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The ways of development of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills in students of higher education

Шляхи розвитку м'яких навичок, метанавичок та твердих навичок у студентів вищої освіти

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
Abstract


The article analyzes the content and shows the importance and necessity of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills today. The types of soft skills that are particularly important in modern society are highlighted and the most common classification of soft skills in the public space is presented. Mets skills are considered as a basis for the development, application, and improvement of knowledge and skills, as "higher order" skills that provide an opportunity to improve and understand the significance of other, already existing competencies and allow to achieve the set goal. The importance and necessity of professional hard skills – skills of working with machinery, equipment, and devices have been established. It has been proven that only a combination of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills should and can become a cornerstone in the plan of training specialists in institutions of higher education. Ways of effective formation of


Анотація


У статті проаналізовано зміст та показано важливість і необхідність soft skills, mets skills, hard skills у сьогоденні. Виділено види soft skills, що особливо важливі в сучасному суспільстві та представлено найпоширенішу класифікацію soft skills у суспільному просторі. Mets skills розглянуто як основа для розвитку, застосування, вдосконалення знань та умінь, як навички «вищого порядку», що дають можливість покращувати та розуміти значущість інших, вже існуючих компетенцій і дозволяють досягати поставленої мети. Встановлено важливість і необхідність професійних навичок hard skills – навичок роботи з технікою, обладнанням, пристроями. Доведено, що тільки поєднання soft skills, mets skills, hard skills повинні й можуть стати у плані підготовки фахівців у закладах вищої освіти наріжним каменем. Показано шляхи ефективного формування soft skills, mets skills,

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soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills with the use of ICT are shown. It is noted that a necessary component in the international academic environment is the command of foreign languages.

Keywords: applicants of higher education, soft skills, mets skills, hard skills, institutions of higher education.

Introduction

The importance of universal soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills is confirmed by international and national studies and called "21st-century skills". In recent years, in the global labor market, the concept of "Soft skills" has become an integral part of society and the most diverse sectors of the economy. However, institutions of higher education in practice may not always create conditions for the comprehensive development of soft skills. Therefore, in the preparation of students of higher education, one of the main tasks in the modern educational space is to find ways for the systematic and purposeful development of soft skills (Shchekhlova, 2021).

Until recently, it was assumed that a specialist trained in a higher education institution would be able to do everything and perform his work professionally, namely, work in a team, analyze, be resistant to stress, and this was not taught in higher education institutions, it was not separated into a certain specific branch. Nowadays, the attitude towards the development of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills – important skills for a specialist in any field has changed, employers require separate and diverse skills and knowledge. Attention is paid to the ability to rationally allocate one's time, think creatively, work in a team, and communicate with different people, which has led to changes in the standards of higher education and educational programs in the educational sector (Kravets, 2020).

Professional communication in English, which is an integral component of a specialist's success in the professional field, is a relevant issue in the era of high technologies when training a specialist in any field. Therefore, English language learning should be professionally oriented in institutions of higher education and closely intertwined with the development of skills (soft skills, mets skills, hard skills) in higher education students. It is this combination that makes it possible to successfully compete in the labor market and opens up wider prospects for a person in his activities.

hard skills з використанням ІКТ. Зазначено, що необхідною компонентою у міжнародному академічному середовищі є володіння іноземними мовами.

Ключові слова: здобувачі вищої освіти, soft skills, mets skills, hard skills, заклади вищої освіти.

In the conditions of the challenges of the century, which are global, as a result of which the educational process is implemented on a remote platform, all teachers have to look for new ways to improve and develop soft skills, mets skills, hard skills and training for the development of communication skills.

Development of effective strategies for soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills training programs in any field can contribute to social changes in society, in general, in the labor market, increase the competitive advantage of companies, as well as provide opportunities for employees themselves to advance in careers summer stairs (Kuptsova & Kolieva, 2022).

