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RAPID ENROLMENT GROWTH AND THE QUALITY OF STUDENTS' LEARNING ACTIVITY IN UZBEK HIGHER EDUCATION: A POLICY AND STATISTICAL ANALYSIS WITH A MULTI-LEVEL ASSURANCE MECHANISM

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Abstract. The article examines the gap between quantitative growth and the quality of students' learning activity in Uzbek higher education, drawing on normative acts and official statistics. Our calculations show that enrolment rose from 808.4 to 1535 thousand between 2021/22 and 2025/26, an increase of 89.9% and a compound annual rate of 17.4%; in 2024/25 there were about 28.9 students per teacher. Six normative acts are compared and the quality mechanisms they establish identified. A multi-level mechanism (state – agency – institution – faculty – student) with indicators is proposed, and the 20% survey-participation threshold of the national rating is argued to be an engagement lever.

Keywords: higher education, quality of learning activity, enrolment growth, quality assurance, national rating, student engagement, self-regulated learning, credit-module system

O‘ZBEKISTON OLIY TA’LIMINING JADAL KENGAYISHI VA TALABALAR O‘QUV FAOLIYATI SIFATI: ME’YORIY-STATISTIK TAHLIL VA KO‘P DARAJALI TA’MINLASH MEXANIZMI

Annotatsiya. Maqolada O‘zbekiston oliy ta’limidagi miqdoriy o‘sish va talabalar o‘quv faoliyati sifati o‘rtasidagi nomutanosiblik me’yoriy hujjatlar va rasmiy statistika asosida tahlil qilingan. Hisob-kitoblarga ko‘ra, talabalar soni 2021/22–2025/26-yillarda 808,4 mingdan 1535 mingga, ya’ni 89,9% ga o‘sgan, yillik o‘rtacha sur’at 17,4% ni tashkil etgan; 2024/25-yilda bir professor-o‘qituvchiga taxminan 28,9 talaba to‘g‘ri kelgan. Oltita me’yoriy hujjat qiyoslanib, ularning sifat mexanizmlari aniqlangan. Davlat, agentlik, muassasa, fakultet va talaba darajalarini qamrovchi mexanizm hamda indikatorlar tizimi taklif etilgan; milliy reytingdagi 20% ishtirok chegarasi talaba faolligini oshirish vositasi sifatida asoslangan.

Kalit so‘zlar: oliy ta’lim, o‘quv faoliyati sifati, talabalar kontingenti, ta’lim sifatini ta’minlash, milliy reyting, talaba faolligi, o‘z-o‘zini boshqarib o‘qish, kredit-modul tizimi

СТРЕМИТЕЛЬНОЕ РАСШИРЕНИЕ ВЫСШЕГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ УЗБЕКИСТАНА И КАЧЕСТВО УЧЕБНОЙ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТИ СТУДЕНТОВ: НОРМАТИВНО-СТАТИСТИЧЕСКИЙ АНАЛИЗ И МНОГОУРОВНЕВЫЙ МЕХАНИЗМ ОБЕСПЕЧЕНИЯ

Аннотация. В статье на основе анализа нормативных актов и официальной статистики рассматривается разрыв между количественным ростом высшего образования Узбекистана и качеством учебной деятельности студентов. Расчёты показывают, что контингент студентов за 2021/22–2025/26 гг. вырос с 808,4 до 1535 тыс., то есть на 89,9%, при среднегодовом темпе 17,4%; в 2024/25 г. на одного преподавателя приходилось около 28,9 студента. Сопоставлены шесть нормативных актов и выявлены закреплённые ими механизмы качества. Предложен многоуровневый механизм (государство – агентство

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– вуз – факультет – студент) с системой индикаторов; порог участия 20% в общенациональном опросе обоснован как рычаг вовлечённости студентов.

Ключевые слова: высшее образование, качество учебной деятельности, контингент студентов, обеспечение качества, национальный рейтинг, вовлечённость студентов, саморегулируемое обучение, кредитно-модульная система

Introduction

Few higher education systems have grown as quickly in recent years as Uzbekistan's. A sector that until the late 2010s admitted only a small fraction of each age cohort now enrols well over a million and a half students, and new public, private and foreign institutions open every year. Expansion of this kind is a legitimate policy goal: it widens access, answers labour-market demand and responds to the aspirations of a young population. Yet growth also raises an uncomfortable question that every massifying system eventually faces. When the number of students doubles within a few years, does the quality of what those students actually do while learning keep pace, or does it quietly erode behind favourable headline figures?

