



CONCLUSION

ON THE ACCREDITATION OF THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES OF VANADZOR STATE UNIVERSITY AFTER H. TUMANYAN

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSTITUTION

Full name of the Institution:	Vanadzor State University after H. Tumanyan
Acronym:	VSU
Official address:	36 Tigran Mets street, Vanadzor, 2001 Lori Region, RA
Previous Accreditation decree and date:	Not available

LEGAL BASIS

Guided by the regulation on “State Accreditation of RA Institutions and their Educational Programs” approved by RA Government decree as of 30 June, 2011 N978-Ն; by N959-Ն (30 June, 2011) decree on approving RA Standards for Professional Education Accreditation as well as by ANQA Regulation on the Formation of the Expert Panel, ANQA representatives together with the expert panel and ANQA coordinator of the accreditation procedure discussed the issue of VSU institutional accreditation.

Having examining VSU self-evaluation, expert panel report, the action plan presented by VSU on the elimination of shortcomings mentioned in the expert panel report and the expert panel opinion about that action plan and as a result of discussion **ANQA registered the following:**

The main phases of accreditation procedure were carried out within the following periods:

Submission of application	23 February, 2015
Submission of self-evaluation report	15 April, 2015
Site-visit	1-4 June, 2015
Submission of expert panel report	15 July, 2015
Submission of action plan for elimination of shortcomings	24 August, 2015

RESULTS OF PEER-REVIEW

The expertise was carried out by an expert panel¹ formed according to the requirements of ANQA regulation on the Formation of Expert Panel. The evaluation was carried out based on the 10 criteria² of institutional accreditation approved by RA Government decree N 959-Ն as of June 30, 2011.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The expertise was carried out by an expert panel formed according to the requirements of ANQA regulation on the Formation of Expert Panel. The evaluation was carried out based on the 10 criteria of institutional accreditation approved by RA Government decree N 959-Ն as of June 30, 2011. While carrying out the evaluation that fact that according to its vision VSU strives “to meet the requirements of the labor market by preparing competent specialists and to become a leading center the northern part of RA that will ensure the stable development, provide education services and carry out scientific research”.

VSU's mission is:

- 1) To ensure stable development and to be integrated into the common European education area, the University pursues the policy of meeting the needs of the stakeholders as the basis for realization of its educational and scientific activities.
- 2) To educate competent specialists with fundamental and applicable knowledge and practical skills, the University is creating a student-centered atmosphere.
- 3) To contribute to the ongoing development of the individual, to create a favorable environment for educating a comprehensively developed person by accepting its responsibility towards the society.

According to the decree of RA government on 30 April, 2014, the Institute was renamed into Vanadzor State University after H. Tumanyan and is considered to be the legal successor of Vanadzor State Pedagogical Institute after H. Tumanyan.

VSU is the first educational complex in region which carries out a four-level education: Specialized Secondary Education (since 2010), Bachelor's and Master's (since 2008) and PhD (since 2006).

VSU has the right of providing 28 Bachelor and 13 Master programs and in 2015 there was an admission with 3 new specialties.

There are certain shortcomings in the management system of the University which hinder the efficiency of the activities of the University. Great work is being done at the University in terms of needs assessment of internal stakeholders but there is an apparent tardiness in terms of meeting the identified needs of the stakeholders.

¹ **Appendix 1** ` Expert panel composition and ANQA support staff

² **Appendix 2** ` Summative evaluation

Mechanisms of plan-do-check-act are not fully invested in the management system. Collegial management is still behind the sole decision making.

Based on tuning methodology VSU has developed program specifications with precisely defined learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competences) and educational-methodological packages where teaching, learning and assessment methods are clearly described. The academic programs were compared with other universities'/Armenian and foreign/ similar programs. Labor market analysis is represented in academic programs. The material and technical base of the University and the building conditions not always contribute to the application of various teaching and learning methods stated in the academic programs.