Literature review

Foreign and domestic publications update the need for systematic and purposeful development of universal soft skills, mets skills, hard skills, and general competencies of higher education students.

James Heckman and Tim Kautz (2012) showed that it is "soft skills that predict success in life, that they causally cause this success, and that programs that improve soft skills occupy an important place in the effective portfolio of public policies".

P. Raciti (2015) determined that the development of soft skills and student training in a higher education institution should be a priority task of the educational space since soft skills are closely related to a person's social adaptation, personal well-being, and adaptation to the work context.

For the first time, a classification of "soft skills" was developed for future primary school teachers. I. Miroshnyk (2021), a complex of communicatively oriented exercises, which should be formed in the process of foreign language professional training in higher education students; within the scope of the educational discipline "Foreign language

according to professional direction", the peculiarities of the formation of "soft skills" in the applicants based on a specially developed complex of communicatively oriented exercises are revealed. M. Chykalova (2023) devoted her research to the analysis of the acquisition of communicative interpersonal skills by students of higher education in the specialty "International Relations" in the process of learning foreign languages, to promote the effective promotion of specialists in the professional field; an analysis of the concepts of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills was carried out, the possibilities of creating abilities were compared, the corresponding possibilities in the training of students in higher education institutions, the characteristics of soft skills according to the direction of training "International relations" were presented.

The works of scientists are devoted to the integration of extra-professional skills in the process of learning foreign languages into university education (Kostikova et al., 2021). O. Kravets (2020), the problem of the development of soft skills in professional foreign language classes for students of higher education is considered, foreign language resources that help students of non-linguistic higher education institutions to develop and nurture soft skills are considered, the possibility, expediency, necessity are highlighted development of soft skills under the condition of properly selected resources in a regular English class.

During the study of a foreign language on a distance platform, T. Kuptsova and I. Kolieva (2022) considered the main methods, features, and ways of developing soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills. For graduates of engineering specialties, the ways of developing soft skills, mets skills, hard skills, and the possibility of language communication during negotiations, business conferences, meetings, meetings, work in international teams are shown; the ability to negotiate and convince, to make public speeches, to defend one's point of view; to implement critical thinking, written communication. The necessity of the English language for the formation of such skills is shown.

I. Kostikova, L. Holubnycha, Z. Girich, & N. Movmyga (2021) determined the degree of development of soft skills (team management, creativity, critical thinking, interaction with people, emotional intelligence, conflict management, stress resistance, flexibility) in higher education graduates, who successfully acquired further development with the help of

game learning tools in the process of learning English.

A. Albarrán, & C. González (2015) conducted scientific investigations and proved the connection between the degree of formation of soft skills of a higher education student and the effectiveness of professional tasks.

International studies by scientists confirm the importance of 21st-century skills – universal soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills. But because, in practice, institutions of higher education cannot always create conditions for the purposeful and complex development of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills, therefore, in the modern conditions of training students of higher education, one of the main tasks is to find ways for systematic and purposeful development of soft skills, mets skills, hard skills.

So, the **goal** of our research is to identify the most optimal options for the development of sought-after soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills for those seeking higher education.

Methodology

Research methods were used in the research process:

- theoretical: analysis, comparison, systematization of scientific, methodical, educational literature on the subject of research on the development of soft skills, mets skills, hard skills in students of higher education, generalization of the development of soft skills, mets skills, hard skills to clarify the level of the research problem and its scientific development, determination of methodical principles of the raised problem, outline of directions of development of advanced progressive ideas in this field;
- empirical: indirect and direct observation, questionnaires, surveys, diagnostic methods, with the aim of systematizing and generalizing statistical and analytical material; a pedagogical experiment to reveal the real state of development of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills among students of higher education;
- mathematical: (mathematical analysis, processing of melons, ranking);
- statistical: for statistical digital processing, summarization of the obtained results.