The answer depends partly on what is meant by quality. Harvey and Green showed three decades ago that the term carries several distinct meanings, among them quality as exceptionality, as consistency, as fitness for purpose, as value for money and as transformation of the learner [1]. Policy documents frequently slide between these meanings, measuring inputs and compliance while proclaiming transformation as the aim. For the present study the transformative reading matters most, because it locates quality in changes in the student, and therefore in the learning activity through which such changes occur.

Research on teaching and learning in universities supports this focus on process. Gibbs, reviewing the evidence on what predicts educational gain, concluded that presage variables such as funding, research reputation and student–staff ratios explain less than process variables: class size, the quantity and promptness of feedback, the level of student effort and the extent to which students are engaged [2]. Kuh's work on student engagement makes a similar point from another angle, defining engagement as the time and effort students invest in educationally purposeful activities together with what institutions do to induce such participation [3]. In both accounts, quality is co-produced. It cannot be guaranteed by regulation alone, nor left entirely to the individual learner.

Persistence research adds a further dimension. Tinto's model of student departure links withdrawal to the degree of academic and social integration students achieve, especially in the first year [4]. Rapid expansion tends to bring in first-generation students and students in part-time or distance modes, groups for whom integration is harder and institutional support more consequential. A system that grows fastest precisely in these segments therefore needs mechanisms that monitor not only how many students enrol but how they progress.

The learner's side of co-production is captured by the concept of self-regulated learning. Zimmerman describes self-regulation as a cyclical process of forethought, performance and self-reflection through which learners set goals, select strategies, monitor their progress and adjust [5]. Meta-analytic evidence shows why this matters for quality. Richardson, Abraham and Bond, pooling 13 years of research and 241 data sets, reported that performance self-efficacy correlated with university grades at $r = 0.59$, grade goal at $r = 0.35$, effort regulation at $r = 0.32$ and academic self-efficacy at $r = 0.31$, whereas a strategic approach to study showed $r = 0.23$ [6]. Active formats point in the same direction: in Freeman and colleagues' meta-analysis of 225 studies, students in traditional

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lectures were 1.5 times more likely to fail than those in active-learning classes, 33.8% against 21.8%, and exam scores were on average about 6% (0.47 SD) higher under active learning [7].

At the level of systems, the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) translate these insights into expectations for internal and external quality assurance. Standard 1.3 asks institutions to deliver programmes that encourage students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and other Part 1 standards cover information management, ongoing monitoring and student involvement [8]. A growing literature, however, warns that formal systems can remain detached from daily academic practice. Elken and Stensaker introduced the notion of "quality work" to draw attention to the routine, often informal activities through which staff and students actually sustain or neglect quality [9]. This critique is relevant to any country that builds external machinery quickly: agencies, ratings and procedures can multiply faster than the everyday practices they are meant to steer.

Uzbekistan has, in fact, been building such machinery at speed. The Concept for the development of higher education until 2030 (PF-5847) set the course for expansion and for the transition to a credit-module system [10]; the Law on Education (ORQ-637) provided the legal frame [11]; Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 824 regulated the organisation of study under credits [12]; Presidential Decree PF-76 of 2025 created a National Agency for Education Quality Assurance [13], whose statute was approved by Resolution PQ-275 [14]; and in February 2026 the Agency issued a regulation on the national rating of higher education institutions [15]. What has not yet been examined systematically is how these instruments relate to the scale and pace of enrolment growth, and which levels of the system they leave without a clear quality lever.

The aim of the study is to compare the dynamics of higher education expansion in Uzbekistan with the normative mechanisms that govern the quality of students' learning activity, to quantify the main growth and capacity indicators from official data, and on this basis to propose a multi-level mechanism for assuring learning-activity quality with tools and indicators for each level.

Materials and methods

The study combines two strands of desk research, both conducted on materials produced in and about Uzbekistan. No primary data were collected; the analysis relies entirely on published documents and official statistics.

