

Original article

UDC 342

doi 10.46741/2686-9764.2023.64.4.008



On Reforming State Regulation of Educational Activities and Its Impact on the Higher Education System of the Federal Penitentiary Service

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Abstract

Introduction: the system of state regulation of educational activities has recently undergone changes. The control and supervision model is changing due to the introduction of a risk-oriented approach, organization of constant monitoring of the education system, and conduct of preventive measures in relation to activities of educational organizations. The procedure for state accreditation of higher education programs is also reorganized, in particular, new accreditation indicators are developed and accreditation monitoring of the higher education system is introduced. These changes are aimed at reducing the administrative impact on the sphere of higher education by reducing verification measures with appropriate procedural rules and documentation support. Control measures are replaced by constant monitoring of the implementation of educational activities by universities, their compliance with established requirements, provision of advisory assistance, and correction of possible violations. In these conditions, the role of self-control of educational organizations over the implementation of educational programs and self-regulation in this area is increasing. The higher education system of the Federal Penitentiary Service operates within the framework of the education system of the Russian Federation and is subject to any changes. State bodies (Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation, Federal Service for Supervision of Education and Science), new standards of educational activities, control measures, monitoring, etc. are significant factors of the external environment. Changes in the system of state regulation of educational activities have a significant impact on functioning of the departmental education system and require detailed study in order to determine directions of its improvement. The *purpose* of this study is to analyze modern mechanisms of state regulation of educational activities and formulate proposals for improving certain aspects of functioning of the higher education system of the Federal Penitentiary Service. *Methods:* general scientific (induction and deduction, system analysis, synthesis and generalization, comparison) and private (comparative legal, formal legal) methods of cognition allowed us to provide an integrated approach to this study. *Results:* based on the analysis of transformation of the state regulation of educational activities in the Russian Federation and its impact on the higher education system of the Federal Penitentiary Service, proposals for improving practical activities of educational

organizations are formed. The necessity of developing an order of the Federal Penitentiary Service approving the procedure for accreditation monitoring of the higher education system of the Federal Penitentiary Service with the definition of appropriate criteria, revision of the regulatory framework for the organization and inspection of educational organizations is substantiated. *Conclusion*: the reform of state regulation of educational activities determines priority directions to develop the higher education system of the FPS of Russia, encouraging construction of new integration links between its elements – educational organizations and the Federal Penitentiary Service.

Key words: accreditation; accreditation monitoring; state regulation; quality of education; educational activities; educational organizations.

5.1.2. Public law (state law) sciences.

For citation: Motorova N.V. On reforming state regulation of educational activities and its impact on the higher education system of the Federal Penitentiary Service. *Penitentiary Science*, 2023, vol. 17, no. 4 (64), pp. 409–418. doi 10.46741/2686-9764.2023.64.4.008.

Introduction

An important element of the development of the higher education system of the Federal Penitentiary Service (FPS of Russia) that requires increased attention is control of the quality of training specialists for institutions and bodies of the penitentiary system. An effective system for assessing graduates' attainment levels contributes to achieving key goals of functioning of the system of departmental higher education organizations, such as regular replenishment of the staff with highly qualified specialists, improvement of the quality of educational programs in various fields, introduction of modern educational technologies, and bringing learning closer to real needs of practical activity.

Quality of education and key activities to ensure it

The higher education system of the Federal Penitentiary Service should function in full compliance with uniform requirements for the implementation of educational activities established by the state and ensure a certain quality level of education. The term “quality of education” has several meanings [1–3]; various definitions are proposed by researchers studying problems of jurisprudence [4], pedagogy [5–7], management processes [8], while “this category is interpreted in various disciplinary contexts: philosophical, sociological, psychological, and economic” [9, p. 21]. Taking into account the variety of approaches, we adhere to the definition of the Federal Law No. 273-FZ of December 29, 2012 “On Education in the Russian Federation”

(hereinafter referred to as the Education Law), according to which the quality of education is “a comprehensive characteristic of educational activities and training of a student, expressing the degree of their compliance with the Federal State Educational Standard (FSES), educational standards, federal state requirements (FSR), needs of the individual or legal entity in whose interests the educational activity is carried out, including the achievement degree of planned results of the educational program”.