In the educational space of institutions of higher education, a survey of the degree of development

of sought-after soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills among higher education recipients was conducted with the help of a questionnaire developed in Google Forms. The proposed questionnaire contained open and closed-type questions.

When answering the questions, students of higher education had to determine the degree of development in the educational process of each of the proposed soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills on a 10-point scale. The questions were formulated in such a way that students of higher education started from their own opinions.

The proposed questions were aimed at obtaining information:

- respondents' understanding of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills;
- expressing the opinion of each respondent regarding the necessity and importance of developing soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills in the educational process;
- expressing an opinion about the necessary soft skills, mets skills, hard skills for the future profession, etc.

Students in the last year of study took part in the survey.

The research made it possible to find out the ways that can contribute to the effective development of the necessary soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills in higher education applicants. The majority of respondents believe that the optimal ways of developing soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills are: their inclusion in professional disciplines, i.e. polishing and thorough development of the required soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills in the process of studying educational disciplines – 80% of respondents; introduction into the educational process of higher education institutions: trainings – 75% of respondents; elective disciplines – 67% of respondents; webinars – 55% of respondents; essays and portfolios – 53% of respondents; online courses – 50% of respondents; round tables – 49% of respondents; creative tasks – 49% of respondents; business and role-playing games – 40% of respondents; group and individual projects – 40% of respondents.

After analyzing the answers of the respondents to the questions of the questionnaire, the most optimal options for the development of the in-demand soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills were selected for those seeking higher education.

The conducted empirical research confirmed the need of higher education applicants for the systematic and purposeful development of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills demanded by the modern labor market.

Results and discussion

1. Content, importance, and necessity of hard and soft skills today.

Soft skills are universal general competencies, extra-professional skills that allow a person to interact effectively in various life and professional situations and strengthen professional skills and are a necessary condition for successful professional implementation. "Soft skills" are used as synonyms of such concepts as "non-professional skills", "people skills", and "employability skills". Today, only professional skills are not enough, it is necessary to widely use the spectrum of universal (soft skills) skills to be competitive in the labor market. For this, a specialist must have the ability to quickly orient himself in non-standard, new conditions, learn throughout his life, solve complex professional tasks, accept challenges, and be able to overcome difficulties. From the very beginning of his career, a graduate of a higher education institution should be able to negotiate with partners, and clients, argue and communicate his position to other people, possess emotional intelligence, critical thinking, etc. (Shvedova et al., 2022).

The qualification level of the future specialist has always played a primary role for employers.

In the historical process of the professional field, attention was primarily paid to hard skills, which are easier to assess in a short period and are more technical. The present is characterized by constant improvement and development of technologies, which directly affects changes in the specialist's workplace. Therefore, the need for the appropriate skills of employees is evolving and changing, as modern companies face a changing competitive battlefield (Connell et al., 2014). The working environment, which means the modern student environment, is characterized by diversity, where specialists have the opportunity to interact in a multicultural world. The ability to apply interpersonal communication skills is critically important for the educational space and understanding of team members and colleagues. The constituent part of the student educational space is changing. In a modern educational institution, the student environment is a combination of people from

several age groups and people of different genders and ethnicities. An important element of the modern educational process is that "the change of generations has led to an increase in the demand for future workers with soft skills" (Bailey, 2014).

In 1959, there was a need for a sound scientific approach to the training of highly qualified military personnel of the US Army, and it was then that the terms hard and soft skills were coined in the military field. The importance and necessity of both the professional skills of military personnel (hard skills) and the relevance of the development of soft skills and their universal competencies were established, and the differences between hard and soft skills were shown. (hard skills – skills of working with machinery, equipment, devices; soft skills – skills of teamwork, working with people, papers). The terms hard and soft skills, which were used only in military psychology and science, later moved to the business sphere, the business sphere, and education. The requirements for hard skills remain unchanged in different companies, and for soft skills – they are situational and change.