The first strand is a document (policy) analysis of six normative acts: the Law on Education ORQ-637 of 23 September 2020 [11], Presidential Decree PF-5847 of 8 October 2019 [10], Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 824 of 31 December 2020 [12], Presidential Decree PF-76 of 5 May 2025 [13], Presidential Resolution PQ-275 of 8 September 2025 approving the statute of the National Agency [14], and the regulation on the national rating of higher education institutions approved by the order of the Agency's director of 28 February 2026, registration No. 3783 [15]. Each document was read with a fixed set of questions: which actor it empowers, what instrument it introduces, whether that instrument addresses inputs, processes or outcomes, and whether it reaches the learning activity of students directly or only indirectly. The answers were coded and summarised in a comparative table.

The second strand is a secondary analysis of official statistics. Enrolment figures for 2021/22–2025/26 come from the State Statistics Committee as reported in the national press [16]; the number of institutions in 2017/18 and 2023/24 comes from the Institute for Labour Market and Migration Research [17], and the 2025/26 figure from a ministry-based news source [18]; the number of teaching staff at the start of 2024/25 is taken from State Statistics Committee data reported in [19]; and the coverage rate and the number of institutions offering distance study were announced at the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation's year-end briefing in December 2025 [20]. The figure for

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2024/25 enrolment (about 1,432.8 thousand) was derived from the reported 2025/26 total and the stated annual increase of 102.2 thousand.

Three types of calculation were performed. Year-on-year growth rates were computed as g = (Et / Et-1 − 1) × 100, where E is enrolment in thousands. Cumulative growth over the period was computed in the same way between the first and last year, and the compound annual growth rate as CAGR = (E2025/26 / E2021/22)^(1/4) − 1. Capacity was described through the ratio of students to teaching staff and the average number of students per institution. All figures were rounded to one decimal place after calculation.

The comparative part draws on international quality frameworks, chiefly the ESG [8], and on the research literature reviewed above. This comparison is qualitative: no foreign statistical benchmarks were used, because the aim was to test the logic of Uzbek instruments against widely accepted principles rather than to rank the country. The proposed mechanism was constructed by mapping the gaps identified in the document analysis onto five levels of governance and assigning to each level tools and indicators supported by the literature.

Results

Enrolment dynamics and capacity

The scale of growth is shown in Table 1 and Figure 1. Between 2021/22 and 2025/26 enrolment rose from 808.4 to 1,535 thousand students. The steepest increases occurred at the start of the period. In 2022/23 enrolment grew by 233.7 thousand: 1,042.1 / 808.4 = 1.289, that is, +28.9%. In 2023/24 the increase was 272.4 thousand: 1,314.5 / 1,042.1 = 1.261, or +26.1%. Growth then slowed markedly, to +9.0% in 2024/25 (1,432.8 / 1,314.5 = 1.090) and +7.1% in 2025/26 (1,535 / 1,432.8 = 1.071).

Table 1. Enrolment dynamics in higher education of Uzbekistan, 2021/22–2025/26

Academic year	Students, thousand	Absolute change, thousand	Year-on-year growth, %	Index (2021/22 = 100)
2021/22	808.4	–	–	100.0
2022/23	1042.1	+233.7	+28.9	128.9
2023/24	1314.5	+272.4	+26.1	162.6
2024/25	≈1432.8	+118.3	+9.0	177.2
2025/26	1535.0	+102.2	+7.1	189.9

Source: State Statistics Committee data as reported in [16]; the 2024/25 figure is derived from the 2025/26 total minus the reported annual increase; growth rates and indices calculated by the author.

Over the four years as a whole, enrolment increased by 726.6 thousand, or 1,535 / 808.4 = 1.899, which corresponds to cumulative growth of +89.9%. The compound annual growth rate is 1.899^(1/4) − 1 ≈ 0.174, i.e. 17.4% per year. In 2025/26 women made up 782.9 thousand and men 752.1 thousand of the student body [16], a female share of 51.0%.

