

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE,
FOUNDATION



ON INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION CARRIED OUT AT
YEREVAN STATE INSTITUTE OF THEATRE AND CINEMATOGRAPHY
(YSITC)

YEREVAN– 2016

FOREWORD

The institutional accreditation of Yerevan State Institute of Theatre and Cinematography (hereinafter YSITC) is carried out on the initiative of the Educational institution and based on its application. The process of institutional accreditation was organized and coordinated by the National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance, Foundation (ANQA).

ANQA was guided by the regulation on “State Accreditation of RA Institutions and their Academic Programs” set by the RA Government on 30 June, 2011 N978-Ն decree as well as by N959-Ն (30 June, 2011) decree on approving RA Standards for Professional Education Accreditation.

The institutional audit was carried out by the expert panel composed according to the requirements of ANQA Regulation on the Expert Panel Composition. The expert panel consisted of 3 local and 2 international experts.

Institutional accreditation aims not only at the external evaluation of quality assurance, but also at the continuous improvement of the institution’s management and quality of academic programs. Hence, there were two important issues for the expert panel members:

1. To carry out an audit of institutional capacities in line with the RA standards for state accreditation,
2. To carry out an evaluation for the improvement of HEI’s quality and for its integration to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

This particular report covers the institutional audit of YSITC on the basis of RA accreditation criteria of professional education and the peer review on the basis of international standards. The peer review of the institutional assessment was based on *The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)*.

CONTENTS

FOREWORD	2
SUMMARY OF EVALUATION	4
EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION CRITERIA	4
PEER-REVIEW FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EDUCATION INSTITUTION'S INTEGRATION INTO EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA	11
DESCRIPTION OF EXTERNAL REVIEW	16
PROCESS OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW	17
EVALUATION ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION CRITERIA	20
BRIEF INFORMATION ABOUT THE EDUCATION INSTITUTION	20
I. MISSION AND GOALS	21
II. GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION	24
III. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS	27
IV. STUDENTS	31
V. TEACHING AND SUPPORT STAFF	35
VI. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	37
VII. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES	39
VIII. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY	43
IX. EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONALIZATION	45
X. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE	47
OVERVIEW OF THE ASSESSMENTS	50
APPENDICES	51
APPENDIX 1. THE CURRICULA VITAE OF THE PANEL MEMBERS	51
APPENDIX 2. SCHEDULE OF THE SITE-VISIT	53
APPENDIX 3. THE LIST OF OBSERVED DOCUMENTS	55
APPENDIX 4. RESOURCES OBSERVED BY THE EXPERT PANEL	57
APPENDIX 5. THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF TLI	58
APPENDIX 6. LIST OF THE ABBREVIATIONS	60

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

The institutional accreditation process was carried out by the expert panel composed according to the requirements of ANQA Regulation on the Expert Panel Composition¹. The evaluation was carried out according to the 10 criteria set by the RA Government on 30 June, 2011 N 959-Ն decree.

While carrying out the evaluation it was taken into account that YSITC is a unique educational scientific and creative institution in the field of performing arts, theatre studies, film studies and culture. The main mission of the institution is to ensure the performing arts, cultural education in all levels of higher education as well as the acquisition of knowledge and skills, their transfer and distribution within the frameworks of state strategy of educational and cultural development.

The Institute has three branches, 4 faculties and 13 professions. The number of students in Alma Mater is 800 and in branches — 216. YSITC provides education services in the form of full-time and part-time studies through Bachelor's and Master's programs. There is also postgraduate education at the Institute. YSITC has branches in three cities of RA: in Gyumri, in Vanadzor, and in Goris.

The current Strategic Plan of the YSITC was approved in 2012 and includes TLI's mission, goals and objectives for 2013-2017 and the steps of their implementation. Internal and external stakeholders are satisfied with the activities of YSITC.

Rector's reports serve as a mechanism for the assessment of the results of the implementation of TLI's mission and purpose. There are no certain mechanisms and procedures for the improvement yet.

The structure of YSITC ensures the regulated process of decision-making and maintainance of governance code of ethics. TLI implements long-, mid-, short-term planning, but the mechanisms for the implementation and monitoring of these plans are missing.

Though there are no certain mechanisms for the environmental scanning, the majority of the teaching staff who are the employees of the spheres of performing arts, theatre and TV take part in the surveys conducted among internal stakeholders. Thus, the absence of mechanism is somehow complemented, as the surveys contribute to the identification and the satisfaction of the needs of internal and external stakeholders. The PDCA circle (Plan-do-Check-Act) is not yet fully introduced.

The professions provided by YSITC are mostly in line with the mission and the state educational standards. The academic programs are formally designed according to learning

¹ APPENDIX 1. THE CURRICULA VITAE OF THE PANEL MEMBERS

outcomes. The Institute has adopted a policy of the selection of teaching, learning and assessment methods in compliance with the learning outcomes of academic programs, but the vertical and horizontal alignment has not yet been made. YSITC hasn't established mechanisms and procedures for academic integrity.

The TLI has developed mechanisms for recruitment of students. The admission to Bachelor's program is carried out according to the regulation defined by RA Government. Education at YSITC is mainly carried out through workshops and personal trainings, which apart from effective teaching enables the students to raise their concerns. Surveys are conducted for the identification of educational needs of students. The identified issues are raised by course supervisors at chairs sessions and are solved to the extent possible. Students are involved in the Institute's management councils and can apply to the academic and administrative staff at any time. Students' self-governing processes and the protection of students' rights are ensured by YSITC Students council.

YSITC is staffed with qualified teaching and support staff for the implementation of academic programs. TLI conducts student surveys on the quality and effectiveness of teaching. The Institute has sufficient and qualified support staff for the implementation of the education process. However, there is a need for trainings for raising the effectiveness of their work.

The part of the teaching staff involves students in research; however, research activities are not coordinated. The Institution's research interests and ambitions are not formulated. The mechanisms linking research with teaching are missing.

The resource base of the Institute is sufficient for the implementation of academic programs and strategic plan. As a whole, the TLI ensures education environment for the implementation of academic programs; it has classroom facilities, a library, a film archive, studios and laboratories. Specialized laboratories, modern equipped pavilions were established due to grant programs. There is a clear mechanism for the distribution of financial resources, but the financial distribution policy that ensures the implementation and continuity of the academic programs needs a revision. TLI creates safe and secure environment through health and safety services, but the needs of students with disabilities are not taken into account.

Having no defined regulation for accountability, the Institute has a bottom-up system for the presentation of annual reports. The use of social networks significantly contributes to the transparency of the processes carried out at TLI. In the sphere of social responsibility the Quality assurance system is in the formation process.

Internationalization, particularly the cooperation with European Universities and international institutions of higher education in educational, scientific fields, as well as the increase of number of foreign students are one of the main goals of the YSITC, however tangible results and progress in this field hasn't been achieved yet. International cooperation is mostly limited to the organization of master classes. The mobility of students and lecturers is missing.

From October, 2014 YSITC is a member of UNESCO International Network of Performing Arts in Higher Education. Mechanisms for the assessment of the effectiveness of cooperation with local and international institutions and organizations are not elaborated.

Though YSITC's Quality Assurance Centre was established in 2011, the quality assurance system is still in the formation process. The Quality assurance policy is not yet clearly formulated; the procedures for internal quality assurance are not defined. The centre needs a serious reorganization, especially from the perspective of human resources. The internal and external stakeholders are not sufficiently involved in the quality assurance processes, mechanisms and tools for the assessment of processes are in the formation process. The grounds created by the quality assurance system for the external evaluation are insufficient. The internal quality assurance system doesn't provide stakeholders with information on the quality of YSITC activities and does not ensure the transparency of the Institute's activities.

Strengths of HEI

1. One of the strengths of YSITC is that professional courses of applied nature are based on the solution of concrete professional problems (problem based learning), which significantly contributes to the development of student-centred approach,
2. The events organized in Yerevan and in RA regions for the recruitment of students and their professional orientation is a positive experience,
3. The existence of the institute of course supervisors is a positive experience, as it gives an opportunity to reveal students' professional and personal problems and discuss them in chairs,
4. The students are demanding, they are conscious of their rights and duties, and have a motivation to receive quality education,
5. The majority of teaching staff are employees in the spheres of performing arts, film and TV, due to which the connection between the TLI and the labor market is ensured,
6. Professions of the Film faculty are equipped with modern resource base.
7. Employers are willing to support the Institute in all matters, such as to provide facilities and other resources, to transferr their experience, to participate in the life of the Institute, etc.

Weaknesses of HEI

1. Research component of YSITC's activities. The research activities are not coordinated and no importance is attached to the linking of research with teaching,
2. The internationalization of YSITC in the spheres of academic programs, research, mobility of students and lecturers.
3. Internal quality assurance system. It is imperfect and fragmented. Lack of experience of Centre's employees.

4. Long-, mid-, short-term planning,
5. Mechanisms ensuring academic integrity are missing,
6. Not all the lecturers are involved in the reforms carried out at TLI.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Mission and purpose

1. To regulate the processes of strategic plan development, its approval, monitoring and assessment, clearly defining the phases of its development and discussion, those responsible, stakeholders and their involvement, as well as the mechanisms, procedures and tools for monitoring the implementation of Strategic Plan and the assessment and improvement of the results,
2. To review the Strategic Plan's schedule, defining the steps necessary for achieving goals, clearly indicating the resources required for their implementation and outcomes (key performance indicators (KPI)).

Governance and administration

3. To make the estimate of HEI's expenses in compliance with planned steps for the implementation of the goals of Strategic Plan. It will give an opportunity to spend the existing resources in a more targeted way and later evaluate the effectiveness of the spent resources,
4. To consider all the necessary human, material and financial resources in the plans of subdivisions for the implementation of future activities,
5. To develop and introduce mechanisms that will ensure the connection of lecturers and students involved in councils to other lecturers and students of TLI,
6. To develop tools and procedures for environmental scanning,
7. To activate the TLI's efforts towards the full introduction of PDCA cycle,
8. To develop and introduce mechanisms and tools evaluating updated, objective and unbiased quantitative and qualitative information on quality of academic programs and qualifications awarded,
9. To make changes in the structure of TLI, to transfer the supervision of QAC from Vice-Rector for Personnel Management, International Cooperation and Inter Institutional Affairs to the direct supervision of the Rector.

Academic programs

10. To carry out benchmarking with the academic programs of European Universities, too and to pay a particular attention to the formulation of learning outcomes,
11. To carry out vertical² and horizontal³ alignment of academic programs,
12. To develop certain criteria for the assessment of Bachelor's and Master's theses,
13. To develop mechanisms for formative assessment and for academic integrity,
14. To take steps in conducting humanitarian and theoretical courses with student-centred approach.
15. To take steps in the development of the internationalization and mobility of students and lecturers with the European Higher Education Institutions.