There are certain mechanisms of recruitment and admission of students at VSU, but the University has not evaluated their efficiency yet. In recent years, the number of students has the tendency to decrease. The flow of students from full time to part time mode of study is visible. VSU carried out activities to successfully create a student-centered environment. Various mechanisms facilitate the identification of students' needs. The institute of Academic Advisers was established to support the students.

The University has a qualified teaching staff, but there are some problems in ensuring generation change in some specialties. VSU regularly conducts trainings and qualification enhancement activities for the teaching staff. It encourages teaching staff's professional growth and in recent years the number of lecturers with academic titles and degrees has increased, but the University does not still have enough potential for the internationalization of research.

Most of the objectives of VSU defined for the field of research are extremely ambitious in comparison to the existing resource base and financial resources. Research priorities of the University are not clarified. The research component is expressed in MA programs. One of the main priorities of VSU was Armenian Studies and the University has great number of research in this field. VSU plays a significant role in Pedagogical Science too. The creation of necessary conditions and funding in other fields will allow the teaching staff to match with the rank set by VSU. In order to accomplish these goals, the University should make certain financial investments, but as it is evident from the self-analysis of the University, they are insufficient and the research activities do not ensure any kind of financial flows.

The University does not have policy on the effective management of financial resources which hinders the formation of learning environment and effective accomplishment of set mission and goals. The University recognizes its responsibility to the society of Lori region and tries to meet the demands of the region.

VSU takes active steps in terms of external relations and internationalization. The experience gained through international relations fosters the development of the University; elaboration of academic programs through tuning methodology, introduction of network model of quality assurance, involvement of students and lecturers in mobility programs. The internationalization of the University is hampered by the lack of knowledge of foreign

languages. VSU organizes trainings, founded the Language Center, but still has not achieved great success in this field.

VSU conducts activities in creating quality assurance network system. Due to the effective functioning of QA Center many awareness-raising seminars, trainings, discussions with stakeholders, surveys for revealing the needs are conducted. Due to that daily work the quality assurance processes and the attitude towards QA Center are gradually changing for the better at the University. The activities of QA Center at VSU contribute to the continuous improvement of all the processes, timely identification of stakeholders' needs and solution of problems. Nevertheless, there is a need to clarify the relations between governing bodies and QA Center as well as to strengthen the links. Cyclical style of quality assurance activities is not yet adopted by all the subdivisions of VSU.

Strengths of the University

1. The mission of the institution in line with the demands of labour market of Lori region and the choice of academic programs.
2. The existence of staff ready for reforms.
3. The existence of developed academic programs for promoting student-centered environment, some of which are already introduced, the others are in the process of investment.
4. The diversity of teaching and learning methods in accordance with the outcomes of academic programs.
5. The existence of the Institute for Academic Advisors for academic support and guidance to students.
6. Ensuring moral-psychological healthy environment for the students with special needs.
7. The usage of experience obtained within the framework of external grants in the process of institutional reforms /development of academic programs, training of teaching staff, introduction of quality assurance model/.
8. Constant development of external relations of the University.
9. The proactive work of QA subdivision.
10. Well-awareness of the University of its own weaknesses.

Weaknesses of the University

1. Incompliance of existing resources with the mission, goals and their implementation.
2. Incomplete application of the principle of quality assurance i.e. plan-do-check-act in governing system.
3. The existence of unnecessary vertical management methods in governing system.
4. The lack of funds to encourage research activities of both students and teaching staff.
5. The lack of University resources /the absence of canteen, gym-halls, dormitory and guest house, electronic library, necessary conditions for students with special needs, etc/.
6. Absence of Financial audit.
7. Weak resource base for the promotion of science.

8. Research activities conducted at VSU do not have international recognition.
9. Research based education has not been formed yet.

