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D 3.1 Report on graduate's employability support through careers, employability and enterprise services

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Triggering innovative approaches and entrepreneurial skills for students through creating conditions
for graduate's employability in Central Asia

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D3.1 Report on on graduate's employability support through careers, employability and enterprise services

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The Report on graduate's employability support through careers, employability and enterprise services at Namangan Institute of Engineering and Technology

PART 1. General information on Namangan Institute of Engineering and Technology (max. 1 A4)

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.

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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.

PART 2. Information on audit (max. 1 A4)

- *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 from 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.

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

A) Framework of Careers, Employability and Enterprise Services in Uzbekistan (country level) (report here findings from question A1)

Labour ministry is on top of the structure in this sense. It has offices in all regional centres and districts. All enterprises and companies are 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.

B) Current Careers, Employability and Enterprise Services in HEIs in the country (HEI level)

(Report here findings from questions B1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 12, 13, 23, 24, 26, 29)

To sum up the answers it can be concluded that major improvements have to be carried out in services related to graduates' carrier and employability. After the survey, while summing up the results an instruction from the ministry has been received on establishing career centre at the institute which includes plans partly illustrating the career centre related activities of TRIGGER project. Here are some points taken from the purposes of the to-be established career centre which are new to NIET in terms of career and employability services, and at the same time parallel with TRIGGER project purposes to a certain extent:

- to organize and develop a system of self-management of students and graduates of the Institute, to contribute to the experience of establishing student relationships with employers and their career planning, to organize employment .
- Temporary employment of students and assistance in employment of graduates;
- To plan and train the students and graduates of the Institute in the process of organizing internships in leading industries, including high-tech international companies;
- Development of academic mobility of students and graduates of the institute using the electronic platform organized by the center;
- Develop a culture of philanthropy and impartial sponsorship among students and graduates of the Institute;
- Organizing and conducting surveys of employers, partner companies, large companies on the organization of the center's events
assessment of the quality of organization and conduct of internships at enterprises;
- to form a database of successful graduates in their careers (working in large foreign and international companies);
- organization of meetings, seminars and webinars for alumni on electronic platform programs and internships for foreign companies for business trips and internships abroad; monitoring grant programs, assisting in the preparation of documents required for participation in international summer schools, trainings
- Assistance in the implementation of student fundraising projects.

- **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 University (Q B1).

All respondents point out the same department, which was previously called as “marketing” department and now “Department for the formation of a portfolio of orders, distribution of graduates for work and monitoring”. 3 staff are engaged in the department: head of department, and 2 assistants. Their main responsibility is to form portfolio of orders for specialists, announcing job vacancies for graduates, and conduct statistics of employment of fresh graduates.

- HEI strategy on matters of employment and career of students and graduates (Q B2)

HEI has relations with textile and other industries. Students carry out their practical studies 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.

- Support offered to students and graduates on their professional development (Q B3, B4, B5, B8, B26)

B3: Does the HEI organise information sessions for students and graduates on available job positions in companies and enterprises, at local or national level?

In general, all respondents answered “yes” to the question, i.e. NIET organises information sessions for graduates on available job positions. It is mainly at local level.

B4: Does the HEI provide counselling services to students and graduates, through career counsellors? If yes, please describe the process.

Out of 18 respondents 13 positive answers 5 negative answers have been received. As positive answers overrule the negative ones, we can conclude that consultations to students and graduates are available, and it should be improved further.

B5: Does the HEI provide counselling services on individual career planning? If yes, please describe the process.

11 positive and 7 negative answers. Same as in B4, the service is available at certain level for talented and language-skilled students and graduates. The service needs further improvements.

B8: Does the HEI offer an online portal or online database where students can find information on matters of the labour market (e.g., open positions, contact information of companies, statistics on employability etc)?

Majority i.e. 8 answers were negative, 7 positive and, 3 answered that forming the database is in the process. NIET has to concentrate on the issue and develop an online database about labor market.

B26: How does the HEI offer support to students and graduates on their academic or professional development?)

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.

