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**ACADEMIC MOBILITY IN A MODERN TECHNICAL  
UNIVERSITY**

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**Abstract**

The academic mobility and its efficient appliance on practice are really actual in modern educational conditions. New society demands, opening of borders, expansion of economic, educational and scientific contacts and their international level imply the necessity of teachers' activity expansion, their leaving university limits, broadening international academic cooperation. Besides, today's education demands modernization as a result of changing realities. It must have more mobility, quality and result. We are sure that it is the academic mobility that can develop education in general and its components in detail in modern conditions. It will allow students to get more knowledge, use it on practice more effectively, and deepen all the competences. This article covers the specialties of the academic mobility in the context of a technical university and suggests some recommendations taking into account modern realities of the academic space. The actuality of the article consists in a vital necessity of academic mobility as the fresh source of new methods, technologies and techniques of high school education in modern realities. The scientific importance of the article implies some recommendations how to improve the academic mobility in modern educational conditions that can be used for perfecting the educational system as a whole.

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## 1. Introduction

In modern educational conditions, the issue of academic mobility and its qualitative application in practice is relevant. New demands of society, opening of borders, expansion of economic, educational and scientific contacts and their entry to the international level provide for the need to expand the activities of teachers, their going beyond the university framework, broad international academic cooperation. In addition, modern education requires modernization due to changing realities. It should be more mobile, better quality, efficient and effective. We believe that it is the academic mobility in new conditions that can develop education in general and its individual components, in particular. It will allow students to receive a wider amount of knowledge; more effectively apply it in practice and deepen the range of competencies.

Academic mobility provides for the movement of teachers and students within the educational process. This happens for teaching or studying at another university in the country and abroad. This article will consider the features of academic mobility in the context of a technical university, offer some recommendations based on the modern realities of the educational space.

## 2. Problem Statement

In the modern world, the development of international cooperation in terms of academic activities is gaining momentum. Student exchanges, training and teaching in other universities and abroad are developing, teachers leave for scientific conferences, symposia, seminars (Likhacheva, 2019). All these aspects are called academic mobility, but we believe that a deeper consideration of this educational phenomenon is necessary. It is important to expand and systematize the definition in some way, highlight the constituent components, compare the existing and desired characteristics and properties, and also develop this direction in an active manner, since it is promising for science, technology, simple exchange of experience, stimulating language practice, gaining knowledge about culture and mentality of another country, improvement of professional competencies. In addition, contacts in the field of education and science strengthen international cooperation in general, maintain peace throughout the world, and solve educational and general educational problems.

## 3. Research Questions

Academic mobility can be real, or stationary, and virtual, i. e. remote. Depending on the implementation space, the academic mobility program is subdivided into regional, interregional, international and intercontinental. It is clear that regional mobility provides for exchanges between teachers and students within the same region, for example, in the south of Russia, northwest and central regions. Interregional academic mobility covers several subjects, more precisely, the interaction of higher educational institutions within them. For example, leading Moscow and St. Petersburg universities can accept students and teachers from Kuban and Rostov universities for internships in order to establish scientific ties, generalize experience, and improve the efficiency of students and teachers (Likhacheva, 2020a). International mobility provides for the admission of foreign students and teachers for internships, advanced training, basic and additional training. In turn, Russian universities, under cooperation

agreements, send teachers and students to partner universities for implementation of projects, research activities and improvement of professional competencies, study at various stages and for the implementation and improvement of other academic activities (Likhacheva, 2020b).

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

So, academic mobility is the movement of students and teachers of higher educational institutions for a certain period of time to another educational or scientific institution within or outside their country for the purpose of learning and teaching. In addition, members of the administrative apparatus of the university can also participate in various academic mobility programs. Student academic mobility can also be called student exchange. For its high-quality implementation, it is important to develop effective programs that would allow the student to study at another university or abroad effectively, without experiencing any cultural, socio-economic and academic difficulties (Likhacheva, 2020c).

Let us consider the possibility of developing academic mobility using the example of a technical university, since it is these universities that currently occupy a leading position due to the importance and development of engineering education not only in Russia, but also abroad. Let us characterize step by step the possible academic mobility of a teacher, student, as well as the managerial staff.