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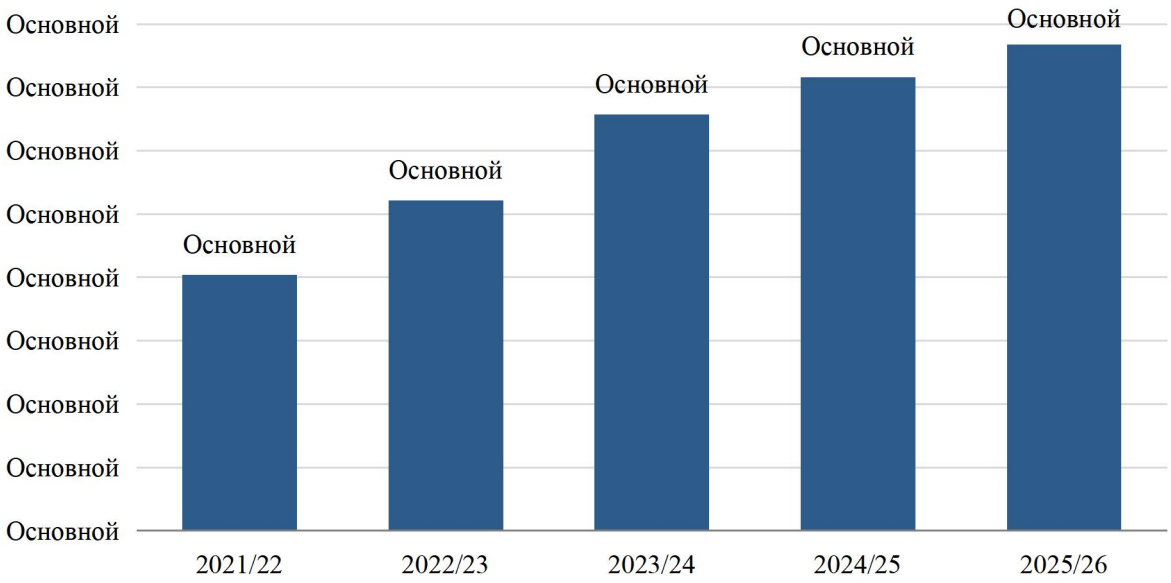


Figure 1. Number of students in higher education institutions of Uzbekistan, thousand

Source: compiled by the author from [16]; the 2024/25 value is derived.

The deceleration is easier to see in Figure 2, which plots the year-on-year growth rates from Table 1. After two years of growth above 25%, the rate fell by more than half in a single year and continued to decline.

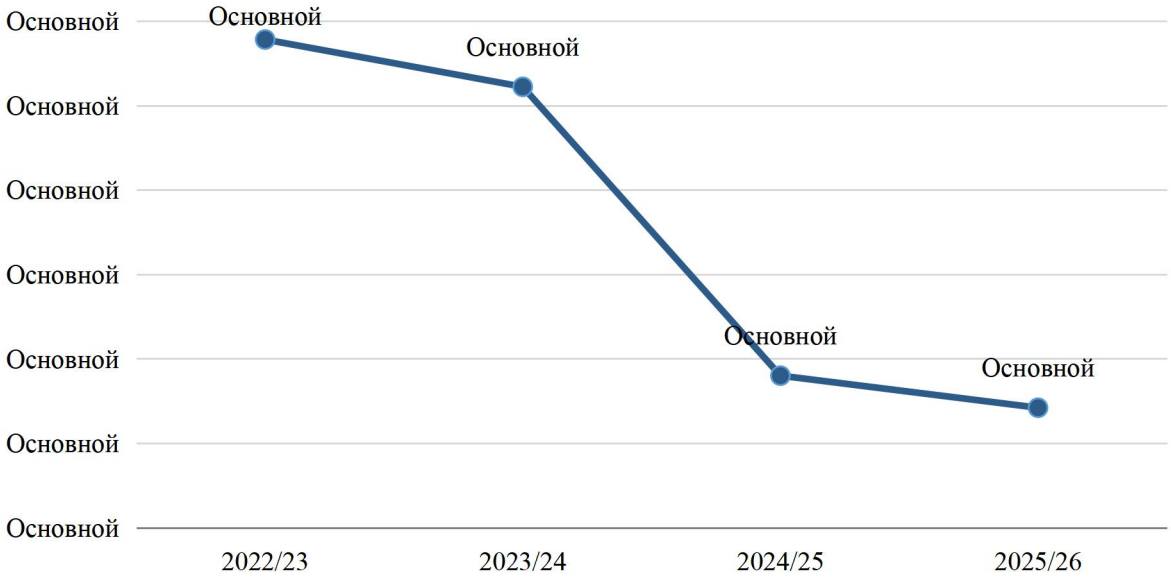


Figure 2. Year-on-year growth of enrolment in higher education of Uzbekistan, %

Source: calculated by the author from [16] (see Table 1).