- Support offered to students and graduates on their educational development (Q B12, B13, B26)

B12: Does the HEI provide information to students and graduates on postgraduate programmes at national or international Universities?

All answers except one is "yes" to the question. 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.

B13: Does the HEI inform students about available scholarships at national and international level?

All answers are positive, i.e. NIET keeps students informed about scholarships at national and international level?

B26: How does the HEI offer support to students and graduates on their academic or professional development?

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 (Q B23, B24)

B23: Does the HEI track the academic and/or professional progress of its graduates? How is the tracking implemented?

11 positive answers and 7 negative answers have been observed. Some answers show that marketing department keeps record, and some point out that social networks can help with it. In general, the activity needs improvement.

B24: If the HEI tracks the academic or professional progress of its graduates, how does it use the results?

11 positive answers and 7 negative answers. Most answers pointed out that the 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 (Q B30)

B30: Is there anything you would like to add regarding the cooperation procedures between the HEI and companies?)

14 respondents added their opinions, stating that university 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** (Report here findings from questions B6, 7, 9, 14)

- Activities on employability skills development of students and graduates as part of the curriculum (Q B6)

B6: Does the HEI organise workshops or seminars on development of soft or employability skills? Who is involved in the workshops?)

11 positive answers whereas 7 do not agree. Some departments organise some do not always organise seminars on developing soft skills or employability skills. The activity needs further improvement.

- Activities on employability skills development of students and graduates as part of organised social activities (Q B7, B9)

B7: Does the HEI organise career days (where students liaise with business representatives)? If yes, how do you recruit companies to participate.

All 18 answers are positive for this question, i.e. career days are organized in NIET where students can have communicate 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.

B9: Does the HEI publish studies regarding the situation in the labour market (e.g., skills needed, salary trends, HR practices etc) and the absorption of graduates? If yes, how are these studies communicated to students and graduates?)

8 answers are negative, and the rest of the answers show that the marketing department has some activities related to labor market i.e. in touch with statistics office of the region. It

can be part of research. But none clearly indicate that regular research and publication on labor market is being conducted.

- Support offered to students and graduates on national or international mobility programmes (Q B14)

B14: Does the HEI provide information to students and graduates on national or international Mobility programmes?

All 18 respondents answered “yes” to this question. Department of sciences and international relations department usually spread information on mobility opportunities.

- **Services and activities relating to development of innovation and entrepreneurial skills**
(Report here findings from questions B15, 16, 18, 19, 20)

B15: Does the HEI have an established Innovation and Entrepreneurship Unit for students (or similar)? If yes, please describe its organisational structure, number of staff, scope, and main activities?

All answers except 1 is positive for this question, i.e. NIET has a unit for supporting students with innovative and entrepreneurial ideas. Answers point out different departments: department of science and innovations, department of working with talented students, department of innovation and transfers. Indeed these all departments can serve to support students in innovation and entrepreneurship.

B16: Does the HEI organise workshops or seminars on innovation or entrepreneurship matters? Who is involved in the workshops?

15 answers are “yes” and 3 are “no” for this question, i.e. workshops are organised in NIET on innovation and entrepreneurship matters. Positive answers differ in pointing out groups involved in these workshops.

B18: Does the HEI organise competitions for students on entrepreneurship or innovation ideas? Please describe the process.,

All respondents answered positively, i.e. NIET organises competitions for students on entrepreneurship or innovation ideas. According to most of the answers competitions are based on the calls announced by the Ministry of innovations.

B19: Does the HEI provide relevant materials to students and graduates, on issues of innovation and entrepreneurship, such as business plan development guides, financial analysis tool for business plans, educational material and case studies? If yes, how are these materials communicated to students and graduates?

12 answers are “yes”, while 6 are “no” in this case, i.e. majority states that 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.

B20: Does the HEI support business efforts of students or graduates through the provision of personalised support on designing or implementing business ideas? Do you involve the business sector? How do you exploit the ideas? Please describe the process.)