Students

16. To introduce an internal regulation for BA admission, in which the process of conducting internal examinations will be defined,
17. To include additional requirements and / or criteria in the internal regulation for MA admission stemming from the specifications of the professions at TLI,
18. To specify educational, advising and all the other system of services provided to the students, to develop mechanisms for their assessment and quality assurance.

Teaching and Support Staff

19. To define clear requirements for the professional qualities of the Institute's teaching staff for each academic program,
20. To elaborate certain criteria and procedures on the implementation of class observations, analysis of results and their application,
21. To elaborate and introduce certain processes for the development of lecturers' skills in compliance with the needs identified during internal and external evaluation,
22. To elaborate a certain plan ensuring the professional development of the teaching staff, particularly in research activities and international cooperation.

Research and Development

23. To review 2013-2017 Strategic plan, to describe in detail YSITC's interests and ambitions in the field of research in the strategic goals "Research and Innovation" and "International

² Vertical alignment assumes the elaboration and introduction of principles, procedures and tools that reflect the compliance of learning outcomes defined in the level of NQF and academic programs, as well as academic programs and courses/ moduls.

³ Horizontal or constructive alignment assumes the elaboration and introduction of procedures, tools, methodology for the assessment of intended learning outcomes, methods for teaching and learning aimed at the formation of learning outcomes that are defined for each course/module.

Cooperation", as well as to describe the activities directed towards the development and internationalization of research,

24. To establish a new subdivision which would coordinate research activities of YSITC,
25. To elaborate policy and procedures that ensure the implementation and development of research,
26. To make allocations for the development of research from TLI's budget,
27. To take steps in finding external sources of funding research activities (thematic funding allocated by the State Committee of Science, international grant funding, etc.),
28. To introduce mechanisms for linking research with teaching.

Infrastructure and resources

29. To compile the annual budget of TLI according to the expenses required for the implementation of each goal of Strategic plan of that year,
30. To highlight the financial resources in the annual budget required for the implementation of each academic program,
31. To increase the funding for the the maintainace and development of resources necessary for educational process,
32. To elaborate and introduce certain policies and procedures for the management of information and documentation processes,
33. To plan the creation of appropriate environment for students with special needs in the bugdet of the next year. (staircases and toilet for the students with disabilities),
34. To develop mechanisms and tools for the evaluation of the effectiveness of the use of infrastructure and resources.

Social Responsibility

35. To elaborate a document that describes the mechanisms and tools of YSITC's accountability to society,
36. To develop mechanisms and tools on receiving information, i.e. feedback from the society about the activities of YSITC,
37. To study the effectiveness of mechanisms of transferring knowledge to the society and revise them, if necessary. Taking into consideration the results of the revision, to elaborate a document on the mechanisms and procedures of transferring knowledge to the society.

External relations and internationalization

38. To elaborate a strategy and a certain plan of actions on the development of external relations and internationalization,

39. To develop a system for assessing the effectiveness of cooperation with local and international institutions and organizations,
40. To organize events among internal stakeholders for increasing the level of proficiency of foreign language.

Internal Quality Assurance

41. To include the formation of internal quality assurance system as a separate goal in the strategic plan,
42. To elaborate a quality assurance manual, which will include the goals and directions of internal quality assurance, main stakeholders and QA mechanisms and tools,
43. To staff the quality assurance centre with highly professional employees,
44. To organize trainings on quality assurance for administrative, teaching and support staff,
45. To elaborate mechanisms for the involvement of internal and external stakeholders, particularly students in quality assurance processes.

PEER-REVIEW FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EDUCATION INSTITUTION'S INTEGRATION INTO EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA

Observations

In this phase the policy and activities of TLI are in accordance with its mission. The Institute should develop its research activities and international relations with the countries that are involved in Bologna process.

During the site-visit, we did not see sufficient mechanisms and procedures in place for the evaluation of achievement of mission and its further improvement. The Quality Assurance Centre is in the formation process. The implementation of monitoring will be practically impossible without the final formation of this subdivision and it can cause additional difficulties during the development of the next strategic plan.

The governance of the TLI is clearly established system, the functions of the administrative positions are correctly distributed, however, it is more like the Soviet model of governance of the educational institutions. Material-technical base is very well developed, especially in the film department and meets the needs of the educational process.

The Institution's system of governance gives an opportunity to students and the teaching staff to take part in decision making process. The meetings with the teaching staff and students showed that there is an opportunity for direct communication. Besides, YSITC creatively approaches to the acceptance of various suggestions and wishes. There is a box in the Institute where everyone can express their opinion about educational and administrative processes through anonymous letters. The meetings also showed that teachers and students freely exchange critical and creative issues and try to solve the problems together.

Planning must be more synchronized with Bologna process in which the constant monitoring of various issues is very important. As the Quality Assurance Centre is in formation phase, these processes are still being developed. QAC should collect and elaborate information about the processes being carried out in the institute, and send it for feedback. This will allow the administrative staff to properly assess the state of short-term and long-term goals, and to make, specific correction, if necessary.

Currently there is a lack of application of electronic system of periodic surveys which contributes to greater objectivity and allows to calculate the results more professionally.

There are not enough objective mechanisms in place evaluating the quality of quantitative and qualitative information on the academic programs and qualifications awarded. The scientific conferences and publications do not meet the requirements of international standards. TLI should learn more about, e.g. Chicago style, method of anonymous referencing etc.

The academic programs are in line with Institution's mission; and RA legislation, but do not thoroughly reflect the peculiarities of the Bologna process. Existing programs are in line with the current legislation and state requirements, according to which the subjects defined by the state are

too many and do not meet the needs of the particular qualification. Academic programs should more comply with the requirements of Bologna process.

During the observation of academic programs we got an impression that there is a large number of parameters in the system of learning outcomes. Learning outcomes should be more compact and comply with the criteria and experience of the EU countries.

Institute is in the process of implementation and still needs to do considerable work to promote mobility of students and staff.

The TLI has not yet adopted policies in place ensuring academic program monitoring, evaluation of effectiveness and enhancement. This problem should be solved with the development of quality assurance system. TLI needs to adopt and implement Bologna practice. During the site-visit, it was found out that the teachers conduct the exams through examination tickets and do not use modern methods of pedagogy. It contradicts to the essence of the Bologna process.

YSITC promotes the students' involvement in research activities. However, it does not have a clear mechanism for the involvement of students in research activities, as the latter is a new direction for the TLI and must be elaborated in the next strategic plan.

Institute should pay a great attention to the correct planning of raising the students' awareness about the existing services and opportunities at TLI. It is obvious that the institute strives to promote students' active involvement in these processes.

The requirements for qualifications of teaching staff per academic program are comprehensively stated. There is a large number of academic staff.

Despite the fact that there is an opportunity for the periodic assessment of lecturers, the criteria for the assessment haven't been developed yet.

The TLI needs to keep the age balance of academic staff. There is need for Doctors both in practical and theoretical directions. In general, the Institute meets the requirements of the current legislation, which is not always consistent with the principles of the Bologna process.

Currently the heads of chairs are responsible for the research activities, whereas it should be the aim and objective of each professor, and not of the chair. Quality Assurance Centre must compile a clear guideline for the scientific workload. Also the professors lack the clear understanding of the field of scientific planning and self-development.

Despite the fact that research is a new direction for the Institute, it should be compulsory for each professor like the education process. Especially in the Master's program the professors do not have clear vision about the research component. There are no such essential subjects as academic writing and research methods.

The diversity of creative specialties is well distributed between the centre and branches. A visit to the Gyumri branch was very interesting from the perspective of getting acquainted with the preparation of the actors in regions. Finances are distributed according to the needs, although it would be better to introduce an internal grant system for the development of different directions. As a whole, TLI meets the requirements of the criterion.

Despite TLI activities' compliance with the objectives of strategic plan, there are still some flaws in the activities of PR. This area should be better thought out, planned and documented.

The Institute regularly participates in state and government programs. Its activities are covered by TV, radio and press. However, PR of the Institute should be more active. The website of the institute is diverse, well designed, but is not fully applied: there is no general mailing list, electronic dissemination of information, etc.

In this phase, TLI has serious problems with internationalization; the weakest link of the Institute is international relations. Despite the existence of the department of International relations, contracts and memoranda, the relations with the institutions that have experience in Bologna process is missing. The number of international projects and exchanges is small. Institute's involvement in international professional networks is weak. The low level of knowledge of foreign language is a key problem.

The development of Quality Assurance Centre is a new element in the education system, but necessary and traditional element in Bologna process. Currently, the Quality Assurance Centre is in the formation process at TLI. Its establishment requires a lot of time, efforts and knowledge. This is a problem in most of the TLIs. All the key issues of academic programs, standards, research conditions in the Bologna process, as well as the preparation of TLI to local and international accreditation is carried out by the Quality Assurance Centre.

QAC is currently the weakest link of the institute and needs to be reorganized, particularly from the perspective of human resources. During the meeting with the head of the centre, it became clear that she didn't have sufficient competencies both in theoretical and in practical issues.

The Institution has very weak quality assurance policies and procedures. The Institution does not allocate sufficient material, human and financial resources for the management of internal quality assurance processes. The internal and external stakeholders are not involved in quality assurance processes. The internal quality assurance system is in the formation process. The internal quality assurance system ensures not enough professional transparency of the processes at the Institution providing valid and up to date information on their quality to the internal and external stakeholders.