The analysis of the category presented in the law allows us to identify two main areas of activity to ensure compliance of educational activities with this complex characteristic. The higher education system of the Federal Penitentiary Service, activities of its educational organizations, on the one hand, should comply with the established FSES, educational standards, and FSR; on the other hand, training of personnel in the departmental system of higher education should meet requirements of the department, in whose interests educational activities are carried out, as well as students' needs. Accordingly, control measures in relation to higher education institutions of the Federal Penitentiary Service include two blocks: 1) regulatory, control and supervisory activities in the field of education and science on the part of federal state authorities with relevant powers in the field of education; 2) assessment of personnel training by interested subjects (the Federal Penitentiary Service and territorial bodies) and students (future employees of the

penal system). We will consider the system of state regulation and control measures in relation to educational institutions of higher education of the Federal Penitentiary Service in the light of modern trends in changing principles of control and supervisory activities on the part of the state and developing the Russian penal system. At the same time, it should be emphasized that the scope of this publication does not allow us to present a detailed analysis of state regulation of educational activities, and our attention will be focused on results of the study conducted in order to formulate proposals for improving practical activities of educational organizations of the Federal Penitentiary Service in accordance with the revised requirements of legislation.

Key directions of state regulation of educational activity

Authorized bodies are responsible for state regulation of educational activities; higher education organizations of the Federal Penitentiary Service, providing training of students in certain specialties and areas of training, are objects of management processes. State regulation of educational activities is aimed at establishing uniform requirements for the implementation of educational activities and procedures related to the establishment and verification of educational organizations' compliance with these requirements. According to the Education Law, the state regulation of educational activity includes 1) licensing of educational activities; 2) state accreditation of educational activities; and 3) state control (supervision) in the field of education.

Educational activities are subject to licensing. According to provisions of the Federal Law No. 99-FZ of May 4, 2011 "On Licensing of Certain Types of Activities", this is the activity of licensing authorities to grant licenses, extend the validity period of licenses if the limitation of the validity period of licenses is provided for by federal laws, assess the license applicant's compliance with licensing requirements, suspend, renew, and terminate licenses, form and maintain a register of licenses, form a state information resource, as well as provide information on licensing issues as applicable. A license is a special permit for the right of a legal entity or individual entrepreneur to carry out a specific type of activity (performing works, render-

ing services that make up the licensed type of activity), which is confirmed by an entry in the register of licenses. Licensing of educational activities is carried out by types of education, levels of education, professions, specialties, areas of training, scientific specialties (for vocational education), subtypes of additional education. Educational organizations of higher education of the Federal Penitentiary Service train specialists on the basis of licenses obtained in accordance with the established procedure.

State accreditation of educational activities by the main educational programs of higher education is carried out in order to confirm the conformity of the quality of education in an educational organization with the established accreditation indicators. Accreditation indicators are a set of mandatory requirements that are established by law for the quality of education. Accreditation indicators, methods of their calculation and application are approved by the federal executive authority responsible for the development and implementation of state policy and regulation in the field of higher education (Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation), in coordination with the federal executive authority responsible for control and supervision in the field of education (Federal Service for Supervision of Education and Science). The Order of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation No. 409 "On Approval of Accreditation Indicators for Educational Programs of Higher Education, Methods of Calculation and Application of Accreditation Indicators for Educational Programs of Higher Education" was adopted on April 18, 2023.

State accreditation is carried out by the Federal Service for Supervision of Education and Science according to the applications of organizations engaged in educational activities. State accreditation is carried out based on results of the accreditation examination, which is based on the principles of objectivity and responsibility of experts. The procedure is defined by the Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 797 of May 19, 2023 "On Approval of the Regulations on State Accreditation of Educational Activities and on Invalidation of the Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 3 of January 14,

2022". State accreditation of educational activities is of unlimited duration.

State regulation of educational activities includes state control (supervision). According to provisions of the Federal Law No. 248-FZ of July 31, 2020 "On State Control (Supervision) and Municipal Control in the Russian Federation", state control (supervision) in the Russian Federation is an activity of control (supervisory) bodies to prevent, detect and suppress violations of mandatory requirements by preventing violations of mandatory requirements, assessing citizens and organizations' compliance with mandatory requirements, identifying their violations, and adopting legal measures to prevent the identified violations of mandatory requirements, eliminate their consequences and (or) restore the legal situation that existed before the occurrence of such violations. In relation to educational institutions of higher education, the subject of state control (supervision) is compliance with mandatory requirements established by the legislation on education, including licensing requirements for educational activities, FSES requirements, requirements for the implementation of accreditation indicators; requirements to ensure accessibility for disabled people of social, engineering and transport infrastructure and services provided. The implementation of control powers is entrusted to the Federal Service for Supervision of Education and Science.