Institutional growth was even more pronounced in relative terms. The number of higher education institutions rose from 72 in 2017/18 to 219 in 2023/24, including 31 foreign institutions [17], an increase by a factor of 3.04, or +204%. By 2025/26 the count, including branches, stood at 215 [18], a slight decrease of 1.8% that may reflect consolidation or closures rather than a reversal of the trend. Average size moved in the opposite direction: 1,314.5 / 219 ≈ 6.0 thousand students per institution in

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2023/24 against 1,535 / 215 ≈ 7.1 thousand in 2025/26. Growth in the second half of the period, in other words, has come mainly from existing institutions taking in more students.

Teaching capacity has not kept up with this intake. At the start of 2024/25 the system employed 49.6 thousand teaching staff [19]. Dividing enrolment for the same year by this number gives 1,432.8 / 49.6 ≈ 28.9 students per teacher. Because the enrolment figure counts all forms of study, including part-time and distance students, the ratio is an aggregate measure and conceals large variation between institutions and programmes. Even so, it signals that the average teacher now carries a heavy load, which constrains exactly the process variables Gibbs identified as most consequential: small-group teaching and frequent, timely feedback [2].

Two further indicators complete the picture. Gross coverage of the relevant age group exceeded 44% in 2025, and the number of institutions training students in the distance mode rose from 21 to 52 [20], an increase of 147.6%. Distance study enlarges access but transfers more responsibility for organising learning to the students themselves, which raises the importance of self-regulation and of institutional monitoring of online activity.

Normative mechanisms of learning-activity quality

Table 2 summarises the document analysis. Read in chronological order, the six acts show a clear shift: from expansion and structural reform in 2019–2020 to the creation of dedicated quality bodies and measurement instruments in 2025–2026.

Table 2. Normative acts of Uzbekistan and the learning-quality mechanisms they establish

Act	Main content relevant to quality	Mechanism type	Reach to students' learning activity
PF-5847, 08.10.2019	Concept to 2030: expansion of access; transition of 85% of HEIs to the credit-module system by 2030 (33 HEIs in 2020/21)	Strategic target, structural reform	Indirect: changes the organisation of study
ORQ-637, 23.09.2020	Legal framework of the education system; principles, rights and duties of learners; state control of education quality	Legal norm, state oversight	Indirect: sets general obligations
VM 824, 31.12.2020	Organisation of the study process under credits; student workload and independent study counted in credits; structured assessment	Process regulation	Direct: defines workload and assessment of students
PF-76, 05.05.2025	Establishment of the National Agency for Education Quality Assurance under the Presidential Administration	Institutional (external QA body)	Indirect: creates the actor
PQ-275, 08.09.2025	Statute of the Agency: functions, powers,	Institutional, international	Indirect: defines external

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Act	Main content relevant to quality	Mechanism type	Reach to students' learning activity
	structure; Agency later admitted to CHEA CIQG membership	alignment	review
Rating regulation, 28.02.2026	Four scoring blocks; annual national survey of students, staff and employers by 1 June; no survey points if student and staff participation is below 20%; four rating categories	Measurement and incentive	Partly direct: student voice enters institutional scores

Source: compiled by the author from [10–15].

The early documents act on the structure of study. PF-5847 set the target that 85% of institutions should adopt the credit-module system by 2030, starting from 33 institutions in 2020/21 [10]. Resolution No. 824 then made credits the unit in which students' workload, including independent work, is planned and assessed [12]. Under the ECTS logic on which the credit-module system draws, one year corresponds to 60 credits and one credit to 25–30 hours of student work, so an annual workload of roughly 1,500–1,800 hours is implied. This is the only instrument in the set that speaks directly to how students spend their learning time. Whether that time is in fact spent on purposeful activity is not monitored by any of the acts, however; the credit is a planning unit, not an engagement measure.

The later acts create an external quality-assurance architecture. PF-76 established the National Agency [13] and PQ-275 defined its mandate [14]; the Agency's admission to the CIQG network of the US Council for Higher Education Accreditation signals an intention to align with international practice. These steps correspond to the ESG expectation of an independent external body [8], but on their own they say nothing about learning processes inside institutions.

The rating regulation of February 2026 is the first instrument that converts quality into scores for which institutions compete [15]. Its scores are distributed across four blocks whose weights vary by rating category (social sciences and humanities, applied, medical, creative and sports). The academic block carries 30 points and includes the share of teachers with academic degrees, their average age, the student–teacher ratio, and teaching quality and conditions. The research block carries 10–25 points, the international block 10–15 points, and the block on graduates and digitalisation 30–50 points, covering employment, time to employment, average earnings and digitalisation.