During the site-visit it became clear that different departments were more involved in the preparation of self-evaluation report than the quality assurance centre itself.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The description of mission should be more clear and compact. The Quality Assurance Centre should be actively involved in the development of strategic plan,
2. It is necessary to take care about translation. Qualifications must be adequate to EU titles.(e.g. performing arts, but not dramatic art; theatre studies, but not drama studies etc.),

3. TLI's goal should be the internationalization of its publications. For that purpose TLI should introduce publications in English language, as well as internationally accepted rules for their selection and peer-review,
4. TLI should be more integrated in EU educational system and organize training programs for administrative and academic staff using international funding opportunities,
5. According the "Students Knowledge evaluation" we strongly recommend: in the part of evaluation components 2.2 evaluation factors final exam's points 50, 60, 70 are too high. According Bologna system it should be less than 40 (because the different components must be balanced, and each of them must be important to have access for final evaluation),
6. Synchronization of the programs with EU Universities will raise the number and possibilities for international mobility,
7. There is no necessity to have student's scientific organization (it's up to students decision), but research should be part of curriculum as well as the usage of new methodologies,
8. For monitoring and evaluation of staff it's better to use surveys and approved indicators by QA and scientific council,
9. For the adoption of the principles of Bologna process TLI should eliminate the system of chairs and shift to "program leader" system (shift from the collective responsibility to individual one),
10. It's preferable to use the system of Full and Associative Professors system and go from hourly workload to annual. The credit system gives an opportunity to precisely plan the academic year,
11. According the problems and weakness the organization needs to adopt and create training programs and workshops, retraining programs for staff and professional upgrades through inviting local and international experts.
12. It is disairable for the institution to use the Bologna practice and to invite foreign specialists as full-time professors. Besides, it will contribute not only to the professional development of the academic staff, but also to the development of foreign language proficiency of students and teaching staff, which is another step towards internationalization,
13. Research must be the part of the professor's annual activities as obligatory like in all EU Universities. Research must be part of BA and MA levels. Research projects must be integrated to the syllabuses of the professors,
14. Research must have an interdisciplinary approach,
15. Establishment of interfaculty research centre or institute should be a good solution for further development of research projects,
16. The importance of development of joint research projects and joint educational programs, like joint MA and PhD programs,
17. Fundraising for research projects could be part of curriculum for the management students connected with their ECTS,
18. Using new skills for fundraising through charity, sponsorship etc.,

19. Institute could use so-called “faces” of its staff as best mediators with society as the extra tools, PR Service should compile the mailing lists of all employees and students, as well as the graduates and stakeholders of the Institute. It is necessary to send the information about planned and ongoing events, funding opportunities, grants, international conferences, programs etc. on a daily basis,
20. The establishment of relations with EU professional networks which have rich experience in Bologna process is of big importance,
21. Institute needs to better use international and EU opportunities like Eastern Partnership, Horisont2020 or Erasmus and some other programs,
22. The institute should pay a serious attention to the development of Quality Assurance Centre through regular training, the involvement of foreign experts, especially from those countries where these issues have been already solved.

Signature of the chairman of the expert panel

15 July, 2016

DESCRIPTION OF EXTERNAL REVIEW

EXPERT PANEL COMPOSITION

The external evaluation of YSITC's self-evaluation and quality assurance processes was carried out by the expert panel with the following members:

1. **Mkrtich Ayvazyan**, Candidate of Physical and Mathematical Sciences, Vice-Rector for Education and Research of Yerevan State Academy of Fine Arts, chairman of the expert panel, Armenia.
2. **Levan Khetaguri**, Specialist in Theatre study (Diploma in Theatre Study), PhD in Foreign Theatre, President of Stichting Caucasus Foundation, member of expert panel, international expert, Georgia.
3. **Iuri Mgebrishvili**, Professor at Arts Research Institute, Head of Cultural Management and Cultural Policy Research Centre, Leading Ph.D, MA and BA Programmes in Cultural Management, Associative Professor at Ilia State University, member of the expert panel, international expert, Georgia.
4. **Geghetsik Grigoryan**, Candidate in Law, associative professor at ASUE chair of Political Science and Law, member of the expert panel, Armenia.
5. **Misha Tadevosyan** - Third-year student at the faculty of Education, Psychology and Sociology of Armenian State Pedagogical University after Khachatur Abovyan. Member of the expert panel, Armenia.

The composition of the expert group was agreed upon with the Institute.

The works of the expert panel were coordinated by **Anahit Utmazyan**.

The translation was provided by **Lilit Muradyan**.

Protocols were made by **Lilit Zakaryan**.

All panel members as well as the secretary signed a statement of independence and confidentiality.

PROCESS OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW

Application for the state accreditation

YSITC applied for institutional accreditation by submitting application form, the copies of the license and respective appendices to ANQA on December 15, 2015.

The ANQA Secretariat checked the application package, the data presented in the application form, the appendices and the ANQA electronic questionnaire completed by the University. Based on the decision on accepting the application request, the schedule of activities and estimate of expenses were prepared and approved. An agreement was signed between ANQA and YSITC on December 25, 2015.

Preparatory phase

The revised versions of YSITC's self-evaluation report in Armenian and English languages and package of appendices were presented to ANQA on February 2, 2016. The ANQA Secretariat studied the self-evaluation report to verify its compliance with technical requirements. Based on the positive opinion of the Coordinator, the self-evaluation report and package of documents attached were accepted by ANQA on March 1, 2016.

The self-evaluation report is mostly written precisely and each standard is taken into account. Sufficient evidence for the statements of the document is provided in appendices.

In general, the expert panel considered the self-evaluation report presented in critical way, to be a useful document for obtaining information about YSITC and for organizing discussions with TLI.

The members of expert panel were agreed upon with TLI and were confirmed by the director of ANQA. On March 22, 2016 the self-evaluation report was given to the expert panel for draft report. The evaluation was carried out in the period starting from March 22, 2016 till May 13, 2016. During that time, the expert panel held 5 phases of training, regular meetings once a week for discussing the self-evaluation report of the Institute and packages of appendices. The issues raised by the international expert were included in the draft report. The issues to be observed during the site-visit were clarified and target groups of the meetings were chosen.

The Coordinator together with the chairman of the expert panel decided on the schedule of the site-visit. Intended meetings with all the focus groups, open and close meetings, document and resource review, visits to structural subdivisions, etc were included in the schedule.

Preparatory visit

On May 5, 2016, the coordinator and the chairman of the expert panel and the head of ANQA subdivision of institutional and program accreditation visited YSITC to discuss and agree upon the

schedule of the site-visit⁴. The list of the documents was presented, subdivisions, the expert panel planned to visit and organizational and technical issues concerning the site-visit, were discussed. The rooms, meeting hall and technical resources for the panel were also observed.

Site-visit

The day before the planned site-visit, the local experts of expert panel met international experts. During the meeting the members of expert panel shared their initial impressions on the report, discussed and summarized the list of main issues / problems, decided who is responsible to clarify the issues related to each criterion, as well as discussed the meetings with separate target groups.

Afterwards, the members of the expert panel discussed the assessment scale which consists of two levels: 1. compliance with the requirements of the criterion is **satisfactory**, 2. compliance with the requirements of the criterion is **unsatisfactory**.

The site-visit took place from the 16th to 20th June, 2016.

The site-visit began and ended with the meetings with the Rector. The meetings were held with heads of the chairs, working group that carried out the self-evaluation, faculty, graduates, employers, and full-time and part-time students as well as with graduate students. The expert panel chose the focus groups randomly. In the framework of scheduled and announced open meeting, a number of employees of the Institute expressed a wish to meet the expert panel; there were deans, heads of the chairs, representatives of teaching and support staff, heads of departments and centres of the Institute.

According to the schedule, the expert panel visited YSITC branch in Gyumri where they had meetings with the director of the branch, administrative and academic staff, students, lecturers, observed the resources and watched performances of the first-year and graduating students.

The expert panel reviewed the documents⁵ and observed the resources⁶, watched the performance of students of the acting department, as well as the films shot by the students of Film faculty.

The meetings were very well organized by the staff of the institution. Due to it the expert panel managed to cover all the necessary issues in accordance with the schedule designed for the site-visit.

The expert panel highly appreciates the participants' open discussions. Information obtained during the meetings, as well as the main findings from the observation and reviews of the documents were summarized at the end of each day and at the final meeting at the end of the visit.

⁴ APPENDIX 2. SCHEDULE OF THE SITE-VISIT

⁵ APPENDIX 3. THE LIST OF OBSERVED DOCUMENTS

⁶ APPENDIX 4. RESOURCES OBSERVED BY THE EXPERT PANEL

The expert panel discussed the main outcomes and reached an agreement first on accreditation standards and then on the requirements of criteria. The final conclusions have been reached on the standards through open discussion of all the members of expert panel using consensus method.

Expert panel report

After the site-visit, the chairman of expert panel with the assistance of coordinator prepared the draft version of the expert panel report. All the members of the Expert panel had their contribution in revealing the findings, formation of considerations and evaluation of each criterion of the report, as well as responded to the full version. Experts' comments were taken into account when summarizing the draft report.

The international experts prepared their conclusions and peer assessment review. Both documents were translated and given to the chairman of the expert panel. It was the responsibility of the chairman and coordinator of the expert panel to include the international experts' opinion and approaches in report. The peer review opinion was fully included into the text of the report. The draft report was approved by all members of local expert panel, was translated and sent to the international experts. The draft report was reedited based on their observations and represents the main results, considerations and recommendations.

The draft report was presented to the Institute on July 15, 2016.

Signature of the coordinator

July 15, 2016

EVALUATION ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

BRIEF INFORMATION ABOUT THE EDUCATION INSTITUTION

History: Yerevan Theatre Institute was founded in 1944 and had 3 faculties: acting, directing and theatre studies. In 1952, Theatre and Fine Art Institutes were united, as a result of which Fine Art and Theatre Institute was founded. However, in 1994, it was divided into two separate HEIs: State Academy of Fine Arts and Theatre Institute. In 1999 the specialized sphere of the Institute was expanded and it was named "Yerevan State Institute of Theatre and Cinematography". Nowadays, education in the Institute is implemented through 13 professions and numerous specializations. Leading figures of culture and arts of RA teach at the YSITC, who also have international recognition; there are People's artists, winners in international competitions and laureates of state prizes. There are 35 professors, 33 associate professors, 67 senior lecturers, 74 lecturers (by 16 January, 2016)

Education: According to the self-evaluation report, YSITC intends to review and clarify Bachelor's and Master's programs according to European standards and national peculiarities, to assess all the academic programs by corresponding methods and standards, to elaborate measurable knowledge, capabilities and skills for academic programs and learning outputs of qualification degrees and professions.

To carry out a multidimensional assessment of the teaching staff according to their professional, pedagogical skills, personal qualities and age. To organize training of teachers in the light of education reform requirements. To create appropriate conditions and promoting mechanisms for teachers to participate in innovative projects in the field of education.

To develop financial planning system, to ensure efficient and targeted distribution of financial resources. To direct further YSITC expenses policy towards the solution of essential problems of the Institute and spend the annual profit on the development of the Institute and solution of employees' social problems. To elaborate and introduce a system for the assessment of the effectiveness of resource utilization.

Research: According to the self-evaluation report and the strategic plan, it is planned to ensure the integration of scientific-creative and research and educational processes, thus, ensuring the Institute's progress. To establish scientific and creative centres at YSITC aimed at productive application and spread of innovative knowledge and experience. To enhance the quality of effectiveness of students' research activities. To expand scientific cooperation with partner HEIs. To elaborate joint research programs.

Internationalization: The most important aim of YSITC's internationalization is to improve the quality of education services and creative activities, to ensure the international competitiveness of the Institute, to create a favourable environment for a cultural dialogue. YSITC also aims at providing the demand and competitiveness of YSITC graduates on national and international level,

at increasing the international reputation of the Institute in preparing film and theatre actors, directors, and film and theatre critics.

