Kyrgyzstan shifted from the Soviet state attestation system to independent accreditation of academic programs to assure the public about the quality of higher education in fall 2016.

The purpose of this interpretative qualitative study was to explore faculty perspectives on new independent accreditation of pedagogical programs at three public universities in Kyrgyzstan. The data were collected using semi-structured interviews with sixteen faculty, participant observation and review of Government regulations on the new accreditation system, accreditation standards, policies and procedures. Schlossberg’s Transition Theory (Schlossberg et al., 1995) guided the study in understanding the distinct experiences of faculty with the new program accreditation process conducted by the independent accreditation agency EdNet. The data analysis identified various factors that impact faculty attitudes towards the independent accreditation. The findings showed how the faculty professional lives changed as a result of multiple transitions related to the Bologna Process reforms in higher education. Faculty expressed both positive and negative attitudes towards the new independent accreditation. Some faculty found the new accreditation system as an opportunity for quality improvement and professional
development; others considered it to be a challenge that would not promote the quality of education.

The study provides valuable insights on the new accreditation system that will help both the Ministry of Education and Sciences and the accreditation agency EdNet to review the accreditation regulations, standards and procedures for further quality improvement of higher education programs.