The University is advised to:

Mission and Purpose

1. In order to make University's mission more measurable and precise, it must be clearly stated that the mission of VSU is to prepare competent specialists who will meet the market needs of the northern regions of Armenia to ensure the sustainable development of the society, and to provide education and cultural services.
2. In order to control the accomplishment of the mission, it is necessary to establish a strategic plan with certain schedule and responsible, based on the strategic directions mentioned in the University's concept paper.
3. It is necessary to develop quantitative and qualitative measurable and available indicators for the evaluation of outcomes of strategic, mid-term and annual plans.
4. It is necessary to improve feedback mechanisms with the external stakeholders. Taking into consideration the increase of the number of employers as a result of changes in mission, it is necessary to update labor market research, to reveal the problems and provide the students with necessary knowledge and skills that would meet the requirements of the labor market.
5. To find means of increasing the motivation of internal and external stakeholders for the reforms.

Governance and administration

6. Search additional sources for funding. It is necessary to improve the mechanisms of the formation and effective management of financial revenues and financial resources and to introduce a system of financial audit.
7. Reform the governing system, engage stakeholders in decision-making processes, improve feedback mechanisms.
8. It is necessary to take into account the needs of students with special needs.
9. Coordinate the examination of factors affecting the activities of the University, to create mechanisms for verifying the accuracy of gathered data.
10. It is necessary to use the gathered data more effectively to identify trends of development and to set new targets. Planning and decision-making should be based on the analysis of the data revealed.

Academic programs

11. It is necessary to create appropriate resource base /particularly, resources of physics, biology, chemistry should be modernized/ for ensuring the achievement of the learning outcomes of academic programs.

12. It is necessary to pay special attention to the academic integrity in the improvement process of assessment policy. The university should develop clear assessment guidelines for ensuring the academic honesty. It is not necessary to apply only punitive and controlling actions but work hard to raise the awareness of the students and explain the dangers that plagiarism can contain.
13. To introduce reliable mechanisms for graduates' feedback. To evaluate the risks of the employment of graduates and improve the academic programs according to those risks.

Students

14. It is necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of students' recruitment mechanisms.
15. To establish relations with various external stakeholders in order to involve students in research activities.
16. To organize regular meetings, seminars and discussions with the employers involving both full-time and part-time students.
17. To develop more effective mechanisms for maintaining feedback with the graduates.
18. The university should provide equal opportunities for full-time and part-time students.
19. To make the part-time students to be involved in Student Council's activities at least through online mode. The same method can be used revealing the needs of part-time students.

Teaching and Supporting Staff

20. To develop mechanisms for ensuring the mobility of the teaching staff.
21. To encourage the involvement of teachers in individual grant projects and create mechanisms to spread their positive experience /mentorship/.
22. The development and implementation of the regulation on competitive recruitment of administrative and supporting staff will contribute to the enhancement of the quality of human resources.
23. It is necessary to organize trainings for teaching staff to promote its development in accordance with the identified needs.

Research and Development

24. It is necessary to revise and clarify research priorities.
25. To create long-term and short-term plans with certain schedule based on the conception of reforms in scientific field and scientific priorities of the University.
26. To develop encouraging methods for research activities.
27. To create mechanisms for evaluating the quality of research activities in chairs.
28. To develop and implement regulations encouraging the involvement of students and teaching staff in international research initiatives.

29. To develop such mechanisms that will promote the internationalization of research (improvement of foreign language proficiency level, involving the graduates of the department of translation studies in the translation of research and scientific articles).

Infrastructure and Resources

30. To carry out external financial audit.
31. The University should try to find other funding sources, as the existing sources of revenues tend to decline.
32. It is necessary to examine the effectiveness of budget allocations according to the needs of academic programs and to make improvements based on the data obtained.
33. To expand the list of programs and services provided types of paid services, to increase their volume and profitability.
34. To take steps in providing students with dormitory, to create opportunities for having meals in the University campus.

Social Responsibility

35. Ensure accountability based on the strategy of the University and annual plans. In this case, it will be easier to evaluate the outcomes.
36. To create a sustainable mechanism for supplementing the website of VSU with the materials in foreign languages which will be beneficial step towards internationalization.
37. One of the lecturers from the Faculty of Journalism and few students can participate in trainings for ensuring PR of VSU.
38. On the basis of the Center for Law to consider the establishment of legal clinics, that will provide free services to the public. The clinic will greatly contribute to the students' practice and create more connections with the public.