Two features of the regulation stand out. First, outcome indicators dominate: the graduates and digitalisation block can weigh up to 50 points, more than the entire academic block. Learning processes appear only within the academic block, mostly through input proxies such as staff qualifications and the student–teacher ratio. Second, the regulation requires an annual nationwide survey of students, teaching staff and employers, to be completed by 1 June, and it denies an institution any points on the survey indicators if fewer than 20% of its students and staff take part [15]. This threshold is, in effect, the only point at which the rating rewards the participation of students as such.

A multi-level mechanism for assuring learning-activity quality

Placing the statistical and normative results side by side reveals a pattern. The state and the Agency now possess strategic, legal and measurement instruments; the student's own learning activity

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is regulated in volume (credits) but not in quality; and the levels between them, the institution and especially the faculty or department, are where process variables such as class size and feedback are decided, yet no act assigns them explicit quality responsibilities. Table 3 sets out a mechanism that fills these gaps by giving each level a defined set of tools and indicators.

Table 3. Proposed multi-level mechanism for assuring the quality of students' learning activity

Level	Main actor	Tools	Indicators
State	Cabinet of Ministers, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation	Linking licensing of new places and admission quotas to staff capacity; funding formulas that include process indicators; national monitoring of the credit-module transition	Students per teacher by institution and form of study; share of HEIs fully on the credit-module system; enrolment growth relative to staff growth
Agency	National Agency for Education Quality Assurance	Accreditation standards modelled on ESG Part 1; national rating; annual national survey with engagement items; publication of results	Survey participation rate (threshold 20%, target higher); engagement and feedback scores; first-year progression rate; graduate employment
Institution	Rector's office, internal quality-assurance unit	Internal quality policy; programme review cycle; learning-management analytics; student support for first-year and distance students	Progression and dropout by year; share of active LMS users per module; compliance of actual workload with credit hours; staff with degrees
Faculty or department	Dean, head of department, programme team	Module design with active-learning tasks; formative assessment plan; feedback standards; workload coordination between modules	Share of modules with formative tasks; median feedback turnaround in days; seminar group size; module pass rates
Student	Student, student council, tutor	Individual learning plan; self-regulation tools (goal setting, time planning, reflection logs); representation in quality bodies; survey participation	Self-reported effort regulation and self-efficacy; hours of independent study; share of students in representative bodies; personal survey participation

Source: developed by the author on the basis of the document analysis and [2–9].

The mechanism is built around two flows. The downward flow transmits expectations: the state sets capacity conditions for growth, the Agency translates them into standards and rating indicators, institutions turn them into internal policies, and departments into concrete module designs. The upward flow transmits evidence: students' learning traces, survey responses and progression data move from modules to institutions, from institutions to the Agency, and from the Agency into public reports and policy decisions. Each level both receives a norm and supplies data, so that responsibility for quality is not concentrated at the top.

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Discussion

The figures in Table 1 describe a system that has nearly doubled in four years. Growth of this order can be absorbed without loss of quality only if teaching capacity, learning support and monitoring expand at a comparable rate. The available data suggest they have not. A national ratio of about 28.9 students per teacher in 2024/25, combined with average institutional size rising from 6.0 to 7.1 thousand students, indicates that the additional students have mostly been accommodated by stretching existing staff. Gibbs's analysis warns that the student–staff ratio is itself a weak predictor of learning gain, but it matters through what it allows: smaller classes, more contact with teachers and more feedback on work [2]. When the ratio rises sharply, these process conditions are the first to suffer, and they are also the ones that official enrolment statistics do not capture.

This is the core of the risk that quantity outpaces quality. In Harvey and Green's terms, a system can perform well on quality as "value for money", producing more graduates per unit of public spending, while performing poorly on quality as transformation [1]. The slowdown in growth after 2023/24, from +26.1% to +9.0% and then +7.1%, offers a window in which capacity can catch up. Whether that happens depends on whether the newly built quality machinery reaches the learning process itself.

