system several difficulties and peculiarities of its application were identified. The main difficulty is the lack of a common approach to the issue within the same University. It prevents an understanding and perception of this system by the students.

The next challenge is to develop common criteria for evaluating different types of activities and interdisciplinary projects under interdepartmental cooperation. Moreover, a significant problem is that using this system is time-and-effort consuming as it requires more detailed procedures for scoring and a more thorough tracking student’s performance by the teacher, since it is necessary to periodically review and improve the system depending on learning conditions and the quality of the student body [1]. It should correspond to new conditions and requirements of modern education. Without this the system will not work effectively.

Despite the above difficulties and problems of rating system introduction, it has a range of benefits in comparison with the conventional appraisal system, as it:

- allows to define the level of mastering the academic material at each stage of training and assess more objectively students' individual achievements during the training period, as this assessment system is based on clear and understandable to students criteria;

- increases the importance of students' performance evaluations in the process of current control and allows to reflect the students' work and effort more objectively;

- encourages students to self-search for and analysis of materials bearing professional character , that stimulates students' scientific research activities, develops such qualities as discipline, critical thinking, the ability to self-education and self-development and promotes students' personal responsibility for the results of their studies [3];

- helps students to develop their individual educational trajectory, to plan their activities in order to achieve the desired results in accordance with their abilities and interests and thereby increase their competence in the field of the discipline;

- allows the teacher to realize the pedagogical process on the basis of the subject-to-subject relations;

- makes, on the one hand, the teacher track students' achievements on an ongoing basis and take into account student's individual abilities and, on the other hand, forces the student to take up the subject systematically, work more actively in class and pay more attention to independent work;

- erases the contradiction between the labor amount and its results. The results achieved and the task performed depends directly on the effort that motivates the student to achieve new goals. Student's self-esteem increases, there is a desire to be more active in learning activities.

Thus, modern education needs a more effective tool for assessing the competences formation, and the rating system, unlike traditional, has additional benefits. The rating system formation in various educational institutions depends on the conditions of implementing the basic professional educational program. A more

objective knowledge assessment, the ability to build the own educational trajectory of development, stimulation of cognitive activity and motivation are factors which help the teacher to organize learning and education processes in the optimal way, to translate the educational process on the subject-to-subject basis and, as a result, enhance the learning process and the quality of education.

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