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## LEVERAGING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO ENHANCE QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

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**Annotation:** Quality assurance (QA) plays a critical role in ensuring high-quality education, yet its traditional procedures remain manual, time-consuming, and inefficient. Rapidly developing Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems offer new opportunities to modernize conventional quality assurance processes through automation, predictive analysis, and data-driven decision-making. This article examines the theoretical rationale for integrating AI into quality monitoring and assessment in higher education, explores quality assurance through the lens of international and local contexts, and provides practical recommendations for further development of AI tools in QA management.

**Keywords:** artificial intelligence, quality assurance, higher education management, natural language processing, predictive analytics tools, HEMIS

Monitoring, improving, and ensuring quality in teaching, learning, and administrative procedures within educational institutions has always played a pivotal role in the sphere of higher education. As students are the main stakeholders of higher educational establishments, it is significant to evaluate the extent to which they are satisfied with the education they receive, facilities provided to them, and assessment processes. The rapid expansion of educational establishments worldwide, including Uzbekistan, has increased the need to control the quality of study programs, curriculum, competencies of instructors, and some other aspects, placing extra pressure on government bodies that are responsible for monitoring and ensuring quality assurance in higher education. Meanwhile, the gradual adoption of digital solutions, including the use of artificial intelligence in QA, has the potential to build strong bridges between educational institutions and quality monitoring organizations, optimizing workflows and ensuring better practices in education quality evaluation. This study explores why and how AI is becoming a tool for digital transformation of QA systems, drawing on international experience and the ongoing need for digitalization of higher education in Uzbekistan.

Quality assurance in higher education gained popularity due to an increase in educational demand and rising standards of excellence of academic programs [1]. Currently, QA is mainly based on manual collection and review of documents, self-assessment reports, and external audits that happen periodically. This model has several pitfalls that result in inefficiency of procedures. Firstly, manual inspection is considered to be time-consuming, causing unexpected delays in deadlines for specific parts of audits and placing pressure on QA specialists and managers of higher educational establishments. Secondly, evaluations based on site visits and human-based document review has the



Date: 27<sup>th</sup> July-2026

potential to increase non-transparent, biased, and subjective opinions which in turn affects objectivity and correctness of decisions. As credibility of QA relies on its transparency [2], there is a need to guarantee it in all stages of the procedure. Thirdly, as higher education systems expand, the data to be processed by QA organizations, namely enrollment statistics, student outcomes, curriculum, qualifications of staff, and student satisfaction metrics, exceed the workload that can be handled by review staff. These three limitations make it clear that there is a need for a tool that can simplify and accelerate the process, leaving more space for transparent human decision-making in terms of QA.

Although it was not long ago that AI began to be used in education monitoring internationally, some countries have already initiated its use for QA. To fulfill this aim, several forms of AI are being applied. AI-powered predictive analytics tools are implemented to identify study programs that are at higher risk of quality decline, allowing QA bodies to come up with individualized solutions rather than the ones that are universal to all institutions. Another AI tool being used is natural language processing that automates analysis of unstructured student feedback, accreditation documents, self-assessment reports, still leaving the final decision to human raters by flagging missing or inconsistent evidence. AI-supported data dashboards allow QA analysts not only to monitor the current situation in educational institutions, but also take a look at trends that clearly showcase the rise and decline in the quality of instruction over time.[5]

A notable example of AI-supported QA policy measures can be seen in the case of Qatar, where the National Committee for Qualification and Academic Accreditation (NCQAA) involved AI in its accreditation and quality assurance process. Qatar's approach is supported by its National Artificial Intelligence strategy from 2019 and the National Vision 2030 development agenda that promote AI implementation in education. For Qatar, AI is not simply a technical upgrade, it is treated more as a policy-to-practice model. National documents set institutional and ethical parameters within which the country is planning to develop AI tools for QA and accreditation [3]. This case acts as an explicit example for many reforming countries, including Uzbekistan, on the importance of promoting AI adoption into quality assurance through a national standards-based initiative.

In recent years, Uzbekistan's higher education system has faced major improvements and reforms as part of efforts at the governmental level to modernize the quality assurance system and align it with international frameworks. The establishment of the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NQAAE) under the Administration of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan in September, 2025 functions of which include external quality assessment of specialized, vocational, higher, and postgraduate educational institutions, demonstrates Uzbekistan's trajectory on education quality enhancement [4]. A substantial step towards digitalization of the QA procedures in Uzbekistan was the nationwide implementation of the HEMIS platform in education, which enables the automation of many manual tasks, increasing efficiency. Nevertheless, tools like HEMIS are known only as data collection and reporting platform,



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not as an AI-driven predictive analytics tool that enables saving time, decreasing manual review analysis and seeing the bigger picture to predict future trends.

Based on the analysis provided above, the following three recommendations are proposed to enhance QA in higher education management. First, AI-based functions need to be built on the existing HEMIS infrastructure. This enables to fulfill the potential of the platform, making it a practical tool for higher education authorities and QA bodies. Second, guidelines and national policy standards need to be established to ensure data privacy and transparency while using AI-based tools in QA. Third, the capacity of managers and QA specialists should be improved through short courses or on-site training to avoid using AI as a genuine decision-making tool. Instead, AI should be used as a technical aid on specific tasks to increase effectiveness and save resources.

Artificial Intelligence has the potential to transform QA practices, making it consistent, time-saving, and efficient. Uzbekistan shows a positive change in improving the QA system by founding NQAAE, utilizing HEMIS, and investing in the implementation of AI in multiple spheres. However, immense work needs to be done to explore the potential of AI in quality assurance of higher education in Uzbekistan and positive ways of its use to provide transparent, data-privacy ensuring, and time-saving monitoring, assessment, and improvement of higher education quality.

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