Hard skills ("hard" skills) – knowledge of programming languages, knowledge of foreign languages, ability to type quickly, mathematical calculations, etc., where any skill can be evaluated objectively.

Soft skills ("soft" skills). It is much more difficult to measure them in specific indicators, but it is possible to develop them. These are universal competencies, the degree of manifestation of which depends on the characteristics of the character, personality type, and temperament of a person – inclination to teamwork, sociability, the ability to work in conditions of force majeure, etc. (Kuptsova & Kolieva, 2022).

2. Types of soft skills that are especially important in modern society.

Soft skills identified in the workplace as important levers include teamwork, communication, problem-solving, motivation, trust, and enthusiasm. Communication skills are crucial for success in any field of human activity (Oseredchuk et al., 2022). Employers are constantly determined by the soft skills they consider appropriate. The most in demand are adaptability, creativity, cooperation, conviction, and emotional intelligence (Kuchai & Kuchai, 2019). Employers want to see a high level of self-organization, communication, and public

speaking skills, the ability to create presentations, master office programs, and manage projects (Puhach et al., 2021).

M. Franco-Ángel, J. Carabali, & M. Velasco (2023) identify the following types of soft skills that are particularly important in modern society:

- 1) the area of interpersonal relations (objective self-assessment; contact; empathy and compassion for other people);
- 2) personal dynamics (striving for achievements; sense of responsibility; high motivation; self-confidence);
- 3) desire for success (motivation to maintain status; self-sacrifice; initiative; tendency to systematize);
- 4) endurance (resistance to failure and criticism; positive emotional guidance; job satisfaction; firmness of life position).

The Boston Consulting Group, an international company specializing in management consulting, conducted a study of the most important qualities of candidates for a vacant position, and the significance for employers of various soft skills:

- communication skills are most in-demand – 79% of respondents claim this;
- vital active position – 78%;
- think analytically – 77%
- endurance – 75%;
- teamwork – 74%;
- desire to achieve the set goal – 70%;
- the ability to be inspired by new ideas – 54%;
- the ability to positively resolve conflicts – 54%;
- personal creativity – 43%;
- reliability as a person and specialist – 42% (David et al., 2021).

Operating on such ladies, it was concluded that the importance of soft skills is constantly growing, and the development of these skills in a higher education student is aimed at making him competitive in the labor market and a worthy member of society (Kravets, 2020).

If for 2023 the defining skills for a specialist in any field of activity were: communication skills, an active life position, analytical thinking, endurance, teamwork, striving to achieve a set goal, solving complex tasks and conflicts, critical thinking, personal creativity, the ability to interact with people, the ability to manage people and be inspired by new ideas, the reliability of a person and a specialist, the ability to make

decisions, etc., then for 2025 the rating of skills is slightly changing:

- 1) innovativeness and analytical thinking;
- 2) educational strategies and active learning;
- 3) the skill of complex problem-solving,
- 4) formation of ideas;
- 5) think critically and analyze the situation;
- 6) initiative, creativity, originality;
- 7) 7 personal leadership and social influence on it;
- 8) use of innovative technologies, development of technologies;
- 9) peer evaluation and monitoring;
- 10) stress resistance of the individual and human flexibility;
- 11) solution, justification of problems (World Economic Forum, 2023).

3. The most common classification of soft skills.

The most common classification of soft skills in public space is the distribution of soft skills according to the following categories:

- 1) social and communicative skills (interpersonal skills, communication skills, leadership, group work, human social intelligence, communication ethics, responsibility);
- 2) cognitive skills (problem-solving skills, critical thinking, intellectual load management, innovative thinking, information skills, time management, self-study skills);
- 3) components of emotional intelligence and personality attributes (creativity, emotional intelligence, optimism, honesty, flexibility, empathy, motivation) (Guerra-Báez, 2019). Between categories and within each category, personality qualities and individual skills overlap (Shvedova et al., 2021).