In general, the analysis of regulatory prescriptions shows that the structure of state regulation of educational activities has independent elements, such as licensing, state accreditation, and requirements for control and supervisory activities in the field of education. Licensing of educational activities is nothing more than an "input filter" that prevents unscrupulous entities from entering the educational services market. State accreditation is aimed at confirming the compliance of educational activities with the FSES and FSR, and control and supervision in the field of education are focused on assessing the quality of educational activities and its legality [10]. Each of these areas of state regulation contains elements of verification and control measures.

These areas of state regulation of educational activities are constantly discussed by legal scholars analyzing licensing procedures

[11–14], accreditation processes [15–17] and control and supervisory activities [18–20]. A comprehensive in-depth analysis of the modern model of state regulation of higher education could be the subject of a separate study. Within the framework of this article, we will analyze certain aspects of this type of activity in order to determine its impact on the development and functioning of the higher education system of the Federal Penitentiary Service, while taking into account scientists' positions affecting certain aspects of activities of departmental universities.

Transformation of certain areas of state regulation of educational activities and its impact on the higher education system of the Federal Penitentiary Service

The system of departmental higher education functions within the framework of the education system of the Russian Federation and is affected by any changes. State bodies (Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation, Federal Service for Supervision of Education and Science), new standards of educational activities, control measures, monitoring, etc. are significant factors of the external environment. Training of future employees in various specialties is carried out on the basis of appropriate licenses; educational programs of higher education are built in accordance with the Federal State Educational Standard; universities create all the necessary conditions (material, financial, information technology, etc.) for implementing educational activities. Control and supervisory measures on the part of the Federal Service for Supervision of Education and Science in relation to higher education institutions of the Federal Penitentiary Service are carried out in accordance with the established rules. Due to these circumstances, the higher education system of the Federal Penitentiary Service constantly receives external impulses of a managerial nature, is modified and adapts to conditions of the external environment.

For example, licensing and accreditation of educational activities as areas of state regulation have a serious impact on the higher education system. Higher education organizations of the Federal Penitentiary Service have licenses for implemented educational programs, the vast majority of which have termless state accreditation. At the same time, educational or-

ganizations comply with licensing requirements in their activities and are constantly working to achieve compliance of educational activities with accreditation criteria, as well as to improve the relevant indicators.

Individual departmental universities are expanding their capabilities to prepare specialists for penitentiary institutions and bodies by obtaining permits to carry out educational activities in new areas of training or specialties. For example, in 2022, the Vologda Institute of Law and Economics of the Federal Penitentiary Service received a license for the right to carry out educational activities under two higher education programs “Economic security” and “Ensuring law and order”, as well as two programs of secondary vocational education [21]. In 2022, the University of the FPS of Russia expanded the scope of educational services, having received the permission to carry out educational activities under the higher education program “Fire safety” [22]. Implementing new educational programs, these educational organizations are improving their work to successfully pass accreditation examination in these areas of training in the near future. Consequently, licensing and accreditation necessitate the maintenance of a proper functioning level in accordance with licensing requirements and accreditation indicators, as well as determine development frameworks of individual elements of the system, in particular, educational organizations.

The change in accreditation principles also has a significant impact on the development of the higher education system of the Federal Penitentiary Service. The year of 2022 witnessed introduction of accreditation monitoring and an updated model to assess the quality of implemented educational programs according to the accreditation indicators approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation. Besides, state accreditation received under educational programs is of unlimited duration. The introduction of indicators has changed approaches to state accreditation, since “according to the wording of Article 92 of the Education Law in force up to March 1, 2022, state accreditation was carried out in order to confirm compliance with federal state educational standards for educational activities and training of students” [16, p. 180] and was fixed-term, that is, the checks were car-

ried out with a certain frequency. Some authors believe that changing criteria for the quality of education leads to the creation of a situation in which obtaining state accreditation will not depend on meeting the overwhelming majority of requirements of educational standards. So, I.Yu. Goltzapina notes that “the mechanism of the “regulatory guillotine” for the education sector was clearly premature... The most negative impact of the introduction of such a mechanism will be vivid only after years of its implementation, since in the absence of control and liability, educational organizations will take pains to meet indicators of accreditation monitoring and not to improve the content of educational programs” [16, p. 181]. In our opinion, the novelties of educational legislation should still contribute to the enhancement of management processes in the field of education and, as a result, will lead to a reduction in the bureaucratic burden on educational organizations. Let us consider certain aspects of this type of state regulation of educational activities.

The accreditation indicators approved by the Order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation No. 409 of April 18, 2023 represent a set of mandatory requirements to the quality of education established in accordance with the Education Law. Besides, state accreditation is of unlimited duration for all organizations received it up to March 1, 2022, as well as for organizations that successfully pass the accreditation procedure after this period.