#### **5. Research Methods**

Academic mobility of a non-linguistic teacher provides, firstly, proficiency in a foreign language, in particular, English for a possible lecture course or practical training at universities abroad. The level of English must be at least B2 or C1, which means free communication in the language on everyday and professional topics. We note the need for constant improvement of language competence through the environment, specialized courses and self-education - watching films in the language, reading literature on the specialty in English, listening to special lectures, attending webinars on teaching methods of a particular discipline in English. In fact, the teacher must speak, write, comprehend and, of course, read profile texts in English practically, as in their native language (Likhacheva, 2020d). This is not an easy question. Note that, unfortunately, the level of proficiency in the foreign language communicative competence of non-linguistic teachers, as a rule, needs to be improved. Unfortunately, the humanitarian segment in such universities is not particularly developed, and is often ignored. But in accordance with the changing reality, the importance of a foreign language, English, in particular, is increasing. In this vein, motivation is of great importance. If the teacher is active, interested in constant growth and improvement, mastering or improving foreign language communicative competence will not be difficult for him (Gez et al., 2010). In addition, the prospect of work or part-time work at a foreign university or a special internship is a strong motivating factor for a teacher who is a professional in higher education.

Secondly, the teacher must have a number of personal qualities that can allow him to travel abroad and read a course of lectures there. These are purposefulness, a certain assertiveness, responsibility, the desire to constantly improve their professional competencies, volitional characteristics that allow you to set goals and objectives and achieve them, contact, sociability, the desire for joint activities and teamwork. The teacher should be initially open to cooperation, interaction, ready for possible aspects associated with some

misunderstanding on the part of the trainees, strive to eliminate them, and approach the educational process democratically. The most important in this context is the motivation to see the results of their work, to increase the level of knowledge of students after a particular course of lectures, practical classes, special and elective courses. The form of communication with students, regardless of lecture or practical, should be relaxed, friendly (Galskova, 2000; Galskova & Gez, 2016). The teacher must also have a basic knowledge of the mentality and culture of the country or region where he will be sent to the framework of the academic mobility program. This will remove some stiffness and language barrier from both the learner and the student. It is desirable for the teacher to act as an older friend and comrade who is able to point out to students the vector of further development, formation, professional growth and the development of personal qualities that are in demand by society.

Thirdly, the teacher must be a professional in his field. We believe that this means an excellent knowledge of the taught and related disciplines, the desire to master effective methods of teaching a particular discipline in the context of a modern university and realities. Also, a real teacher-professional must be effectively engaged in methodological and research activities, attract students, develop joint manuals, articles, test materials, prepare video lectures, plan and participate in various competitions and grants. In addition, a teacher planning to participate in an academic exchange program must be proficient in modern computer technology and distance work skills, which will greatly simplify the process of academic interaction between universities (Dakhin, 2003; Galskova et al., 2018). Note that the teacher must constantly develop, grow, bring knowledge to students, popularize his subject, improve methods, generalize and share experience, participate in interdepartmental interaction in order to find new approaches to solving educational and research problems.

## **6. Findings**

We believe that the above characteristics of the teacher will allow him to effectively participate in the academic mobility program at the present stage.

With regard to students, we note the following. Academic student mobility is also called student exchange. This is a very interesting and useful activity, especially at the present stage of the development of society. Universities should actively promote this policy, since such an initiative has a positive effect on the general cultural level of students, language competence, professional knowledge and characteristics (Bershadsky & Guzeev, 2003). In addition, student mobility contributes to the restoration and development of international cooperation in terms of science, technology, language segment, cultural integration, promotion of peace and mutual understanding between countries.

So, we think that cooperation between universities in terms of student exchange should take place in the following context. First, it is possible for individual students to intern at a similar university abroad. These are the students who are engaged in research, take part in scientific conferences and seminars, round tables, and discussions. These are motivated students who, as a rule, want to master a greater number of competencies than provided by the programs and curricula for a particular discipline or profile (Pisarenko, 2019). Such students can adequately represent a local university abroad and complete a set of certain disciplines in English in their specialty. They can also study a range of electives or take specialized courses. Of course, the level of proficiency in a foreign language communicative competence is taken for granted

and should not be lower than B2 or C1. In turn, the partner university sends future researchers, potential scientists to our university, which will allow them to significantly expand their professional competencies, improve language skills, and get to know Russian culture, traditions, and mentality better.

Secondly, it is possible to exchange groups of students in the framework of writing future qualification works (Shtoff, 1966). Russian students can be sent to one of the foreign technical universities for pre-diploma practice and carry out a project abroad using materials, experience, possible experiments and laboratory research within the framework of the partner university. In turn, students of the specified university can come to our university and go through the last year of bachelor's or master's degrees with us, using our technologies, factual material, listening to a course of lectures from our professors and teachers. They must also be fluent in Russian at least at the Second Certification Level. Such interaction will expand cooperation in terms of training future specialists precisely at the graduation level. In this regard, it is also appropriate to exchange graduate students who may work at a partner university at the stage of completing a dissertation research.

