

The History Of The First International University In Uzbekistan

Farzona Khojiakbar kizi Salimboeva

2nd year master's student of History specialty of Andizhan State University, Republic of Uzbekistan

Abstract: This article, using scientific literature, periodicals and Internet information, provides a comprehensive analysis of the establishment of the University of Westminster, the first in Central Asia and the Republic of Uzbekistan, the growing international status of this educational institution and role and prospects of the university in the development of education system in Uzbekistan.

Key words: International university, "Umid" foundation, Uzbekistan, Westminster University, Great Britain, qualified personnel.

Introduction

In 1991, Uzbekistan gained its sovereignty. After this historical event, the government of Uzbekistan emphasized development of education and its globalization. As a result of these actions, in the following decade many international universities established in Uzbekistan and the increased trend was observed in the number of international universities during the following years. In particular, information which released by National statistics committee in 2023, there were 31 international universities in Uzbekistan and these numbers have been growing during the years. The first international university in Central Asia and Uzbekistan was Westminster. It was established on 16th of January 2002 on the basis of Cabinet Resolution No.22 of that year. The proposal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education of Uzbekistan, "Umid" Foundation and British council to establish the University of Westminster was approved.

Research Methods

As I mentioned above, in 1991 Uzbekistan became independent. After that, diplomatic relations were established with many counties in Asia and Europe. Islam Karimov the first Former President of the Republic Uzbekistan visited the UK in November 1993 and relations between two counties started. Since then, cultural, economic, political and social relations have been developing. As a consequence, the University of Westminster in London opened a brunch in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan.

Results Abd Discussions

Westminster University in Tashkent was opened by Resolution No.22 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic Uzbekistan with the participation of the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as "Umid" foundation established in 1997 on the initiative of the first President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov. It was located at 12, Okhunboboyev street, Tashkent city. All buildings of aviation college were given to the Umid Foundation free of charge.

There is a question. Why this university opened in 2002? Well known English journalist Polly Curtis published an article titled "Westminster to keep open Uzbek campus" in the Guardian newspaper in 2005. According to this article this university won the competition of British Council and Uzbekistan government to establish university in Tashkent in 2002. Moreover, in October 2013, Ian Cobain and Lidia Kurasinka published an article in the Guardian newspaper. According to this article, the UK after the September 11 attacks sought to strengthen relations with Central Asia that was strategically important, a former part of the USSR and a key point for NATO's supply to Afghanistan. Establishment of Westminster University in Tashkent was supported by British Council and UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

Uzdaily pointed out that "Umid" Foundation sent 800 young Uzbeks to study in the UK, Germany, Italy, Canada, the USA, France and Japan from 1997 to 2002. According to information released by Publications.parliament.uk website on July 27, 1999, 110 Uzbek students were sent by Umid Foundation for bachelor's and master's programs of high ranking universities of the UK for 1998-1999 academic years and these numbers were expected to grow in the following academic years. The establishment of Westminster

University in Tashkent created opportunities for a lot of students to have international diploma in their home country. Furthermore, this university has been contributing to an increase in the number of personnel who meet world standards.

Currently, Westminster University in Tashkent is one of the important and reputable universities in the Republic of Uzbekistan. In the book, "International education: An encyclopedia of contemporary issues and systems" written by Daniel Ness and Chia Lin, quoted that: "Westminster university in Tashkent is a relatively new institution (founded in 2002) that has been successful in attracting students with high academic credentials." Information in Gazeta.uz emphasized that this university won the Scopus Award for "Impact of research on society: social subjects" in 2023.

University of Westminster in Tashkent has foundation courses, bachelor's and master's programs. High school graduates or academic lyceum graduates in Uzbekistan can not apply directly to a bachelor's degree. First of all, they are required to study in International Foundation Studies which last one or two years. Applicants for this course are required to have IELTS band 6.0 (a writing section may not be lower than 5.0), Grade C or higher than this or IGCSE English or TOEFL78 (IBT (in person)). In addition, there are some requirements in mathematic. Candidates must pass the mathematics exams administered by the university (passing score is 40 percent) or must have Grade C or GCSE "O" level mathematics or equivalent of these and alternatively, they must have SAT (a section of mathematics must be 570) or must complete the university of Westminster academic lyceum with a minimum of 4 grade in each term in mathematics and geometry. In addition, it is also accepted that applicants who progress in the second level of quantitative skills of this university foundation program. There is also an age requirement. Candidates must be 17 years old. Academic English, I, citizen, developing professional identity and quantitative methods are compulsory modules of CIFS program and visual programming, business in the modern world, understanding finance, fundamentals of commercial law and foundation of economics are optional modules. Students who successfully complete these courses are eligible for admission to one of the bachelor's degrees. Furthermore, certificates from these courses are accepted worldwide as a UK university award and accepted as a required level of study for many universities.

Information from Lex.uz website emphasized that initially, university of Westminster undertook the task of training personnel in the field of economics, management, law and information technologies in undergraduate and graduate programs. Currently, this university has undergraduate programs in the field of economics, commercial law, finance information systems in business and business management and graduate programs in analysis in business and analytics, applied economics, commercial law, international business management, master's degree in teaching and education, research methods, public health and human resource management and talent development. Educational processes are conducted entirely in English. These educational programs are confirmed by Westminster University in London and all graduates are given diploma by University of Westminster in London. This university admitted 120 students for 2002-2003 academic years. Currently, the number of students exceeded 5000.

This university established graduate programs in 2007. These programs are also created and confirmed by University of Westminster in London. In addition, these programs are always supported educationally and methodologically. This program involves mastering the necessary knowledge, conducting research and defending a master's thesis. Students who did not study their bachelor's program in English, must have at least a 6.5 on IELTS or TOEFL. After that, they are interviewed.

This was reported on the on the Government Portal of the Republic of Uzbekistan that on 13th of June 2024, chancellor of Westminster university, Komiljon Karimjonov and chairman of the Tax Committee of Uzbekistan, Mubin Mirzaev organized the meeting. At the end of that meeting, memorandum was signed. In addition, on 25th of March 2025, chancellor of Westminster university, Komiljon Karimov and chairman of the Tourism Committee of The Republic of Uzbekistan S.Niyozov met and they signed the memorandum. According to this memorandum, for students and graduates of Westminster university new professional and educational opportunities were created and this memorandum aimed at developing tourism industry in Uzbekistan.

Furthermore, University of Westminster in Tashkent has established partnership with a number of universities. For example, according to information released by official website of this university, on 27th of September 2023, University of Westminster and reputable Asia Pacific University signed the memorandum

at the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Kuala Lumpur. The memorandum was about exchanging students and teachers. This partnership allowed establishing cybersecurity research center in the Republic of Uzbekistan and creation of joint research program which emphasize the importance of cooperation in education. Moreover, this university has established partnership with INTI University in Malaysia. In addition, partnerships began with some universities in Europe such as Vrije University in Belgium. This cooperation included preparing personnel in the field of managing human resources and talent development within the framework of Erasmus plus program.

This university started partnership with United Nation. On 24th of May, 2023, between this university and UN Joint Declaration of Intent was signed. This declaration strengthened exist cooperation.

According to information from official website of this university, this university is planning to hold Tashkent business and economy hybrid conference. In general, this university has created chances for students who want to receive a quality education in the international education system. High academic level, modern infrastructure and attractive students' life make this university one of leading universities in Uzbekistan.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Westminster University in Tashkent is the first international university in Uzbekistan and in Central Asia as well. Currently, this university is preparing high knowledgeable and experienced personnel in undergraduate and graduate programs. In our opinion, this university should multiply kinds of bachelor's and master's programs.

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