Organizations with state accreditation automatically get into accreditation monitoring, which is a remote monitoring of an educational organization, conducted once every three years in order to analyze the quality of education and develop appropriate recommendations. This procedure does not require interaction with an educational organization [10]. According to the Order of the Federal Service for Supervision of Education and Science, the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation No. 660/306/448 of April 24, 2023 “On the Implementation of Accreditation Monitoring of the Education System by the Federal Service for Supervision of Education and Science, the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation”,

the first accreditation monitoring starts on September 1, 2023 and is aimed at analyzing activities of educational organizations and their compliance with accreditation indicators. When identifying problematic aspects for educational organizations, recommendations will be formulated to improve the quality of education. It is assumed that 1,398 universities (749 parent universities and 649 branches) will engage in the monitoring [23].

According to provisions of regulatory legal acts on the monitoring of the education system, federal state organizations under the jurisdiction of the Prosecutor General's Office of the Russian Federation, the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation, the Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation, and the Federal Penitentiary Service that implement professional educational programs containing information, which constitute a state secret, are not subject to accreditation monitoring; they are monitored by the federal state body exercising functions and powers of the founder in relation to these organizations. These powers are determined by the Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 662 of August 5, 2013 "On the Monitoring of the Education System", which also determines that the procedure for monitoring, including accreditation, of federal state organizations is established by the federal state body exercising functions and powers of the founder in relation to these organizations.

Thus, to date, departmental universities have not been included in the number of educational organizations that fall under the accreditation monitoring procedures from September 1, 2023, while there are no clear criteria for its implementation by federal state bodies exercising functions and powers of the founder. The current state of affairs creates the need to create normative legal acts on the regulation of these issues in relation to educational organizations that train personnel in the interests of defense and security of the state, ensuring law and order. The Federal Penitentiary Service should also join this norm-setting activity.

Educational organizations of higher education as departmental institutions are subject to constant inspection and evaluation of the effectiveness of their activities by the Federal Penitentiary Service.

The inspection includes a set of measures to study, verify and assess the state of educational, research, financial and economic activities, service and physical training of employees of educational institutions of the Federal Penitentiary Service and is carried out every five years. The procedure for organizing work on the inspection of activities of departmental educational organizations is fixed in the Order of the FPS of Russia No. 385 of August 28, 2010 "On Approval of the Procedure for Organizing Work on the Inspection of Activities of Educational Institutions of the Federal Penitentiary Service". However, the analysis of this normative legal act shows that it does not contain clear criteria and indicators for assessing the quality of educational programs. Accordingly, it is impossible to use inspection procedures of departmental universities instead of accreditation monitoring on the basis of existing departmental acts, since evaluation indicators of educational activity and frequency do not coincide with those established by the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia (accreditation monitoring is carried out every three years).

Based on the above, it seems appropriate to issue an order of the Federal Penitentiary Service approving the procedure for accreditation monitoring of the higher education system of the FPS of Russia with the definition of appropriate criteria. At the same time, it is necessary to revise the regulatory framework for the inspection of departmental universities in order to increase terms (at least once every six years) and adjust individual criteria for their compliance with accreditation indicators. The adoption of these departmental legal acts will make it possible to organize accreditation monitoring every three years: once as a separate procedure, and then as part of the inspection of activities of departmental universities. The regulatory legal acts proposed for development, in our opinion, will become the legal basis for the organization of quality control of education in departmental universities.

Having discussed issues to organize monitoring of the higher education system of the FPS of Russia, we will consider substantive aspects of the mandatory requirements, on the basis of which the quality of education in certain higher education programs is recognized as satisfactory.

Accreditation indicators for higher education programs are approved by the Order of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation No. 409 of April 18, 2023 “On Approval of Accreditation Indicators for Higher Education Programs, Methods of Calculation and Application of Accreditation Indicators for Higher Education Programs” and include six positions, accreditation monitoring indicators include eight positions. Let us analyze certain indicators that have significant impact on the higher education system of the Federal Penitentiary Service.

The first accreditation indicator (AI1) is the average score of the unified state exam (USE) of students accepted according to its results for training in educational programs of higher education. Its criterion value should be at least 60 to receive points (from five to ten) during accreditation or monitoring. The analysis of admission campaigns for the last three years shows low values of this indicator in most higher education institutions of the FPS of Russia.