External Relations and Internationalization

39. To develop certain mechanisms for checking the quality of foreign language courses regularly.
40. To carry out joint research programs and form effective international cooperation indicators.
41. It is preferable to include internationalization in the work plans of chairs as well.

Internal Quality Assurance System

42. It is necessary to clarify and strengthen relations between governing and QA bodies.
43. The QA toolkit should be developed in accordance with the University's strategic priorities.
44. It is necessary to apply the quality assurance cycle- PDCA, in all the subdivisions of the University covering all the processes.

PEER-REVIEW ACCORDING TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

As critical friends, the panel has conducted a peer review resulting in a number of recommendations related to the ambition of the university to enter the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The panel would like to commend the University for making progress in this respect and also to put forward some recommendations, which can help the University to move forward into the EHEA. Most of these recommendations are intended to encourage the University to continue the work already started.

Observations, commendations

It should be acknowledged that staff is working tirelessly to achieve the University's mission and it is clear that the University is in the phase of continuous development. The emphasis that the University has put upon the employability of its graduates is evident and the panel has seen some encouraging initiatives and plans in this area although the impact of these hasn't yet been quantified. The second emphasis highlighted in the mission statement is the creation of a "student-centered" environment. Staff and students are well aware of this concept in relation to the mission, and are able to articulate what it means in relation to andragogy.

The third part of the mission statement refers to "the ongoing development of the individual" and "a favorable environment for educating a comprehensively developed person". What this means for every student (full time and part time) was not clearly articulated during the meetings and it is the least developed aspect of the mission in terms of principle and practice. It may be argued that there is a tension between a narrow curriculum for "employability" and a broader one which seeks to educate a "comprehensively educated person" and that the University is yet to resolve these competing drivers.

During the site-visit the expert panel met many articulate, concerned and motivated students, including *two with special education needs*. European Universities are fully inclusive institutions and the two students with special needs were strong evidence that students with physical disability are able to succeed at VSU and were a credit to their University. The University is also engaged in developing a distance learning non-award bearing course for *students with special needs* using Moodle. This is an exciting development that will contribute towards the inclusivity of the University and also has potential to lead to research output.

In general, the programs are in the process of modernization particularly with respect to more transparent requirements of the students and the emergence of a student-centered approach. There is work to continue regarding the communication of University standards of academic honesty, although it is not suggested here that we have seen cases of dishonest practice. **Faculties and chairs take academic honesty very seriously** but the University has yet to ensure there is standard practice applied across all faculties and programs for both part-time and full-time students.

Research activities are very limited both in terms of national and international output and in the number of staff and students involved in such research. Funding has been difficult to access and the University may wish to direct further financial support towards promising research staff and productive avenues of research (see recommendation 3).

The process of internationalization has begun with quite a good practice. The department of internal and external relations has been established and appropriately staffed. Students are aware of the opportunities of international mobility and of the value of internationalization of the University. The senior students indeed welcome that process and have seen considerable developments in the last five years. Students and staff speak positively about the importance of cultural exchange, the understanding of others' cultural values, the need to become "networked" and integrated into international and global systems. Surely more can be done to prepare and motivate all staff to engage in international networks and activities and to bring an international dimension to the curriculum for each chair.

International partner institutions have been identified and agreements exist. Some chairs are involved in establishing and cooperating in networks. There is potential at the University for the development of this project which can draw on the expertise and understanding of staff members.

Qualitative data about other initiatives of the University is available. These data enables to be informed about the analytical activities. The mechanism for data collection is operating but is not yet fully developed and integrated. More needs to be done regarding the identification of quantitative measures to inform about the evaluation and quality assurance. As such the internal structure of providing and analyzing information on the quality of programs is rather piecemeal and could benefit from a more systematic and coordinated approach.

Recommendations

Having identified the weaknesses of the University the following recommendations are made in order to better align the University with international frames.