4. Mets skills – the basis for development, application, and improvement of knowledge and skills.

Mets skills are "higher-order" skills that make it possible to improve and understand the significance of other, already existing competencies and allow you to achieve the set goal, they are "skills that are outside the boundaries, that is, super-professional, interdisciplinary, those that go beyond the usual way of thinking, perception of the surrounding world and oneself" (Chykalova, 2023).

Interesting studies were conducted at Stanford and Harvard universities. In particular, scientists claim that only 15% of career success is ensured by the level of acquired professional skills, and 85% belongs to soft skills. These facts, obtained during the research, motivate the student of higher education to purposefully develop such skills that will be useful to future specialists in various life situations when solving important issues.

At today's stage of society's development, effective professional activity and the training of specialists for it cannot be successfully developed without another type of skills – mets skills, "higher order" skills that allow the future specialist to achieve the set goal, that enable the student of higher education to better understand ways of acquiring competencies important for professional activity and improving existing ones. It is mets skills that are the basis for the development, application, and improvement of other skills and knowledge. Note that only the combination of soft- and mets skills should and can become a cornerstone in the plan of training specialists in institutions of higher education (Bida et al., 2022).

5. The effectiveness of the formation of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills using ICT.

From the side of the students of higher education, as well as from the side of the teachers, the use of information management systems for the educational process contributes to the improvement of the quality of education and the development of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills in students of higher education.

Distance learning services and platforms are considered a means of authentic communication, becoming a mandatory element in the process of language education and information exchange. The effectiveness of the formation of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills with the use of ICT depends on the correctly selected material, the clarity of tasks, and the formulation of instructions by the communication needs and competence of students with the help of a technical tool, the attractiveness of ICT occurs and appears in the cooperation of the teacher with students of higher education in the form of projector equipment, a laptop, a telephone where the teacher plays the role of a facilitator, who only coordinates the process of cognitive and creative activity of students, directing their work so that all students of higher education in the course of the lesson, they joined the work and the

percentage of achievement of the developmental component of the goal in the lesson constantly increased (López de Parra, 2017).

6. Proficiency in foreign languages is a necessary component in an international academic environment.

In the international academic environment, to successfully adapt to the exchange of scientific, professional, and research information, mastering foreign languages is a necessary component. Therefore, the basis for the formation of soft skills, met skills, and hard skills is a foreign language, which has become one of the main components in the field of successful business and any professional activity, which contributes to the development of international cooperation, and work in international teams. In the process of studying professional disciplines, students of higher education develop the following social skills:

- communication skills: the ability to communicate in language during conferences, negotiations, business meetings, meetings; the ability to negotiate and convince, defend one's point of view, make public speeches; to skillfully implement written communication;
- critical thinking: the ability to resolve conflicts and avoid conflicts; the ability to reach agreement and agreement;
- leadership traits: the ability to identify the essence and main trends of any issue through observation.

The challenges of the 21st century have presented new global challenges to the educational space, intensifying the need for all forms of the educational process. Therefore, the development of soft skills, met skills, and hard skills becomes even more relevant for the successful construction of a professional career, for the personal growth of young people, and for the development of a person's communicative abilities. We see the mandatory use of various types of exercises and tasks aimed at the development of such skills as soft skills, met skills, and hard skills in practical foreign language classes.

Tasks, communication exercises, and meetings during business communication help students of higher education remove the language barrier and contribute to their self-confidence as individuals.

Socio-pedagogical means of forming the moral qualities of higher education students are not just watching films, but also discussing the problems that arise in them, similar to writing articles in a newspaper.

Presentations are a component that is very relevant in modern professional activity. During the preparation and demonstration of presentations, such an important skill as creativity is developed and improved in students of higher education.

The following tasks should be given in classes (vote for the most promising and best project), which contribute to the analytical and critical thinking of young people, and stimulate the attention of those seeking higher education. To teach students of higher education to manage their time, it is necessary to set strict time frames before completing the relevant tasks. It is advisable to appoint a responsible student of higher education from the group who will monitor the time.