YSITC internationalization priorities are as follows:

- Expansion of cooperation with leading international higher education institutions.
- Ensuring the students' and teachers' mobility.
- Participation in international scientific-cultural and grant programs

Quality Assurance: According to the self-evaluation report and the regulation of Quality Assurance Centre, YSITC QAC's mission is the establishment of quality culture while preparing professionals for the sphere of performing arts. The main goals are:

- Formation, introduction, management and improvement of internal quality assurance system,
- To support internal quality assurance system and subdivisions in carrying out monitoring and analysis,
- Normative and methodological provision of internal quality assurance system, documentation and introduction of best practice.

CRITERION I. MISSION AND GOALS

The policy and activities of the TLI stem from the Institution's mission, which is in accordance with the Armenian National Qualifications Framework (hereafter ANQF).

FINDINGS

1.1 The TLI has a clear, well-articulated mission that represents the institution's purposes and goals as well as is in accordance with the ANQF.

YSITC is a unique educational scientific and creative institution in the field of performing arts, theatre studies, film studies and culture. The main mission of the institution is to ensure the performing arts, cultural education in all levels of higher education as well as the acquisition of knowledge and skills, their transfer and distribution within the frameworks of state strategy of educational and cultural development.

The mission, goals, objectives of YSITC and their implementation steps are formulated in Strategic plan 2013-2017.

The main goals of YSITC strategic plan are:

1. The development and improvement of educational activities
2. Formation of students structure
3. Work carried out with students

4. Strategic partnership and international cooperation
5. Development of financial-economic activities
6. High-quality teaching staff and staff potential
7. Research and Innovation
8. Development of Management and Organizational Quality
9. Development of social sector
10. PR activities

YSITC has an "Action Plan", where the time frame of the implementation of steps stemming from the issues mentioned in the strategic plan, the responsables, necessary resources and intended 'outcomes' are defined.

YSITC implements higher and postgraduate education with Bachelor's, Master's and Researcher's academic programs in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

The Institute meets the demands of the Republic in the education sphere of Theatre and Film and prepares specialists not only in Yerevan, but also in its branches in RA regions.

YSITC has 3 branches in Gyumri, Vanadzor and Goris, through which labor market-TLI cooperation is ensured on the local level. It also promotes the program set by RA Government on the balanced development of the regions.

1.2 The TLI's mission, goals and objectives reflect the needs of the internal and external stakeholders.

To what extent the needs of internal and external stakeholders were revealed and reflected during the elaboration of YSITC Strategic plan 2013-2017 is not clear, as there is no approved procedures on the elaboration of strategic plan. However, surveys on the content of education and on the effectiveness of its organization were carried out among the students, graduates, lecturers and administrative staff in 2013-2014. The issues revealed during these surveys were taken into consideration while elaborating subdivisions' short term and long term plans.

During the site-visit it became clear that internal (students, lecturers, administrative staff) and external (graduates, employers) stakeholders are aware of the provisions of strategic plan and are satisfied with the activities of YSITC.

1.3 The institution has approved mechanisms and procedures to evaluate the achievement of its mission and purpose and to further improve them.

Rector's annual reports on academic and financial-economic activities that are compiled on the basis of annual reports of subdivisions serve as a mechanism for the evaluation of the achievement of YSITC's mission and purpose. Rector's annual reports are presented to the Board of the Institute for discussion and evaluation. There are no other mechanisms and procedures for the evaluation of the achievement of TLI's mission and purpose and to further improve them.

CONSIDERATIONS

YSITC has defined and published mission and strategic goals, which generally reflect the needs of internal and external stakeholders. 10 goals of the Strategic Plan can be distributed according to the following directions of Institute's activities:

1. Development of Institutional capacities – 4th, 5th, 8th goals
2. Organization of education – 1st and 6th goals
3. Implementation of research – 7th goal
4. Services provided to the society – 2nd, 3rd, 9th, 10th goals

Internal and external stakeholders are familiar with the mission, goals and objectives of the Institute and are satisfied with its activities.

Rector's annual reports serve as a mechanism for the evaluation of the achievement of mission and purpose and their further improvement. However, the application of this mechanism is ineffective, because the reports are not complied according to strategic goals, which makes the monitoring of the implementation of mission and strategic goals, assessment and planning of further improvement difficult. Other mechanisms for monitoring of the annual activities are not elaborated.

Academic programs of performing arts and related fields are implemented in Bachelor's, Master's and Researcher's level and correspond to the 6th, 7th, 8th levels of NQF and YSITC's mission.

JUDGMENT

Taking into account that the goals of the strategic plan stem from the mission and mostly reflect the needs of external and internal stakeholders, the implemented academic programs are in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework and stem from YSITC 's mission, as well as the fact that the institute realizes that monitoring and assessment mechanisms of the strategic plan are imperfect, the expert panel is of opinion that YSITC meets the requirements of the criterion 1.

CONCLUSION

The compliance of University's institutional capacities with the requirements of criterion 1 is **satisfactory**.

CRITERION II. GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The TLI's system of governance, administrative structures and their practices are effective and intend to the accomplishment of its mission and purposes by keeping the governance code of ethics.

FINDINGS

2.1 The TLI's system of governance ensures regulated decision-making process in accordance with defined code of ethics and has efficient provision of human, material and financial resources to accomplish its educational and other purposes.

YSITC governance is carried out on the basis of combination of self-management and collegial principles by Institute Board, Scientific Council and Rector. YSITC Board is the highest governing body. Its authorization period is 5 years and it consists of 24 members. The Board is formed from the representatives of teaching staff, students, founder and authorized body. The composition of the Board is approved by RA Prime Minister. Board approves YSITC strategic program and budget, elects the rector, and evaluates Rector's annual reports on YSITC activities. Thus, the Board is responsible for approval of the strategic plan and for mid- and long-term monitoring (acceptance of reports) of its implementation.

Scientific Council and Rector are responsible for the implementation of long-, mid- and short-term plans of Strategic plan and for the ongoing management. The authorization period of the Scientific Council is 5 years and it consists of 40 members. The Scientific council is headed by the Rector. It is composed of the vice-rectors, deans, heads of chairs, and representatives of YSITC administrative and teaching staff and students. At least 25 percent of the overall number of Scientific Council members are students, including the president of the Student Council. Such system of governance ensures regulated decision-making process and keeps governance code of ethics.

The Institute's structure and human resources — administrative, teaching, support and technical staff are sufficient to accomplish educational and other strategic goals. Material and financial resources are sufficient for the implementation of education processes.

2.2 The TLI's system of governance provides students and teachers with an opportunity to participate in decision-making processes directed to them.

Internal stakeholders, particularly teaching staff and students are involved in YSITC Board and Scientific Council. 25 % of the Board members are the representatives of the teaching staff and 25 % are students. Lecturers and students involved in councils express the opinion of teaching staff and students.

Internal stakeholders can influence the management indirectly through participating in the surveys that are conducted in the framework of quality assurance and through leaving comments in the Institute's website.

There is a Trade Union at YSITC, a representative of which is in the Scientific Council and protects the rights and interests of its members.

2.3 The TLI develops and implements short, mid, and long term planning consistent with its mission and purposes and has clear monitoring and implementation mechanisms.

YSITC's long-term and mid-term planning is reflected in the 2013-2017 Strategic plan's schedule. YSITC's short-term planning is carried out through the annual plans prepared by administrative and education subdivisions. However, the planning is not regulated; some subdivisions implement the annual planning for calendar year, and some for academic year. Moreover, some of the plans for academic year begin in August and others in September. Annual planning is implemented by the subdivisions. Key performance indicators (KPI) are missing in the plans. Resources necessary for the implantation of annual plans are not defined. Mechanisms for the implementation and monitoring of long-, mid- and short-term planning are missing.

2.4 The TLI conducts environmental scanning and draws on reliable data during the decision-making process.

The main mechanism for environmental scanning is that the employees from the spheres of performing arts, film and TV are mainly the graduates of the Institute and by teaching at HEI they ensure graduate-employer-teaching staff feedback.

According to the self-evaluation report, YSITC applies "SWOT analysis, surveys, focus groups, discussions with stakeholders, analysis of statistical data" for the analysis of external and internal environment. However, the practice of decision-making is not always based on the collected data. The methods and tools for recruitment and elaboration of information are being introduced.

2.5 The management of the policies and the processes draws on the quality management principle (plan-do-check-act).

YSITC implements a long-, mid- and short-term planning through the schedule of strategic plan and annual plans of Institute's subdivisions. However, the annual plans of subdivisions do not generally stem from the Strategic Plan. Curricula of academic programs are often viewed as an action plan for the organization of educational process. We can conclude from the detailed observation of the annual plans and the meetings during the visit that the subdivisions are not always guided by their annual plans.

Reports are produced based on the activities carried out by subdivisions which are later summed up in the Rector's annual report. The annual reports of the subdivisions and Rector are not produced in compliance with the goals of Strategic plan and the implementation process of the strategic plan is not clearly seen. PDCA circle doesn't fully function.

2.6 There are mechanisms in place ensuring data collection on the effectiveness of the academic programs and other processes, analyses and application of the data in decision-making.

The regulation on “Academic program elaboration, approval, monitoring, and periodic review ” was approved in August 2014, according to which the following mechanism of data collection on the effectiveness of the academic programs and other processes have been planned — class observations, consultations with students and teachers, surveys, focus groups, external peer review. These mechanisms are in the introduction phase. The mechanisms for the evaluation of their analysis and application are still imperfect.

2.7 There are impartial mechanisms evaluating the quality of quantitative and qualitative information on the academic programs and qualification awards.

Mechanisms evaluating updated, objective and unbiased quantitative and qualitative information on academic programs and qualifications awarded are missing.

CONSIDERATIONS

The observations showed that the current structure ensures regulated decision-making process in accordance with defined code of ethics. The TLI has necessary subdivisions and qualified staff for the implementation of the goals of Strategic plan. Currently the Institute has the necessary material and financial resources for the implementation of strategic objectives, however, the financial resources are not sufficient for further reforms.

Institute defines its strategic plan, priorities and ways of development, evaluates its activities through the Councils. The system of governance gives an opportunity to students and lecturers to be involved in the decision-making process.

YSITC’s Councils and subdivisions, as well as their hierarchy are depicted on the structural scheme of the Institute.

It is clearly seen from the structure of the Institute that QAC is under the supervision of Vice-Rector for Personnel Management, International Cooperation and Inter Institutional Affairs. It limits the frame of activities of QAC from the perspective of cooperation with other subdivisions under the supervision of other vice-rectors and from the impartial assessment of the effectiveness of activities of the corresponding vice-rector.

The Institute implements long-term, mid-term and short-term planning, though the connection of short-term plans with the mission and strategic goals is missing. Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and necessary resources are missing in the plans, too. The mechanisms for the implementation and monitoring of long-term, mid-term and short-term plans are also missing.