Mission and Purpose

- The University should seek ways to resolve the tensions inherent in its short term purpose (employability on graduation) and a longer term purpose of seeking to develop of "a comprehensively developed person".
- The University should develop a mechanism for defining quantifiable targets in relation to goals (e.g. of employment of graduates) so that improvements can be identified and initiatives evaluated.

Governance and Administration

- The University should enhance its ranking becoming a fully inclusive institution. It should ensure all the students' rights and needs regardless their abilities and disabilities.

This can be ensured by involving students with special needs and students from other ethnic groups in the Student Council and the councils of the University. The University should take into account all the ways that will foster satisfying the needs of students with special needs and improving the physical environment. The first step towards this can be the development of the policy of inclusive learning.

- The University should have Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which are quantitative and tangible and were revealed as a result of the cooperation with the structural units of the University in order to ensure the involvement and responsibility of both internal and external stakeholders in the implementation of the University activities. Recommendations and meetings with target group of stakeholders will give opportunity to the University to show the improvement of the activities carried out in terms of University mission and goals.
- The University should consider how to use data collection more effectively to identify the tendency towards the development and to set new targets. The expert panel suggests setting such targets as students' enrollment, research outcomes, students' achievements, students' satisfaction as well as the quality of education.

Academic Programs

- The University should start to create virtual learning environment to enrich its material resources as it is usually done in European universities. Virtual learning environment provides students with online access to course materials, program information and university regulations. It will create efficient ways of communication with students and will enhance students' experience. VSU has good opportunities to develop a pilot project of virtual learning environment, building it on the bases of Moodle. The information technology skills of staff and students ought to be exploited in order to create a new 'blended' learning approach that is found in many European universities nowadays.
- Further work is needed to ensure that MA thesis papers meet international standards, particularly with respect to the ways in which students demonstrate their understanding of methodology and justify the choice of methodological approaches to reveal the research issues.

Students

- The data provided by the University show that most students at VSU study with part-time system. It also turned out that because of the economic conditions of the region, this tendency may well continue. The University is urged to ensure the experience of part-time students is equitable to that of the full-time peers and that inconsistencies identified in relation to access to guidance and support are eliminated. Virtual learning Environment has great potential to improve communication with part-time students and to enhance face-to-face teaching (see "Academic Programs").

Teaching and support staffs

- The university has significant human resource and it is recommended that it seeks ways to further invest in the development of staff through systematic and target professional development. Targets may include the improvement of language skills of the staff (so that they can fully participate in international activities) and the enhancement of knowledge and skills of administrative staff in the spheres of education management and quality assurance so that they build a sustainable workforce which has the capacity to achieve success in the implementation of long term plans of internationalization.

Research and Development

- The panel wants to urge the university to extend its research activities in a systematic and targeted way. This could be done by focusing its efforts primarily on a limited number of carefully chosen centers of excellence. VSU has the potential to develop research centers in the field of tertiary education andragogy alongside pedagogical research. These centers can stimulate innovation and generate new knowledge and information about teaching and learning processes within the university. This approach has the potential to stimulate more interdisciplinary research.

Infrastructure and Resources

- The university needs to make significant investment in teaching resources and the physical environment if it wants to ensure safe and healthy learning environment for all students. In particular, the resources for physics, biology and chemistry need further updating to enable students to access an appropriate curriculum.

Internal Quality Assurance System

- QA Center has a significant role in ensuring the protection of rights of both staff and students. In particular, the university should develop clear guidelines for assessment practices to ensure academic integrity and honesty. It can be a student handbook explaining the essence of academic honesty and unfair practice; how it can be avoided; and which are the likely sanctions for transgressing agreed regulations. Regulated and consistent processes of cross checking or peer-to-peer moderation of assessment practices will give an opportunity to protect the teaching staff's academic judgments being questioned by students.

The University presented its agreement upon the remarks and recommendations mentioned in the expert panel final report with an official letter.

