

SPbPU partners from recruiting agencies share their experiences and make forecasts on the future of education

The coronavirus pandemic has brought significant changes into almost all spheres of education. For the first time ever, students have to pass exams online, and applicants will submit their documents to universities remotely. Prior to describing the 2020 admission campaign for foreign students of Polytechnic University, international services talked with representatives of international recruiting agencies, SPbPU partners. Director of RIBTTIS LLC Umair SHAUKAT sketched the current situation and gave forecasts on the future in the regions of India, Pakistan, Iran and other Asian countries. See details in his interview.



- Umair, good afternoon! Could you tell us about the situation in the regions?

- It's not too calm. States such as India, Pakistan, Iran, Bangladesh and Nepal are among developing countries. For them, the coronavirus pandemic has got a catastrophic character and severely affected the economy. In connection with quarantine, industrial enterprises, factories, educational institutions and offices are closed down. The very existing in such economic conditions is quite difficult.

- And how are universities doing? Are there any advantages in online learning?

- I guess, the key advantage now is the safety of students. All educational institutions promptly switched to remote mode. Students continue their studies from home; they do not waste time and are protected from social contacts.

- What do you think will change in the sphere of education after the pandemic?

- I am quite sure that even when quarantine ends, maintaining distance in universities will remain mandatory. To avoid large crowds, many processes, such as student enrollment, will become computerized. Some courses may continue to be taught online. There will be restrictions on mass events for some time to come.

- A question that worries many people now: how do you think the current situation might affect students who want to study abroad?

- This matter causes considerable concerns. Virtual education has got a potent breakthrough, but it is yet far from an ideal substitute for traditional education. This means that its quality is to a great extent lower, and if it continues this way, the virtual education system will create enormous competition between universities for attracting foreign students. Students will look for free or cheaper educational courses. Universities, to meet these needs, will begin to create more and more shortened courses to attract students. The number of educational programs at universities will increase, but their content might get short and concise. And this again is an inevitable loss of quality.

In addition, students go to study abroad not only for training, but also in order to study the lifestyle, culture, and features of other countries. The virtual education system has none of such opportunities.

- How would you assess the measures taken by Russian universities to ensure the safety of their students?

- The approach of the Russian government to preventing the spread of coronavirus is quite relevant and highly valued throughout the world. Security measures taken by Russian universities to protect students and foreigners in such a situation deserve praise. Russian universities immediately switched to a virtual learning mode, and, as we now see, this was an absolutely correct decision.

- What would you advise partners and colleagues in this difficult time for everyone?

- We wish you to be safe and sound. COVID-19 is a global problem, and a critical situation is for all of us. Our team is struggling to collaborate and stay in touch with its global partners. Thus, we can provide full support for all foreign students who wish to enter Russian universities. We hope that this situation will be corrected soon and everything will return to normal.

- Umair, thank you for the interesting interview! We wish you health and success!

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