Time management is a method that helps to improve the quality of one's life, one's effectiveness, to life, and to work.

Very useful for the development of soft skills, met skills, and hard skills is teamwork, which is very limited during distance learning, which is currently used too often in the educational process. The need for the development of soft skills, met skills, and hard skills, the components of which are the ability to make presentations of projects or one's work, communication skills, teamwork, and time management is no longer in doubt today. The combination of personal and professional characteristics of an individual will allow future specialists to find their place in the multicultural world and successfully build their careers (Kuptsova et al., 2022).

7. Experimental research.

In the educational space of institutions of higher education, a survey of the degree of development of sought-after soft skills, met skills, and hard skills among higher education recipients was conducted with the help of a questionnaire developed in Google Forms. The proposed questionnaire contained open and closed-type questions.

When answering the questions, students of higher education had to determine the degree of development in the educational process of each

of the proposed soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills on a 10-point scale. The questions were formulated in such a way that students of higher education started from their own opinions.

The proposed questions were aimed at obtaining information:

- respondents' understanding of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills;
- expressing the opinion of each respondent regarding the necessity and importance of developing soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills in the educational process;
- expressing an opinion about the necessary soft skills, mets skills, hard skills for the future profession, etc.

Students in the last year of study took part in the survey.

The conducted survey showed that:

- 87% of respondents have an idea of such a concept as soft skills;
- 13% indicated that they do not know the essence of the concept of soft skills, and only 18% of all surveyed respondents have an idea about the concepts of mets skills and hard skills.

We received the following answers to questions regarding the promotion of the educational process to the sufficient development of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills necessary for work in the educational process. The educational process promotes the development of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills at the level (on a 10-point scale):

- 9–10 points – 17% of respondents;
- 7–8 points – 38% of respondents;
- 5–6 points – 27% of respondents;
- 3–4 points – 10% of respondents;
- 1–2 points – 5% of respondents.

The next question of the questionnaire was aimed at finding out the opinion of the respondents regarding the necessity and importance of developing soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills in the educational process. 93% of respondents consider the development of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills necessary and important in the process of learning in institutions of higher education. 7% disagree with this opinion.

A question was proposed to find out the opinion of respondents regarding the level of development of emotional intelligence in the

educational space of a higher education institution. In the educational space of a higher education institution, the development of emotional intelligence is facilitated by soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills at the level (on a 10-point scale):

- 9–10 points – 13% of respondents;
- 7–8 points – 35% of respondents;
- 5–6 points – 27% of respondents;
- 3–4 points – 13% of respondents;
- 1–2 points – 4% of respondents.

During the training, it was suggested to assess the level of development of such skills as self-analysis on a 10-point scale. 70% of the respondents rated it by 6-10 points, and 30% of the respondents – by 2-5 points.

Questions to find out the opinion of the respondents regarding the level of development of such skills as originality and creativity in them gave the following answers:

- 9–10 points – 17% of respondents;
- 8–7 points – 42% of respondents;
- 6–5 points – 29% of respondents;
- 1–4 points – 20% of respondents.

In response to the question regarding the assessment of the level of development in the educational process of a higher education institution, such a skill as the ability to study, results were obtained indicating that the majority of respondents rate the development of such a skill quite highly. These are 76% of respondents who gave 6-10 points, and 24% of respondents – 2-5 points.

The next question is aimed at clarifying the development in the process of learning such a skill as critical thinking. As for the level of development in the educational space of critical thinking respondents, the following results of the distribution of respondents' evaluations were obtained. The level distribution is as follows:

- 6–10 points – 75% of respondents;
- 2–5 points – 25% of respondents.