VSU'S ACTION PLAN ON THE ELIMINATION OF THE SHORTCOMINGS MENTIONED IN THE EXPERT PANEL REPORT

Vanadzor State University after H. Tumanyan admits that the recommendations presented by the Expert Panel are within the framework of the University's strategy and the University has presented action plan and time schedule for the elimination of shortcomings mentioned in the Expert Panel report. This action plan and time schedule were discussed in VSU Scientific Council and were approved by the Rector on 20.08.2015.

Having examined the University's action plan based on the recommendations presented in the final Expert Panel report, the Expert Panel comes to a conclusion that:

Positive features:

- The recommendations of the Expert Panel per criteria were mainly taken into account. As it can be concluded from the action plan, activity plans for most of the recommendations have been developed which are in the phase of implementation.
- There is a clear action plan for most of the strategies of respective criteria.
- The succession of most of the activities in the time schedule is logical
- Responsible people are clearly mentioned for most of the activities.
- Human and other resources are provided for the solution of the problems.
- Realistic deadlines are set for most of the activities and their outcomes are directed to the accomplishment of the set goals.
- Qualitative and quantitative indicators are developed in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented activities.

Negative features:

- Not all the recommendations of the expert panel are included in the action plan
- Sometimes there is no clear distinction between the activities and steps derived from them, in some cases activities and steps coincide.
- In the column for the responsables the responsibilities are defined nor per steps but per activities. For some part of the activities a number of units are responsible which puts the implementation and control over the activity in danger.
- In the column for resources only human resources are mentioned, there are rare notes about material and financial resources.
- In some cases periods are mentioned only for the activity but not for separate steps.

Evaluation of the action plan per criteria.

1. Mission and goals

The actions are not very clear. Indicators for the evaluation of the outcome are mainly not tangible. From the one hand it is mentioned that the activities are already in process from the other hand the periods for those activities are unnecessarily large.

For the accomplishment of the mission the expert panel has mentioned in the recommendations the importance of having strategic plan with clear and tangible outcomes and indicators. However in the action plan of the University this was not planned.

2. Governance and Administration

The action plan has a clear sequence of actions. The period of implementation is logical and clearly defined. But not all the indicators evaluating the outcomes are clear, sometimes the indicators more look like outcome. Though the provision of necessary conditions for the students with special needs was highlighted in the recommendations of the expert panel the University has not planned anything in this respect.

3. Academic programs

The University mainly has the right perception of the issues concerning the implementation of this criterion.

It's a positive step that research component is planned to be added in academic programs. The planned activities are mainly realistic and tangible however the indicators of outcome are sometimes unclear. For example the indicator "Transparency of assessment, measurement of alignment and assessment".

4. Students

The University has taken into account most part of the recommendations of the expert panel. The sequence of the activities is clearly presented and the mentioned period is realistic. However the expert panel especially mentioned the needs assessment of part-time students which is not included in the action plan of the University.

5. Teaching and support staffs

The University has taken into account most part of the recommendations of the expert panel. The sequence of the activities is clearly presented and the mentioned period is realistic. However the indicators mentioned for this criterion need to be clarified. For example as in indicator 20% enhancement of staff motivation is mentioned. It is not clear how should this be measured.

6. Research and development

Activities are mentioned in the action plan but most part of the steps are not separated. Indicators for the evaluation of the outcomes need to be clarified. The periods for the planned activities are unnecessarily prolonged. For example 3 years (2015-2018) is planned for the development of policy on the improvement of VSU research activities.

7. Infrastructure and resources

The recommendations of the expert panel were taken into account, the activities are mainly directed to the elimination of shortcomings. The planned improvement is feasible within the mentioned period however the deadlines are extended. Outcomes and indicators evaluating outcomes are very similar. For example as an outcome of the first activity it is mentioned "allocation of financial resources according to research priorities is regulated" and as an indicator it is mentioned "there is an allocation of financial resources according to research priorities". Along with that there are some clear and tangible indicators in this criterion as well.

8. Social Responsibility

The action plan is directed to the elimination of the shortcomings. The activities are clearly defined, goals are achievable. The period for the implementation is realistic and the sequence of activities is logical. The indicators evaluating the outcomes are mainly measurable.