There are no certain mechanisms for environmental scanning, but taking into account that the majority of the teaching staff are the employees in the spheres of performing arts, theatre and TV and ensure graduate-employer – TLI feedback, the absence of mechanisms is somehow complemented. The above mentioned fact gives an opportunity to monitor, analyze and assess the

quality of education, as well as to identify and meet the needs of internal and external stakeholders.

The PDCA circle is not fully embedded.

Mechanisms and tools evaluating updated, objective and unbiased quantitative and qualitative information on YSITC's activities, effectiveness of various processes, academic programs and quality of qualifications awarded are imperfect.

JUDGMENT

Taking into consideration that YSITC's system of governance generally ensures the implementation of its mission and strategic goals through keeping the regulated decision-making process with the involvement of students and lecturers and the governance code of ethics, as well as the fact that the Institute realizes the need to improve planning, monitoring, and assessment, as well as the need to complete plan-do-check-act circle, the expert panel is of opinion that the Institute meets the requirements of the criterion 2.

CONCLUSION

The compliance of University's institutional capacities with the requirements of criterion 2 is **satisfactory**.

CRITERION III. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The programs are in concord with the institution's mission, form part of institutional planning and promote mobility and internationalization.

FINDINGS

3.1 The academic programs are thoroughly formulated according to the intended learning outcomes, which correspond to an academic qualification and are in line with the institution's mission and the state academic standards.

YSTIC implements the following professions that are in concord with Institue's mission: acting, directing, choreography directing, choreography, Film art, Theatre studies, Film Studies, Literary work, Camera work, Painting, social-cultural activities (arts managment), Computer design, Costume design.

The regulation on "Academic program elaboration, approval, monitoring, and periodic review" was approved in August 2014, which describes the requirements for the academic programs including learning outcomes, the procedure of their elaboration and approval, as well as the procedure of current monitoring and review of academic programs.

The academic programs are developed according to the formats defined by TLI that include learning outcomes. However, the learning outcomes formulated on the level of academic programs

and courses need reformulation. The relevance of academic programs to NQF or Dublin descriptors is not measurable. The tools and grounds that reflect the compliance of academic programs with NQF are missing. The comparative matrix of academic programs' outcomes and courses has been developed. However, the principles of completing the matrix are not clear, how the learning outcomes of courses are taken into account.

However, the courses presented in the curricula ensure the sequence of content and interconnection of academic courses.

It became clear from the self –evaluation report and the site-visit that while developing academic programs, the Institute implemented benchmarking mainly with the academic programs of the leading HEIs of Russian Federation (GITIS, VGIK). The distribution of learning outcomes (knowledge, practical skills, general skills) presented in the descriptors of academic programs and their quantity (In the European Universities they are generally not more than 15, while in the academic program of “Camera work” they are 24) also speak about in favor of the application of approaches accepted in Russian Federation. European experience hasn't been sufficiently studied and considered.

3.2 The TLI has a policy that ensures alignment between teaching and learning approaches and the intended learning outcomes of academic programs promoting student-centred learning.

Student-centered approach is one of the most important objectives of YSITC and it is mentioned in its mission. Teaching and learning of applied professional courses is based on solving specific professional problems, which greatly contributes to student-centered education, whereas the teaching and learning of humanitarian and theoretical courses are not generally student-centered.

The table of alignment between the learning outcomes and teaching and learning forms of the academic program ‘Theatre Studies’ are presented in the self-evaluation report. However, the teaching and learning methods presented are too general (the forms of classes are presented). In the level of separate courses the learning outcomes and teaching and learning methods are not consistent. The degree of alignment of learning outcomes and teaching and learning methods in the course level is not clear (horizontal alignment). The tables for horizontal alignment are usually prepared for separate courses and not on the level of the whole academic program.

3.3 The TLI has policy on students’ assessment according to the learning outcomes and ensures academic integrity.

The Institute has elaborated an assessment policy according to the learning outcomes, which is reflected in the regulation “The assessment of knowledge of YSITC students” and in the table of compliance of learning outcomes and assessment methods.

The assessment methodology, assessment and marking scale, the organization of midterm and final check-ups, calculation of progress and its registration, midterm and final examinations

and procedure of appealing are described in the regulation. However, the assessment of knowledge and skills is not differentiated in the assessment regulation.

Assessment forms instead of assessment methods are presented in the table of compliance of learning outcomes and assessment methods in the academic program “Theatre studies”. For example:

- Checking of the current tasks
- Verbal and written check-ups
- Final check-ups with the application of examination tickets

Certain criteria for the assessment of Bachelor’s and Master’s theses are not elaborated.

The concept of academic integrity is not touched upon in the regulation.

3.4 The academic programs of the TLI are contextually coherent with other relevant programs and promote internationalization and mobility of students and staff.

Benchmarking of academic programs was carried out with the similar programs of leading Universities of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia. An active cooperation has been launched with Adam Mickiewicz University in Poland.

In terms of students’ exchange YSITC cooperates with 11 HEIs— 3 from Estonia, Latvia, Poland, 4 from Russian Federation, 2 from Georgia, 2 from Belarus. Though in the last 5 years there has been no exchange of students with 6 of these HEIs. 24 students participated in the exchange programs in the rest of the Universities, though only 1 student participated in exchange program in the past two years and there were no students who left for studying in European Universities. There have been no students coming to YSITC through exchange programs.

In terms of lecturers’ exchange, the Institute cooperates with 9 HEIs— 1 from Estonia, 3 from Russia, 2 from Georgia, 2 from Belarus, and 1 from Ukraine. The cooperation with the European Universities is insignificant.

During the past 5 years no exchange was carried out with 5 of these HEIs. 11 lecturers came to YSITC through exchange programs, but there was no exchange during the past two years. There are no lecturers who left for other Universities though the similar exchange programs.

The mobility of exchange of above mentioned students and lecturers was carried out in the form of conferences, summer schools, master classes and festivals.

3.5 The TLI has policy ensuring academic program monitoring, effectiveness assessment and improvement.

The regulation on “Academic program elaboration, approval, monitoring, and periodic review” was elaborated by YSITC. As this document has been elaborated recently, the academic program monitoring, effectiveness assessment and improvement processes are still ahead.

As it was mentioned above, the teaching staff mainly consists of the employees of the sphere of performing arts, film and TV which ensures graduate-employer-teaching staff feedback and is viewed as a mechanism for the assessment of quality of academic programs. However, the

mechanisms and tools for the assessment of academic programs' risks are not sufficient. The information concerning graduates' employment is fragmented. Surveys are conducted among the graduates who work by their profession.

Student surveys through which the teaching methods are assessed are viewed as tools for the preliminary monitoring and assessment of academic programs. Mechanisms and tools for the feedback on the quality of academic programs and assessment of risks are not sufficient.

CONSIDERATIONS

From the comparison of YSITC mission and academic programs it becomes clear that the professions implemented by the Institute are in concord with the mission and state educational standards.

The regulation on "Academic program elaboration, approval, monitoring, and periodic review" was elaborated by the Institute, but it is still in the introduction phase. Academic programs are formally elaborated according to the learning outcomes. YSITC adopted a policy of the selection of teaching, learning and assessment methods in compliance with the learning outcomes.

There is a need for vertical and horizontal alignment of academic programs. The horizontal alignment will ensure the development and introduction of procedures and tools for the selection of teaching, learning, assessment methods that aim at the formation of learning outcomes set for each course / module. Vertical alignment will contribute to the development and introduction of principles, procedures and tools that reflect the compliance of learning outcomes defined in the level of NQF and academic programs, as well as academic programs and courses/ modules. The TLI doesn't have procedures and mechanisms for ensuring academic integrity.

According to the expert panel the student –centered approach, more precisely the problem based learning is implemented mainly in the case of applied professional courses.

Benchmarking was implemented with the similar academic programs of Russian HEIs which considerably limits the mobility of students and lecturers. The cooperation level with the European Universities is very low.

The regulation on "Academic program elaboration, approval, monitoring, and periodic review" is the evidence of the fact that the Institute has adopted a policy for academic programs monitoring, effectiveness assessment and improvement. The document has recently been elaborated and the processes are yet to come.

Expert panel is of opinion that the existence of regulations on the outcome-based academic programs, their elaboration, approval, monitoring and assessment, as well as the assessment of students according to the learning outcomes will contribute to the internationalization and mobility of academic programs.

JUGDMENTS

Taking into account that academic programs correspond to the mission of the Univeristy, are the inseparable part of the planning of activities of the Institute, are mainly elaborated according to the learning outcomes, and that TLI has a policy of selection of teaching, learning and assesment methods in compliance with the learning outcomes, the expert panel thinks that the Institute meets the requirements of the criterion 3.

CONCLUSION

The compliance of University's institutional capacities with the requirements of criterion 3 is **satisfactory**.

CRITERION IV. STUDENTS

The TLI provides relevant student support services ensuring the effectiveness of the learning environment.

FINDINGS

4.1 The TLI has set mechanisms for promoting equitable recruitment, selection, and admission procedures.

For the recruitment and career orientation of students the Institute carries out:

- Advertising campaigns on the admission to the Institute and its branches with the involvement of all the structural subdivisions, student structures, partner employers and stakeholders,
- distribution of booklets, organization of exhibitions, TV and radio programs about programs and professions offered by the Institute,
- Visits of Institute's relevant committees to the high schools in Yerevan and RA regions,
- Organizations of visits of future applicants to the Institute, organization of open days, free preparatory and advisory services.

The Institute has a preparatory department, where 371 applicants studied in the last 5 years.

The admission to the Bachelor's programs is realized according to the requirements and standards of RA Government regulation on the admission to state and private higher education institutions to Bachelor's program. The assessment of students is carried out by special committees formed by the Institute according to internal standards (the chairmen of the committees proposed by the Institute and admission criteria developed by the Institute are approved by RA Minister of Education and Science). Admission to MA program is carried out in accordance with the internal

regulation on "YSITC 2015 admission to Master's" (Appendix 24). However, it does not contain any additional requirements and/or criteria stemming from the specifics of Institute's professions.

4.2 The TLI has policies and procedures for revealing student educational needs.

The existence of course supervisors is one of the components of revealing students' educational needs. They conduct professional trainings and coordinate the educational activities in the course. As a result, students always have the opportunity to raise their concerns and get support and advice through personal contact with their lecturers. The issues that are out of the competency of the course supervisors are discussed in chairs, conclusions and suggestions are made.

The essential component in revealing educational needs of students are surveys on the quality of teaching and education ("Student assesses the HEI", "Student assesses the lecturer "). The surveys are analyzed and the issues identified are discussed. Students' regular meetings with the deans, vice-rectors and rector are positive experience.