Thirdly, the organization of blended learning is possible. This means that the forms of traditional education are combined with elements of electronic, in which special information technologies are used, such as computer graphics, audio and video, and interactive elements. Note that this form includes the best of the traditional and distance academic process (Novikov, 2006). We believe that it can be very easily applied within the framework of academic mobility without any additional costs on the part of partner universities. So, the student receives part of the material in his university in live communication, and part of it can be taken out in a distance format, which is carried out by the partner university. We are confident that blended learning can be the first stage of cooperation between universities in the framework of academic interaction. Teachers from other universities in Russia, as well as from foreign universities, by agreement, can give a course of lectures or even a set of disciplines in a specific profile. If the language of communication is English, then such training will also be in demand in order to increase the level of foreign language proficiency among students of non-linguistic universities.

Fourthly, it is important to take into account the specifics of the trainees. A teacher who travels abroad or gives lectures in a distance format for students of another country must know the peculiarities of culture, mentality, and behavior with such students (Novikov & Novikov, 2004). It is possible that the forms of interaction with students adopted in Russia may seem strange to foreign students, and vice versa. Likewise, students participating in the academic mobility program must be aware of the peculiarities of behavior in the host country, the traditions of the people, its history and culture. In addition, it is important to respect everything and comply with all norms of behavior, ethical aspects and other features characteristic of a particular state. It is because of these aspects that we strongly recommend that you prepare both teachers and learners for effective interaction with foreigners without possible difficulties of a communicative nature in advance.

Fifthly, it is recommended to use universal and effective methods that can be adequately perceived by both Russian and foreign students. For example, the application of a lecture is conversation. The presentation of the material is carried out not in a dry and concise form of a theorized plan, but in an interesting, interactive way, asking students questions about the material being read, as well as on previous topics in order to carry out diagnostic measures, revise a previously passed fragment, and also by asking

leading questions about future topics in connection with the material studied in the lesson. At the same time, it is important to use presentations, sheets - explanations with terminology, an interactive whiteboard with questions, to bring them to their logical conclusion, indicating the results of the lecture. With this approach, students will be in good shape, everyone will be involved in the process, the efficiency of presentation and perception of the material will increase.

Another universal approach is the project methodology, which allows you to reveal all the latent abilities of students. They can realize themselves in the preparation of various projects on a particular topic. The forms of implementation can be oral or written. The teacher gives the task to consider the material at different levels, from different points of view, broadly and deeply, using the Internet, a large amount of literature, factual material. Presentations, video reviews, business games and case studies are welcome to reveal the topic of the project. In addition, diagnostic measures of a different order are necessarily carried out - tests, sections, final work. It is important that students themselves develop test material, test it in practice, make appropriate adjustments, and generalize experience. The teacher guides the trainees towards the preparation of assignments on current control, and also recommends other test material, which is worked out and supplemented by students. In general, the project allows all students to be involved in the coverage of the topic, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the material is studied in many ways, at various levels, carefully and quality of its assimilation increases with this approach.

## **7. Conclusion**

As we can see, academic mobility is an important component of modern university education. It also implies managerial staff exchanges that impact the staff policy greatly. Management exchanges of divisions imply the improvement of their managerial qualities and characteristics in a variety of conditions. While in most Russian universities there is a strict hierarchy and, for the most part, unconditional subordination to top management, which is justified by Russian realities, in the West, in this vein, the situation is somewhat different. More democracy in relations between management and subordinates provides for the development of creative initiatives, greater freedom of choice of management technologies, the absence of a bureaucratic apparatus, effective management, which, first of all, provides for a high-quality personnel policy, emphasis on the professional characteristics of subordinates and management. There is an effective exchange of experience and knowledge, theoretical and practical information, and achievements. In this aspect we should underline that the better the teacher is treated and paid at the university, the better results he produces as far as his students and university activities go.

Finally, if all the recommendations given above are fulfilled, the academic mobility can facilitate the modernization of the educational system of high school in general and in a technical university in particular. The contents of a university education, methods and approaches can be improved, become more effective and practical. Language skills, higher cultural level, wide cooperation between universities, departments and faculties will positively influence the professionalism of future specialists. So, the academic mobility is a kind of an instrument changing the academic and educational space for the better.

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