9. External relations and internationalization

The University has taken into account the recommendations of the expert panel. Clear action plan has been developed for the elimination of shortcomings. The sequence of activities is logical and the planned deadlines are realistic. As a rule the outcomes of the activities as well as the indicators of their achievement are clear and achievable.

10. Internal quality assurance system

The action plan was fully developed based on the recommendations of the expert panel.

Thus despite some shortcomings the action plan for improvement is does not contain risks. Successful implementation of the planned activities can foster the development and improvement of VSU.. However, in order to ensure the control over the action plan, the University should review some outcomes and performance indicators.

Based on the aforementioned, ANQA suggests the Accreditation Committee to draw VSU's attention especially to the implementation of the following activities while making decision:

- 1) To give urgent solution to the problems existing in the spheres of **Governance and Administration, Research and Development, Infrastructure and Resources.**
- 2) According to the requirements of clause 12 of the Regulation on "State Accreditation of RA Institutions and their Educational Programs" or according to the deadlines set by the Accreditation Committee, regularly present a written report to ANQA on the results of the carried out activities.
- 3) To review the action plan for the elimination of shortcomings mentioned in the Expert Panel report taking into account the remarks about the action plan mentioned in the current conclusion.

ANQA finds that the presented improvements will foster the fulfillment of the University's ambitions mentioned in the SER and will serve as a basis for the next evaluation.

Head of ANQA department
of expertise

Head of the Expert Panel

ANQA Coordinator

EXPERT PANEL COMPOSITION

The external evaluation of VSU institutional capacities was conducted by the following expert panel:

- **Lilit Zaqaryan**, PhD in historical sciences, Northern University, Head of the QA Department, RA, Head of the expert panel
- **Alan How**, doctor of pedagogical sciences, Bath Spa University, Head of the Department of Educational and Pedagogical Research, UK, member of the expert panel
- **Varuzhan Atabekyan**, Doctor of physics and mathematical sciences, Yerevan State University, Head of the Chair on Algebra and Geometry, RA, member of the expert panel
- **Susanna Hovhannisyan**, Doctor of philological sciences, RA National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Library after M. Agababyan, leading researcher, RA, member of the expert panel
- **Sima Bosnoyan**, Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences, MS 1st year student of Education management, RA, member of the expert panel

ANQA support staff

- **Anahit Utmazyan**-Head of ANQA staff, Coordinator of VSU Institutional accreditation procedure
- **Srbuhi Jhanjughazyan**- Specialist at ANQA Department on Institutional and Program Expertise, Secretary-stenographer during EIU Institutional accreditation procedure
- **Lilit Muradyan** – Staff member of YSU Center for Armenian studies, translator

SUMMATIVE EVALUATION ³

The expert panel presented its evaluation per accreditation criteria in the following table:

CRITERION	EVALUATION
<i>1. Mission and Goals</i>	SATISFACTORY
<i>2. Governance and Administration</i>	UNSATISFACTORY
<i>3. Academic programs</i>	SATISFACTORY
<i>4. Students</i>	SATISFACTORY
<i>5. Teaching and Support Staff</i>	SATISFACTORY
<i>6. Research and Development</i>	UNSATISFACTORY
<i>7. Infrastructure and Resources</i>	UNSATISFACTORY
<i>8. Social Responsibility</i>	SATISFACTORY
<i>9. External Relations and Internationalization</i>	SATISFACTORY
<i>10. Internal Quality Assurance System</i>	SATISFACTORY

³ While carrying out the evaluation the expert panel followed the Regulation on “State Accreditation of RA Institutions and their Educational Programs” and the procedure described in the ANQA Accreditation Manual carrying out firstly evaluation per standards and then per criteria. “Satisfactory” and “Unsatisfactory” evaluation scale was applied

The expert panel followed the below mentioned principles while carrying out the evaluation:

-unsatisfactory: if the University does not meet the demands of the criterion and it is not allowed to continue the activities that way and urgent improvements are needed

-satisfactory: if the University meets the demands of the criterion yet there might be need for improvements as well