The result is similar to the previous one, yielding 12 positive 6 negative answers. Most of positive answers aren't strong in supporting the answer with comments on further questions. It shows that 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 (Q B15)

Most answers to the question do not show the numbers, while only one mentioned 4 people are engaged in the department. 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 (Q B16, B19)

Entrepreneurial education for spheres in economics. Announcement of calls for projects offered by the Ministry of Innovation.

- Activities to support innovation and entrepreneurship of students and graduates (Q B18, B20)

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

- **Services and activities relating to establishing cooperation relationships with businesses** (Report here findings from questions B10, 11, 17, 21, 22, 25, 28, 30)

- Liaison activities of the HEI with employability organisations (Q B10)

B10: Does the HEI liaise with employability organisations at local or national level (e.g., national employment organisations, employability centres, chambers etc)? Please describe the scope of these liaisons.)

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 (Q B11, B17, B25)

B11: Does the HEI participate in networking actions with business entities? Please describe the process.

6 respondents answered "no", 7 answered "i have no idea" , while 5 state that NIET participates in networking actions with business entities through different exhibitions. Stemming from the answers, NIET needs improvement in networking actions with businesses, and disseminate those activities widely among the staff.

B17: Does the HEI organise educational visits to companies or enterprises?

All answers are positive, i.e. NIET organise educational visits to companies and enterprises.

B25: How does the HEI facilitate the networking between students/graduates and business representatives?)

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

- Mentoring programme offered by the HEI (Q B21, B22)

B21: Does the HEI offer a mentoring programme (where representatives from the business world are matched with students and offer voluntary support on development of business ideas and plans)? How do you select students? How do you select mentors? How is the matching done?

Respondents yielded 7 negative answers and 11 positive ones. Positive answers state that students are selected through interviews. Not much information is given on how mentors are selected.

B22: Does the HEI provide training for mentors or mentees? If yes, on which topics?)

50% of respondents say "no" while the rest 50% say "yes" to this question. Positive answers state that the topics depend on the speciality of the student.

- Services offered to employers (Q B28)

B28: What services does the HEI offer to employers?

Answers state that NIET organises meetings between students and employers, provides employers with the information on students.

- Additional information on cooperation procedures with companies (Q B20)

B20: Does the HEI support business efforts of students or graduates through the provision of personalised support on designing or implementing business ideas? Do you involve the business sector? How do you exploit the ideas? Please describe the process.

6 respondents are on negative view, 6 are positive but not sure about the process, while the rest 4 are positive and gave their comments on further questions where all comments differ from each other. It shows that the activity should get developed if entrepreneurial mindset is to be provided to students.

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

D3.1 Report on on graduate's employability support through careers, employability and enterprise services

SWOT stands for STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES and THREADS

STRENGTHS (What do you do well in terms of CEES? What unique approach do you use in terms of CEES?)	WEAKNESSES (What could you improve in terms of CEES? Where do you have fewer resources than others in terms of CEES?)
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
OPPORTUNITIES (What opportunities are open to you in terms of CEES? What trends could you take advantage of in terms of CEES?)	THREATS (What threats could endanger your efforts in terms of CEES?)
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 (What do you do well in terms of cooperation with outside institutions?)	WEAKNESSES (What could you improve in terms of cooperation with outside institutions?)
Organizing educational visits to industries.	Lack of networking actions between students and businesses
OPPORTUNITIES (What opportunities are open to you in terms of cooperation with outside institutions?)	THREADS (What threads could endanger your cooperation with outside institutions?)
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.

The suggestions for improvement of graduate's employability support through careers, employability and enterprise services at HEIs (please suggest at least 5 ideas)

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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.

The suggestions for improvement of HEI cooperation with institutions outside HEI (please suggest at least 5 ideas)

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.

PART 4. Analyses of Internship programmes

Institutional framework of internships (country level) (report here findings from question A1, 2)

1) Are there rules or measures for internships of students at universities at the national level?

All 18 answers are "yes", i.e. there are rules for internships of students at universities at the national level

2) Are there any mandatory internship requirements set by ministries or other bodies that administer education?

All 18 answers are "yes", i.e. there any mandatory internship requirements set by ministries.