Another accreditation indicator that requires restructuring of activities of individual elements of the higher education system and has the greatest impact is the proportion of students who have completed 70% or more of the diagnostic work tasks formed from the collection of learning assessment materials of the organization carrying out educational activities under the relevant higher education program, in the total number of those who performed the diagnostic work (AI5). It is used during accreditation; its minimum criterion value amounts to 55% of the students. The fulfillment of this indicator generates the need for systematic work to form a collection of learning assessment materials that meet criteria of the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia [24] and the Federal Service for Supervision of Education and Science and have students perform control tasks in class.

Thus, the introduction of new criteria for checking the quality of higher education determines priority directions for the development of the higher education system of the Federal Penitentiary Service, prompting construction of new integration links between its elements – educational organizations and the FPS of Russia.

The higher education system of the FPS of Russia should also adapt to changes in another

area of state regulation of educational activities, such as control and supervision. The system of state control (supervision) in the Russian Federation is currently undergoing serious changes due to the construction of a new control and supervision model in the Russian state. Due to the entry into force of federal laws No. 247-FZ of July 31, 2020 “On Mandatory Requirements in the Russian Federation” and No. 248-FZ of July 31, 2020 “On State Control (Supervision) and Municipal Control in the Russian Federation”, the system of state management of educational activities have undergone serious changes. The model of control and supervisory measures based on systematic planned and unscheduled inspections leading to the application of punitive measures (issuance of prescriptions, suspension of license, revocation of accreditation, etc.) is being rebuilt according to new principles: introduction of a risk-oriented approach, constant monitoring of activities of higher education institutions, and formation of recommendations for development.

Educational organizations of higher education as objects of state control (supervision) are subject to classification into categories of high, medium and low risk of causing harm (damage) to legally protected values (hereinafter referred to as risk categories). The category of high and medium risk includes universities whose activities were proved violating legal requirements by the relevant state authorities (Federal Service for Supervision of Education and Science). The assignment of an object of state control (supervision) to one of the risk categories is carried out by the Federal Service for Supervision of Education and Science annually by comparing its characteristics with the criteria fixed in the Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 997 of June 25, 2021 “On approval of the Regulations on the Federal State Control (Supervision) in the field of education”.

As for low risk control objects, instead of planned control (supervisory) measures, preventive explanatory work is carried out. The Federal Service for Supervision of Education and Science informs controlled and other interested persons on compliance with mandatory requirements established by Russian legislation on education, including licensing requirements for educational activities and requirements established by federal state educational

standards, by posting relevant information on its official website on the Internet and through personal accounts of controlled persons in state information systems.

Being an object of state control, higher education organizations of the FPS of Russia should analyze materials of control measures of the Federal Service for Supervision of Education and Science [25] and relevant recommendations in order to prevent violations of the established requirements. At the same time, the Federal Penitentiary Service plays an important role in the organization of constant monitoring of compliance with the established requirements, since timely management decisions and methodological assistance will contribute to the effective functioning of the entire system of departmental higher education.

Conclusion

The analysis of state regulation of educational activities and its transformation at the present stage shows the existence of unresolved issues in the higher education system of the FPS of Russia, such as organization of accreditation monitoring, development of criteria for the formation of collections of learning assessment materials, etc.

In the presented study, proposals are formulated to address individual issues. Thus, it is advisable to issue an order of the Federal Penitentiary Service approving the procedure for accreditation monitoring of the higher education system with the definition of appropriate criteria. At the same time, it is also necessary to revise the regulatory framework for the inspection of departmental universities in order to increase the terms (at least once every six years) and adjust individual criteria for their compliance with accreditation indicators. The adoption of these departmental legal acts will

allow organizing accreditation monitoring every three years: once as a separate procedure, and then as part of the inspection of activities of departmental universities. The normative legal acts proposed for development, in our opinion, will become the legal basis for the organization of quality control of education in departmental universities.

The introduction of updated indicators of the quality of educational activities has also become a significant factor of influence on the higher education system of the FPS of Russia. So, for example, during accreditation or accreditation monitoring, educational organizations of higher education of the Federal Penitentiary Service would receive zero points according to indicators of the average USE score. The current situation encourages higher education organizations to intensify career guidance counseling and interaction with territorial authorities to select candidates for training with higher USE scores. Another accreditation indicator that requires restructuring activities of individual elements of the higher education system and, therefore, has the greatest impact is the proportion of students who have completed 70% or more of the diagnostic work tasks. The fulfillment of this indicator creates the need to organize systematic work on the formation of a complex collection of learning assessment materials that meet criteria of the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia and the Federal Service for Supervision of Education and Science and having students perform control tasks in class.

The need to develop mechanisms for the implementation of these tasks is a new impetus for the development of the higher education system and the construction of internal ties and interactions.

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Received October 26, 2023