The involvement of students in different councils is another mechanism for revealing student's needs, as students' responses to the educational services provided by the Institute, as well as different issues concerning the activities of the HEI are presented and discussed in the councils.

4.3 The TLI provides advising services, opportunities for extra-curricular activities supporting students' effective learning.

The course supervisors conduct individual trainings and provide advising services. Master classes conducted by RA and foreign specialists are organized at YSITC and all the interested students and lecturers can attend them.

4.4 The TLI has set regulation and schedule for students to receive additional support and guidance from the administrative staff of the faculty.

There are procedures for the acceptance of documents including, students' applications, and corresponding workflow (a system of workflow that has become traditional). Though certain set regulations and schedule for the students to apply to the administrative staff for support and guidance are missing, the students can apply to the deans, heads of chairs, as well as vice-rectors and rector and other employees of administrative staff at any time.

4.5 The TLI has student career support services.

There is a Career and Practice Centre at YSITC. Its charter has been elaborated and the strategic plan for 2013-2017 has been approved. However, the strategic goals of the Centre are not clarified.

YSITC Career and Practice Centre regularly organizes consultative meetings or individual consultations aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of students and graduates in the labor market. The employment of graduates is quite high.

4.6 The TLI promotes student involvement in its research activities.

The involvement of students in research activities is not coordinated. The Institute doesn't have certain mechanism for the involvement of students in research. However, there are chairs, that support students' involvement in research activities. The only functioning mechanism is "Handes" journal, where the articles of MA students, as well as BA students are regularly published. The students participate in different conferences both in RA and abroad.

4.7 The TLI has responsible body for the students' rights protection.

Students' rights are defined by internal disciplinary rules of YSITC and by Students Council Charter.

YSITC Students Council ensures self-governing processes among the students, expresses and protects student's interests and ensures their participation in Institute's governance, presents the issues related to students to relevant management bodies for discussion, informs students about their rights and responsibilities, contributes to the formation of a favourable environment for the students, stimulates students' educational, spiritual, creative and physical development, supports the improvement of social conditions of students, organizes leisure of the students.

It is planned to establish a commission with an approved regulation for the protection of student's rights and interests, for processing the student's complaints and for finding operative solution to the problems and exchange information with the Students Council etc.

4.8 The TLI has evaluation and quality assurance mechanisms of student educational, advisory and other services.

The Institute conducts surveys "Student assesses the HEI", "Student assesses the lecturer", "Graduates assesses the HEI", however, these surveys do not cover all the issues concerning students.

CONSIDERATIONS

The TLI has elaborated mechanisms for the recruitment of students. The preparatory department that functions in the Institute cooperates with RA secondary and high schools and arts colleges.

The admission to BA program of YSITC is realized according to the RA Government regulation on admission to state and private higher education institutions to Bachelor's program and through inter-university examinations; the admission program and assessment criteria are approved by the Scientific Council.

Admission to MA program is carried out in accordance with the internal regulation on "YSITC 2015 admission to Master's". However, it does not contain any additional requirements and/or criteria stemming from the specifics of Institute's professions.

The effectiveness of the identification of the students' needs is conditioned by the fact that the education at YSITC is carried out through workshops and individual trainings, where the students always have an opportunity to raise their concerns and get answers through direct interaction with the supervisor. Each student's progress, problems and failures are regularly discussed in chairs and conclusions and suggestions are made.

The expert panel finds it positive that surveys are conducted for the observation of students' educational needs, the results are analyzed and the issues are discussed. The issues raised by the students are discussed in chair sessions and solved to the possible extent. Students regularly meet the deans, vice-rectors and the rector.

Students are involved and have an opportunity to raise their questions in the management bodies of the Institute.

Though certain set regulations and schedule for the students to apply to the administrative staff for support and guidance are missing, students can apply to teaching and administrative staff at any time.

YSITC Career and Practice Centre regularly organizes consultative meetings or individual consultations aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of students and graduates in the labor market. However, the strategic goals of the Centre need to be clarified. The intended outcomes of activities are not measurable. The schedule of the implementation of activities is also missing.

The involvement of the students in research activities is not coordinated. However, some of the chairs support the students in carrying out research.

Students' rights are defined by internal disciplinary rules of YSITC and by Students Council Charter. YSITC Institute Students Council ensures self-governing processes and the protection of students' rights.

The surveys conducted among the students do not completely assess the educational, advising and other services provided to students; quality assurance mechanisms should be revised. The implementation of these functions becomes difficult because of the wrong planning of the activities of Quality Assurance Centre.

JUDGMENT

The TLI provides support to students to the possible extent for ensuring the effectiveness of the educational environment, however, mechanisms for the evaluation of the effectiveness are not yet elaborated. Despite the existing shortcomings, the expert panel finds that YSITC meets the requirements of the criteria, as the basic principles of the protection of student's rights, their involvement in decision-making processes, guidance and support are ensured by the Institute.

CONCLUSION

The compliance of University's institutional capacities with the requirements of criterion 4th is **satisfactory**.

CRITERION V. TEACHING AND SUPPORT STAFF

The TLI has a highly qualified teaching and supporting staff to accomplish the institution's mission and to implement the goals set for academic programs.

FINDINGS

5.1 The TLI has policies and procedures promoting recruitment of a highly qualified teaching and supporting staff capable of ensuring program provisions.

TLI has highly qualified teaching staff for ensuring the implementation of academic programs. The majority of the teaching staff is well-known specialists in RA in sphere of film and theatre.

Out of 209 members of the teaching staff 6 are doctors of sciences, 19 are candidates, 35 are professors and 33 are associate professors. 10 are People's Artists of ASSR and the RA, 29 are Honored Artists or Honored Workers of Art or Culture of ASSR and the RA, 4 are Honored Pedagogues of the RA, 2 are Honored Painters of the RA, 2 are Honored Journalists of the RA, 1 is an Honored Scientist and 3 are Honorary citizens of Yerevan (01.01.2016).

43 employees have been granted RA state awards and medals, the RA Prime-Minister's diplomas, medals and awards of the RA Ministry of Education and Science and Ministry of Culture. 7 teachers are the winners of international competitions.

YSITC has a defined teaching staff formation procedure and clear-cut processes for its implementation. The standards and formation procedure of YSTIC's scientific and pedagogical positions are defined. The recruitment of teaching staff in chairs is carried out on competitive basis.

28% of YSITC teaching staff is close to retirement age. Starting from 2005, the institute has signed contracts with them for a period of up to 1 year. It doesn't concern administrative and support and technical staffs with whom contracts are signed for an undefined period of time, in accordance with the RA Labor Code.

80% of YSITC teaching staff is the graduates of the Institute. The qualifications of the teaching staff completely meet the necessary requirements.

5.2 The teaching staff qualifications for each program are comprehensively stated.

Though the requirements for the teaching staff qualifications for each program are not defined, they are discussed and taken into consideration during the competitions. Regulations for the formation of the teaching staff and corresponding procedure for the recruitment of lecturers ensure the existence of professional teaching staff.

YSITC has developed and plans to introduce the program for the qualification and professional development of the teaching staff.

5.3 The TLI has well established policies and procedures for the periodic evaluation of the teaching staff.

Class observations and student surveys on education quality and efficiency are carried out at the Institute for the periodic evaluation of the teaching staff. The conducted surveys concern the teacher's professionalism, level of preparedness, qualities as well as the methodological aspects of the delivered course. The class observations are carried out by the heads of chairs and professors. However, certain requirements and procedures for the implementation of class observations, analysis of its results and their application haven't been developed yet. In order to increase the productivity of the periodic evaluation of the teaching staff, it is planned to introduce mechanisms of "evaluation by immediate supervisors and colleagues" and "the introduction of self-evaluation process".

5.4 The TLI implements teacher professional development in accordance to the needs outlined during regular evaluations (both internal and external).

The aim of the internal evaluation of the lecturers at YSITC is to promote the continuous development of the lecturers' qualification, teaching and professional skills, research activities, extracurricular activities with students and advising services, educational-methodological activities and active participation in the activities of the Institute and its subdivisions. However, there are no mechanisms and tools for the encouragement and giving penalties to the lecturers as a result of the evaluation. Measures are not taken towards the professional development of lecturers in accordance with the needs outlined during internal and external evaluation.

Measures are not taken towards the professional development of lecturers in accordance with the needs outlined during internal and external evaluation. The existence of Postgraduate program, master classes with the participation of the foreign leading specialists, scientific and methodological discussions, seminars, conferences, festivals, organization of creative competitions and their implementation contributes to the development of qualification of teaching staff.

The Institute has developed and plans to introduce a program for qualification and professional development of the teaching staff.

5.5 The TLI ensures the sustainability of the teaching staff according to academic programs.

The sustainability of the teaching staff according to academic programs is ensured by the fact that 80% of YSITC teaching staff is full-time. In order to ensure high quality of education, the Institute invites Doctors of sciences, candidates, and the leading specialists from different spheres of education and culture on concurrent or hourly paid basis.

5.6 There are set policies and procedures for the staff promotion.

Policies and procedures for the staff promotion are elaborated and are in introduction phase. It is proved by the existence of "Lecturer's individual 5-year program for qualification and professional development" that will be launched soon.

5.7 There is necessary technical and administrative staff to achieve the strategic goals.

Institute has necessary number and qualified technical staff for ensuring the education process. The administrative staff is sufficient for the implementation of strategic goals.

CONSIDERATIONS

TLI has policies and procedures promoting recruitment of a highly qualified teaching and support staff capable of ensuring program provisions. Regulations for the formation of the teaching staff and corresponding procedure for the recruitment of lecturers ensure the existence of professional teaching staff.

There are a number of mechanisms evaluating the teaching staff, the most important of which are the student surveys on the education quality and efficiency and class observations. It is planned to introduce additional tools for increasing the effectiveness of the periodic evaluation of the teaching staff.

Measures are not taken towards the professional development of lecturers in accordance with the needs outlined during internal and external evaluation. The Institute has developed and plans to introduce a program for qualification and professional development of the teaching staff.

The TLI generally ensures the sustainability of the teaching staff according to academic programs. Institute has necessary number and qualified technical staff for ensuring the education process. The administrative staff is sufficient for the implementation of strategic goals, but there is a need for trainings to increase the effectiveness of work.

JUDGMENT

Taking into consideration that the University has qualified teaching and support staff for the accomplishment of its mission and the implementation of academic programs, expert panel is of opinion that YSITC meets the requirements of criterion 5.

CONCLUSION

The compliance of University's institutional capacities with the requirements of criterion 5 is **satisfactory**.

CRITERION VI. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

The TLI ensures the implementation of research activity and the link of the research with teaching and learning.