Current internship programmes (HEI level)

Management and administration of internships (report here findings from question B1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 13)

- Measures and requirements for student internships (Q B1, B2)

1) *Are there rules or measures for organizing student practice in universities at the university level?*

All 18 answers are "yes", i.e. there rules at the university level for organizing student practice.

2) *Are there any mandatory internship requirements set by the Administration?*

9 respondents say "yes", 6 say "no", 3 have no idea on it. Requirements are based on the requirement set by the ministry.

- Internships' duration, focus and credits offered (Q B3)

3) *Describe the average duration of the internship, focus and number of ECTS credits (etc., etc.) at your institution.*

Most respondents state that the duration of internship is 1-2 months. NIET is only stepping towards the credit system.

- Management of internships (Q B5)

5) *How is internship management carried out at the university (centralized or decentralized at the faculty level)?*

7 answers state that the internship management is centralized, while others answered that it is carried out at faculty or department level.

- Administration procedures (Q B7, B8)

7) *How do you select students for internship?*

Respondents have different answers: it is selected stemming from the specialty, interest and living area of the student.

8) *Describe the process of preparing for the internship before starting it (is there a support office, a person at the university / faculty / department level? What documents are being prepared - for example, an internship plan, contracts? Do you set goals for the internship, measurement criteria and assessment methods before the internship?*

18 answers in general state that contract is signed between NIET and company, goals, working program and internship plan is worked out.

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

13) Please describe any other important points / circumstances related to the internship at your university.

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

- **Support given to students** (report here findings from question B4, 6, 9)

- Training activities to support internships (Q B4)

4) Do you provide training or other preparatory activities for prospective interns, university administrative staff, teachers and mentors from the company? If yes, please describe.

10 respondents said "no", while the other 8 state that instruction is given only to students before internship.

- Support given to students on finding internship positions (Q B6)

6) Describe the process of finding an internship opportunity (is there any support office, a person at the university / faculty / department level? Do you have an Alumni Association (network) and do you use it to find an internship place? Do you have a database of companies and other institutions interested in applying for an internship?)

Answers point out that internships are organized at NIET's partner companies and also at companies towards which the students have interest.

- Development of entrepreneurial skills through internships (Q B9)

9) Do you also support the development of students' entrepreneurial competencies and skills during the internship?

6 respondents say "yes", 5 "no" and 7 agree that mentioned competencies and skills should be developed during the internship.

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- **Monitoring and evaluation of internships** (report here findings from question B10, 11, 12)

- Management procedures during internships (Q B10)

10) Describe the process of managing the internship during its course (is there any support office, a person at the university / faculty / department level; mentoring during the internship; monitoring; contact with the intern and the person in the company)

Answers are different. Contact can be established between responsible teacher and company staff, appointed as responsible. In terms of duration daily monitoring and weekly monitoring is available. Student gives report at the end of the internship.

- Procedures for evaluation of internships (Q B11, B12)

11) Describe the process of evaluating the internship after its implementation (by whom and how the internship is evaluated and its impact on the student / company / university?)

Stemming from the answers it can be concluded that the evaluation is done by supervisor at the institute based on the information provided by the student and by the supervisor at company.

12) Are you collecting feedback polls from companies, educators and students / interns?

Majority - 12 respondents confirm "yes", while 6 state "no" to the question. And feedback is taken from supervisor at company.

SWOT analyses of internship programmes.

STRENGTHS (What do you do well in terms of internships? Why there is interest in your internships?)	WEAKNESSES (What could you improve in terms of internships? What can be done better?)
Partnering textile companies are interested in taking interns from the institute to check	Lack of trainings for supervisors.

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<p>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.</p>	
<p>OPPORTUNITIES (What opportunities are open to you in terms of internship?)</p>	<p>THREADS (What threads could endanger your internship programs?)</p>
<p>Trainings should be organized for supervisors at both sides: university, company.</p>	<p>Unsafe conditions at industries. Lack of monitoring.</p>

The suggestions for improvement of internship programmes at CA HEIs (please suggest at least 5 ideas)

- 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.