The document analysis shows that this reach is still limited. Most of the instruments in Table 2 operate on structure, actors or outcomes. Only Resolution No. 824 regulates students' learning activity directly, and it does so by volume. The national rating, for all its novelty, gives the greatest weight to graduate outcomes. Outcome measures are valuable, but they are lagging indicators; by the time employment data reveal a problem, a full cohort has already passed through the programme. Engagement and self-regulation, by contrast, are leading indicators that can be observed while students are still learning. Kuh's evidence that engagement can be shaped by institutional practice [3], and Tinto's emphasis on early academic integration [4], both argue for building such indicators into the system at the institutional and departmental levels proposed in Table 3.

Self-regulated learning deserves particular attention given the growth of distance study. The rise from 21 to 52 institutions offering distance programmes [20] means that a substantial and growing group of students learns with less direct supervision. Zimmerman's cyclical model implies that self-regulation is learnable and can be supported by tasks that require planning, monitoring and reflection [5]. The correlations reported by Richardson and colleagues, particularly $r = 0.32$ for effort regulation and $r = 0.59$ for performance self-efficacy [6], show that these capacities are not peripheral. For this reason the student level in Table 3 includes self-regulation tools and corresponding self-report indicators, and the department level includes active-learning tasks, which Freeman and colleagues associate with markedly lower failure rates [7].

The 20% participation threshold in the national survey is, in our reading, the most promising lever in the current framework, even though it was probably designed as a safeguard of data quality rather than an engagement tool. By denying survey points to institutions where too few students and staff respond, the regulation gives rectors a material reason to mobilise student voice [15]. Institutions can meet the threshold in two ways. One is administrative: instructing students to fill in the questionnaire. The other is substantive: building a culture in which students see that their feedback changes teaching, and therefore take part willingly. Only the second strengthens learning-activity quality. Elken and Stensaker's notion of quality work is useful here: formal requirements produce lasting effects only when they are absorbed into everyday practice [9]. The mechanism in Table 3 attempts to channel the threshold towards the substantive path by pairing it with engagement items in the survey, with publication of results, and with a "closing the loop" obligation at the departmental

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level. Raising the target above the formal 20% minimum would further reduce the risk that results reflect a small and unrepresentative group.

Compared with the ESG, the Uzbek framework now has the external components in place: an independent agency, public reporting and student involvement in external review [8]. The weaker part is the internal one. ESG Part 1 asks institutions themselves to ensure student-centred learning and assessment, to collect and use information on progression and satisfaction, and to monitor programmes continuously [8]. These are precisely the functions assigned in Table 3 to the institution and department levels. The proposed mechanism is therefore less a departure from current Uzbek policy than an attempt to complete it at the levels where learning actually happens.

Limitations

The study has several limitations. It relies exclusively on secondary data and normative texts; no surveys, interviews or institutional records were collected. Enrolment figures are aggregates that combine full-time, part-time and distance students, so the students-per-teacher ratio cannot be interpreted as a measure of classroom conditions in any particular institution. The 2024/25 enrolment value is derived rather than directly reported, and some figures were taken from official statements reported in the press rather than from statistical bulletins. The rating regulation is new, and its effects cannot yet be observed. Finally, the multi-level mechanism is a conceptual proposal. Its indicators require operational definitions, and its effects need to be tested. Empirical validation is planned as the next stage of the dissertation research, including pilot use of the institution-, department- and student-level indicators in selected institutions and comparison with progression and survey data as they become available.

Conclusion

1. Higher education in Uzbekistan expanded by 89.9% between 2021/22 and 2025/26, from 808.4 to 1,535 thousand students, at a compound annual rate of 17.4%. Growth peaked at +28.9% in 2022/23 and slowed to +7.1% in 2025/26, while the number of institutions tripled from 72 to over 200 and the ratio reached about 28.9 students per teacher in 2024/25. These figures indicate that capacity for process-level quality, such as feedback and small-group teaching, has been stretched by enrolment growth.

2. The normative framework has moved from expansion and credit-based restructuring (PF-5847, ORQ-637, VM 824) to an external quality architecture (PF-76, PQ-275) and a national rating (2026). Students' learning activity is regulated directly only in volume, through credits, while the rating weights graduate outcomes most heavily. The 20% survey-participation threshold is the main existing lever through which student engagement enters institutional assessment.

3. A five-level mechanism (state, agency, institution, faculty or department, student) with defined tools and indicators is proposed to connect external requirements with the everyday learning process. It assigns explicit responsibility for engagement, feedback and self-regulation to the institutional and departmental levels and to students themselves, and it is intended for empirical testing in the next stage of the research.

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