FINDINGS

6.1 The TLI has a clear strategy for promoting its research interests and ambitions.

“Research and innovations” is one of the goals of the strategic plan 2013-2017, which includes one large objective, that is “A substantial increase in the volume of research activities for expanding the involvement of faculty and students”, as well as it includes 11 activities and processes. The research ambitions and interests of the Institute are not reflected in other documents.

6.2 The TLI has a long-term strategy as well as mid and short-term programs that address its research interests and ambitions.

The mid- and short-term programs for research activities are not elaborated. The research carried out at the Institute is not coordinated, does not stem from the personal interests of the lecturers. Though the research activities implemented in the Institute are not planned, they are carried out in the chairs and are consistent with their professional orientation. Institute makes some expenses for the organization of conferences, master classes, business trips and acquisition of new equipments for educational reforms, etc.

6.3 The TLI ensures the implementation of research and development through sound policies and procedures.

There are no sound policies and procedures for ensuring the implementation of research and development. Each chair carries out research activities in accordance with its professional orientation, the results of which are summarized in the annual reports. YSITC has a scientific editorial council which regulates the process of scientific publications, their quality. From 2015 there is a separate article in the budget for publication expenses.

6.4 The TLI emphasizes the internationalization of its research.

During the last 5 years only 4 articles of the lecturers were published in the international peer-reviewed journals (Haykazyan Armenian Studies Periodical (Beirut)). It's a very low result. However, this periodical doesn't have internationally peer-reviewed status. No importance is attached to the internationalization of the research activities.

6.5 The TLI has well established mechanisms for linking research with teaching.

The regulated mechanisms for linking research with teaching are missing at TLI. The Institute views the research carried out by postgraduate student and his/her teaching at the Institute as such a mechanism. The implementation of programs by student theatre that contributes to the cooperation of students-creative young people is also viewed as a mechanism for linking research with teaching.

CONSIDERATIONS

The research ambitions and interests of the Institute are not clearly defined. The research carried out at the Institute is not coordinated, does not stem from the personal interests of the lecturers. There are no sound policies and procedures for ensuring the implementation of research and development. No importance is attached to the internationalization of the research activities. The regulated mechanisms for linking research with teaching are missing.

JUDGMENT

Taking into consideration that YSITC doesn't ensure the regulated implementation of research activities and link of the research with teaching and learning, the expert panel thinks that YSITC doesn't meet the requirements of criterion 6.

CONCLUSION

The compliance of University's institutional capacities with the requirements of criterion 6 is **unsatisfactory**.

CRITERION VII. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

The TLI has necessary resources to create learning environment and to effectively support the implementation of its stated mission and objectives.

FINDINGS

7.1 The TLI has an appropriate learning environment for the implementation of academic programs.

YSITC and its branches are provided with the necessary equipments for carrying out classroom, practical and research activities; it has a library, a film archive, classroom facilities, halls, studios and laboratories.

The library has sufficient amount of general and professional literature in Armenian, Russian and in other languages. In fact, the library of the Institute and its branches has a total of 43.434 books (text- books, educational and methodological manuals, monographs, journals, etc.). General and professional literature is replenished according to the requirements of educational and methodological works carried out at the Institute, as well as by means of donations. There are computers, disks, network devices in the library.

The film archive has two halls and all of the necessary equipment (TV, DVD player, screen, a projector and computer). The replenishment of recordings of films, performances are carried out

taking into consideration the professional and general courses of the Institute. There are films, performances in Armenian, Russian and English, recordings of master classes, as well as audio books (Armenian classics read by Suren Kocharyan and Sos Sargsyan) and radio performances. Today it has more than 4000 disks and it is constantly being replenished with modern and classic films. Full-time and part-time students, as well as those from preparatory courses, can use the available DVDs and CDs. Screenings included in curricula are held in the halls. Students also present their course paper and theses materials in the halls as well. Master classes, meetings and festival films screenings and discussions are also held here.

STUK Production (the Armenian abbreviation of Creative Technologies Educational Centre) program launched on September 5, 2014. The aim of this program is to contribute to the institutional reforms of YSITC. The program is implemented within the second credit program of World Bank “Education Quality and Relevance”. Due to this program the laboratories of the Film faculty were established and equipped and the Institute has obtained new devices and equipment. Student Theatre-Laboratory, dance halls, solo cabinets, video and sound editing and cartoon pavilions, auditoriums, library, reading hall, conference hall, medical centre, cafeteria and workshops are located in the territory of the Institute.

The Institute generally ensures an appropriate learning environment for the implementation of academic programs.

7.2 The TLI provides appropriate financial resources with necessary equipment and facilities as needed to achieve its mission and objectives.

There is a certain mechanism for the distribution of financial resources at the Institute. At the end of each year the Institute compiles the estimate for the coming year, which is approved by the YSTIC Board. The planning of the annual estimate is carried out according to the Institute’s main fields of activities, based on the number of students, human and material-technical resources.

The annual indicative proportions of means allocated for YSITC development, salaries and structural maintenance are defined. The process of development of budget indexes system is carried out based on fields of activities and development directions.

However, financial distribution policy that sustains and ensures the implementation and continuity of the academic programs is missing. The distribution of finances according to the needs of the academic programs is mainly carried out in the form of the teaching staff salaries and current organizational expenses.

In the annual budget the percentage of maintenance and development of resources necessary for ensuring the TLI’s activities and particularly education process are insignificant. Here are the expenses of budget, 2015 expressed in percentages.

- Expenses for maintenance and enrichment of the library, 0.105%,
- Expenses for performances 0.118%,
- Expenses for the acquisition of furniture, 0.269%,
- Acquisition of devices, equipment, 0.165%,

- Office expenses, 0.172%:

7.3 The TLI has sound financial distribution policy and capacity to sustain and ensure the integrity and continuity of the academic programs offered at the institution.

Financial distribution policy that sustains and ensures the integrity and continuity of the academic programs offered at the institution is incomplete. The distribution of finances according to the needs of the academic programs is mainly carried out in the form of the teaching staff salaries and current organizational expenses. The financial distribution practice necessary for the development of academic programs are missing, excluding the expenses towards the development carried out due to PIU grants. It should be noted that the acquisition of equipment in the frame of this funding program is a significant investment in ensuring the implementation and continuity of academic programs.

7.4 The TLI's resource base supports the implementation of institution's academic programs and TLI strategic plan, which promotes for sustainability and continuous quality enhancement.

The Institute has necessary classroom facilities, laboratory, workshop base, including dance halls, solo cabinets, video and sound editing and cartoon pavilions, library, a reading hall and a conference hall for the implementation of academic programs.

All in all, the resource base of the Institute gives an opportunity for the implementation of academic programs and strategic plan. However, the distribution of existing resources is not carried out according to the strategic goals. Thus, the sustainability and continuous quality enhancement are not guaranteed.

7.5 The TLI has a sound policy and procedure to manage information and documentation.

The policy for the management of information and documentation process is not defined in certain documentation. The process and tools for the management of information are missing (information management system). Only the processes that were traditionally considered important during USSR are being documented.

7.6 The TLI creates safe and secure environment through health and safety mechanisms that also consider special needs of students.

The health services at YSITC are carried out by the medical centre. It is provided by first aid medicines and medical tools, but it needs to be upgraded. The Security is provided through the Institute's guards. The environment for students with special needs is missing.

7.7 The TLI has mechanisms in place for the evaluation of the effectiveness, applicability and availability of resources given to the teaching staff and students.

Regular surveys concerning the applicability, availability and effectiveness of resources are conducted among students and teachers. However, no steps are taken based on the results of these surveys.

CONSIDERATIONS

The Institute mainly ensures an appropriate learning environment for the implementation of academic programmes. During the site-visit the expert panel was convinced that the TLI is provided with the necessary equipments for carrying out classroom, practical and research activities, it has a library, a film archive, classroom facilities, halls, studios and laboratories. Thanks to grant programs specialized laboratories, pavilions with modern equipments were created in recent years to ensure learning outcomes of academic programs.

There is a certain mechanism for the distribution of financial resources at the Institute. At the end of each year the Institute compiles the estimate for the coming year, which is approved by the YSTIC Board. The planning of the annual estimate is carried out according to the Institute's main fields of activities.

The distribution of finances according to the needs of the academic programs is mainly carried out in the form of the teaching staff salaries and current organizational expenses. Thus, financial distribution policy that sustains and ensures the integrity and continuity of the academic programs at the Institution needs a revision.

In general, the resource base of TLI gives an opportunity for the implementation of academic programs and strategic plan.

Information management process and tools (information management system) are in the formation process.

TLI creates safe and secure environment through health and safety services, but the environment for students with special needs is missing.

TLI introduces mechanisms for the evaluation of the effectiveness, applicability and availability of resources given to the teaching staff and students.

JUDGMENTS

The expert panel thinks that the Institute has created healthy and safe environment for the implementation of its mission and goals, as well as academic programs, there is a certain financial distribution policy, mechanisms for the evaluation of resources given to the internal stakeholders are being introduced and therefore, the Institute meets the requirements of criterion 7.

CONCLUSION

The compliance of University's institutional capacities with the requirements of criterion 7 is **satisfactory**.

CRITERION VIII. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The TLI is accountable to the government and society for the education it offers and the resources it uses as well as for the research it conducts.

FINDINGS

8.1 The TLI has clear policy on institutional accountability.

YSITC's accountability to the society is ensured through one general annual report which is based on the annual reports of the faculties and chairs, as well as the reports of administrative subdivisions. There are two types of the presentation of reports – report on education scientific activities and report on creative activities. The reports are presented at the Scientific Council once a year. After being discussed, the report is presented at the session of YSITC Board in the form of Rector's annual report. This system can become an effective mechanism for accountability, if it functions properly, but it is not formulated in documentation.

8.2 The TLI ensures transparency of its procedures and processes and makes them publicly available.

Educational, creative, research activities implemented by YSITC are continuously being covered in the press, on TV and YSITC website. Information about YSITC activities, regulatory and procedural documents have been developed within the framework of the grant program "Education Quality and Relevance".

Taking into consideration the traffic rates of social media, especially among the younger generation and students and evaluating their importance in the development of YSITC rating, the Institute has created its official Facebook pages which already have hundreds of followers who can find updated information about events organized at YSITC.

The above mentioned mechanisms ensure the transparency of TLI's procedures and processes and make them publicly available.

8.3 The TLI has sustainable feedback mechanisms for establishing relations with society.

YSITC teaching staff's and students' visits to schools in Yerevan and the RA regions gives an opportunity to the society to express their opinions and discuss them.

The coverage of all cultural events taking place in the RA by mass media and television may be viewed as a feedback, as they are carried out by YSITC teaching staff, graduates and students.

All the described processes can be viewed as feedback mechanisms, however, they are not regulated and it is not clear how the information is used. TLI's website and social networks are not fully used as communication mechanisms.