Questions were proposed regarding the development of analytical thinking in the educational process. In the course of the educational process, the respondents evaluated its development in this way. The level distribution is as follows:

- 6–8 points – 60% of respondents;
- 2–5 points – 20% of respondents;

9–10 points by 20% of respondents.

As for the development of self-organization skills in the educational process, which is suggested by the next question, the following results of the distribution of respondents' evaluations were obtained. The level distribution is as follows:

6–10 points – 80% of respondents;
2–5 points – 20% of respondents.

It was proposed to assess the skills of stress resistance and flexibility. We received the answers of the respondents according to the equal distribution as follows:

8–10 points – 43% of respondents;
5–7 points – 33% of respondents;
1–4 points – 24% of respondents.

Respondents could choose several answers to the question "Name the necessary skills that, in your opinion, will be necessary in your professional activity." The majority of respondents believe that the following skills will be needed in professional activities:

- communication skills – 89% of respondents;
- ability to solve complex problems – 88% of respondents;
- analytical thinking – 85% of respondents;
- stress resistance and flexibility – 80% of respondents;
- self-organization – 78% of respondents;
- critical thinking – 77% of respondents.

To the question "What skills would you most like to develop?" respondents could choose several answer options. The answers received are as follows: the respondents would rather develop such skills as:

- critical thinking – 62% of respondents;
- stress resistance and flexibility – 58% of respondents;
- adaptability – 59% of respondents;
- emotional intelligence and communication skills – 42% of respondents;
- ability to learn – 41% of respondents.

To the question "What ways can contribute to the effective development of students' necessary soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills?". The majority of respondents believe that the optimal ways to develop soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills are:

- 1) their inclusion in professional disciplines, i.e. polishing and end-to-end development of required soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills in the process of studying educational disciplines – 80% of respondents;
- 2) introduction into the educational process of institutions of higher education:
 - trainings – 75% of respondents;
 - elective disciplines – 67% of respondents;
 - webinars – 55% of respondents;
 - essays and portfolios – 53% of respondents;
 - online courses – 50% of respondents;
 - round tables – 49% of respondents;
 - creative tasks – 49% of respondents;
 - business and role-playing games – 40% of respondents;
 - group and individual projects – 40% of respondents.

After analyzing the respondents' answers to the questions of the questionnaire, it is possible to identify the most optimal options for the development of sought-after soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills for those seeking higher education.

The conducted empirical research confirmed the need of higher education applicants for the systematic and purposeful development of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills demanded by the modern labor market.

Conclusions

The content is analyzed and the importance and necessity of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills in today's world is shown. The types of soft skills that are particularly important in modern society are highlighted and the most common classification of soft skills in the public space is presented: this is the distribution of soft skills according to the following categories: social and communicative skills (interpersonal skills, communication skills, leadership, group work, human social intelligence, ethics communication, responsibility); cognitive skills (problem-solving skills, critical thinking, intellectual load management, innovative thinking, information skills, time management, self-study skills); components of emotional intelligence and personality attributes (creativity, emotional intelligence, optimism, honesty, flexibility, empathy, motivation).

Mets skills are considered as a basis for the development, application, and improvement of

knowledge and skills, as "higher order" skills that provide an opportunity to improve and understand the significance of other, already existing competencies and allow to achieve the set goal.

The importance and necessity of professional hard skills – skills of working with machinery, equipment, and devices have been established. It has been proven that only a combination of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills should and can become a cornerstone in the plan of training specialists in institutions of higher education.

Ways of effective formation of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills with the use of ICT are shown.

It is noted that a necessary component in the international academic environment is the command of foreign languages.

The conducted empirical research confirmed the need of higher education seekers for the systematic and purposeful development of soft skills, mets skills, and hard skills demanded by the modern labor market and made it possible to identify the most optimal options for higher education seekers to develop the required skills.

The development of mets skills, "higher-order" skills that provide an opportunity to improve and understand the significance of other, already existing competencies and allow achieving the set goal, requires further research.

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