8.4 The TLI has mechanisms that ensure knowledge transfer to the society.

One of the mechanisms that ensure knowledge transfer to the society is the organization of Professional Directing Courses delivered by “Art-Cinema” foundation and YSITC, that prepare Armenian and foreign applicants for entrance exams for all 13 professions available at the Institute.

Other mechanisms of knowledge transfer are the lectures and master classes organized in Yerevan and the RA regions. YSITC teaching staff and students are frequently invited to participate in various cultural and creative events and master classes by different organizations. All the above mentioned processes can be viewed as mechanism for knowledge transfer to the society, but their effectiveness is not studied yet.

CONSIDERATIONS

Having no regulation on institutional accountability, there is a bottom-up system for the presentation of annual reports, which can become a very effective mechanism for accountability, if it functions correctly.

The reports are good means for the evaluation of the implementation of the Institute's mission and concept of development. However, the mechanism for the accountability is incomplete and does not function according to the directions of Strategic Plan.

The materials provided to the society through mass media, the use of social networks significantly contribute to the transparency of the process implemented at TLI.

There are processes that contribute to the establishment of relations with the society, but they institutionally have not yet become the sustainable feedback mechanisms.

There are some processes for knowledge transfer to the society, but their effectiveness is not studied. The system of quality assurance in the field of social responsibility is in the formation process.

JUDGMENT

There is a bottom –up system of annual report presentation at YSITC in order to be accountable to the government and society. Mechanisms for the dissemination of information are applied for ensuring the availability and transparency of the processes implemented at the Institute. There are also processes that contribute to the establishment of relations and knowledge transfer to the society. Taking into consideration that TLI acknowledges the need for the improvement of the systems, mechanisms and processes; expert panel is of opinion that YSITC meets the requirements of the criterion 8.

CONCLUSION

The compliance of University’s institutional capacities with the requirements of criterion 8 is **satisfactory**.

CRITERION IX. EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONALIZATION

The TLI promotes experience exchange and enhancement through its sound external relations practices, thus promoting internationalization of the institution.

FINDINGS

9.1 The TLI promotes its external relations through sound policies and procedures aimed at creating an environment conducive to experience exchange and enhancement as well as internationalization.

The 4th goal of the Strategic plan 2013-2017 is formulated as “strategic partnership and international cooperation”. The first objective for the accomplishment of this goal is defined as Expansion of cooperation with leading European higher education institutions in the fields of education and science. The second objective is to increase the recruitment of foreign students and organization of education. However, no results or success were achieved in this direction. Policies and procedures that promote external relations and internationalization are missing.

9.2 The institution’s external relations infrastructure ensures regulated process.

Centre for international relations, supplementary and continuous education aims to ensure the membership and cooperation of YSITC with numerous networks and organizations, as well as with a number of HEIs and research centers in the world. However, the activities of the centre are not fully regulated.

9.3 The TLI promotes fruitful and effective collaboration with local and international counterparts.

During the 2010-2015 academic years YSITC has invited foreign specialists Robert Sturua, Sergey Solovyov, Tonino Guerra, Artavazd Peleshyan, Abdrashidov, Zanussi, Stelling, film critic Armen Medvedev, Michael Simon and others, who held master classes for the Institute’s students.

Starting from October, 2014 YSITC is a member of UNESCO international network of performing arts in higher education.

The 'mobility' of the students and lecturers is mainly for the short period of time and usually assumes participation in an event. But the students' exchange assumes at least one semester education and recognition of credits in the partner HEI. The lecturers' mobility assumes teaching at partner HEIs.

There is no certain system for evaluating effectiveness of collaboration with local and international counterparts.

9.4 The TLI ensures internal stakeholders' appropriate level of a foreign language to enhance productivity of internationalization.

There are foreign language courses for the students in accordance with the standards of academic programs. The number of lecturers who can speak foreign language is not large (this does not apply to the Russian language). We should also note that the majority of applicants are the representatives of Diaspora and can speak Armenian.

In order to raise knowledge of foreign language of the teaching, support and administrative staff, Institute has recently reached an agreement with the US Embassy. The internal stakeholders' level of proficiency of foreign language hasn't been studied yet.

CONSIDERATIONS

One of the main goals of YSITC is the creation of environment conducive to internationalization, but no success has been achieved in exchange of experience, enhancement, participation in international programs and mobility of lecturers and students. Policies and procedures that promote external relations and internationalization are missing.

The centre for international relations, supplementary and continuous education functions at the Institute. However, it hasn't achieved tangible results in the field of above-mentioned issues. The international cooperation is mainly limited to the organization of master classes. It's positive that starting from October, 2014 YSITC is a member of UNESCO international network of performing arts in higher education. The system for evaluating effectiveness of collaboration with local and international counterparts is missing.

It is important that YSITC allocates financial resources for raising the level of proficiency of foreign language of staff and students and activate the mobility of lecturers and students. This will promote the creation of environment conducive to internationalization. Strategic steps and initiatives towards the internationalization need to be planned and coordinated.

JUDGMENT

Taking into consideration that the policies and procedures that promote external relations and internationalization are missing, creation of an environment conducive to internationalization is imperfect, the assessment of activities for the enhancement of the external relations is not carried out, mechanisms ensuring the lecturers' and students' mobility are weak and the courses aimed at increasing their foreign language proficiency are still in the introduction phase, the expert panel assesses the criterion 9 as unsatisfactory.

CONCLUSION

The compliance of University's institutional capacities with the requirements of criterion 9 is **unsatisfactory**.

CRITERION X. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

The TLI has an internal quality assurance system for promoting establishment of a quality culture and continuous improvement of all the processes of TLI

FINDINGS

10.1 The TLI has internal quality assurance policies and procedures.

The establishment of quality assurance system is included in the YSITC strategic plan. The policy and strategy of internal quality assurance was approved on August 29, 2014. The policy of internal quality assurance is not clear. The planned activities for the achievement of strategic goals are limited by the review or assessment of this or that issue. The schedule of the strategy and responsibilities are missing.

Guideline of quality assurance system was published in 2015, which describes the main issues, functions, main directions of activities, rights and responsibilities of QAC, ways of improvement of the quality assurance system, QA documents, QAC structure, QA system board.

The Guideline includes the documents “Policy and strategy of YSITC internal quality assurance”, “Academic program development, approval, monitoring and regularly review”, “Regulation of YSITC student assessment”. Quality assurance procedures, methods, mechanism and tools for the implementation of objectives and activities of QAC are not described in the guideline.

10.2 The TLI allocates sufficient time, material, human and financial resources to manage internal quality assurance processes.

The staff of QAC consists of the head of the centre and one employee. The TLI allocated material and financial resources to the Centre. The grant program “Education Quality and Relevance” and “Introduction of internal quality assurance system” provided by the World Bank greatly contributed to the enrichment of Institute’s material resources.

10.3 The internal and external stakeholders are involved in quality assurance processes.

The internal and external stakeholders are not sufficiently involved in quality assurance processes. The involvement of stakeholders is limited only by their participation in different surveys. The YSITC carries out surveys among the Institute’s students and lecturers. Taking into account that employees of external stakeholder institutions teach at the Institute, it can be considered that the part of internal and external stakeholders are involved in the surveys carried out by TLI. The mechanism and tools for the assessment of the implementation of activities are missing.

10.4 The internal quality assurance system is periodically reviewed.

The internal quality assurance system of TLI is still in formation process. The elaboration of mechanisms and tools for the assessment of different activities is not yet over. Some of the tools have been tested and are being reviewed now. In the self-evaluation report it is noted, "Taking into account the fact that YSITC quality assurance centre was founded in 2011 and is still rather young, we think that it is too early to consider reviewing the system". However, 5 years is a sufficient time to develop and introduce quality assurance system.

10.5 The internal quality assurance system provides valid and sufficient background for the success of the external quality assurance processes.

Internal quality assurance system makes efforts to provide valid and sufficient background for the success of the external quality assurance processes. Quality Assurance Centre employees were involved in all the groups producing self-evaluation report. However, because of the incomplete quality assurance system, the self-evaluation is not often based on serious studies or grounds. The grounds created by quality assurance system are not sufficient for the external evaluation of quality assurance.

10.6 The internal quality assurance system ensures the transparency of the processes unfolding in the TLI through providing information on the quality of the processes to the internal and external stakeholders.

The internal quality assurance system is still in formation process. Surveys are conducted, but they do not cover all the directions of TLI's activities. The internal quality assurance system does not provide the stakeholders with information on the quality of the TLI's activities and does not ensure the transparency of the Institute's activities.

CONSIDERATIONS

YSITC quality assurance centre was founded in 2011, but the quality assurance system is still in formation process. Policy of quality assurance is not clearly formulated; procedures of internal quality assurance are not defined. Material and financial resources can be sufficient for the management of quality assurance processes if they are used effectively. The centre is currently the weakest link of the Institute and needs to be restructured, especially in terms of human resources. The centre's employees need professional training.

YSITC internal and external stakeholders are not sufficiently involved in quality assurance processes. The involvement of stakeholders is limited only by their participation in different surveys, which actually do not reveal all the key issues in the Institute. There are no mechanisms and tools for the assessment of different activities. Quality assurance system does not provide sufficient grounds for the evaluation of external quality assurance. It is obvious that quality culture

is not established yet and PDCA circle does not fully function. The internal quality assurance system does not provide the stakeholders with information on the quality of the TLI's activities and does not ensure the transparency of Institute's activities.

JUDGEMENT

The expert panel thinks that TLI does not meet the requirements of the criterion 10, as the internal quality assurance system of YSITC — processes, mechanisms and tools are still in formation process and do not contribute to the establishment of a quality culture and continuous improvement of all the processes of TLI.

CONCLUSION

The compliance of University's institutional capacities with the requirements of criterion 10 is **unsatisfactory**.

OVERVIEW OF THE ASSESSMENTS

CRITERION	CONCLUSION
<i>1. Mission and goals</i>	Meets
<i>2. Governance and Administration</i>	Meets
<i>3. Academic Programs</i>	Meets
<i>4. Students</i>	Meets
<i>5. Teaching and Support Staff</i>	Meets
<i>6. Research and Development</i>	Doesn't meet
<i>7. Infrastructure and Resources</i>	Meets
<i>8. Social Responsibility</i>	Meets
<i>9. External Relations and Internationalization</i>	Doesn't meet
<i>10. Internal Quality Assurance</i>	Doesn't meet

Chairman of the expert panel

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. THE CURRICULA VITAE OF THE PANEL MEMBERS

Mkrtich Ayvazyan – In 2000 M. Ayvazyan graduated from Yerevan State Pedagogical University, Department of Physics and Mathematics. In 2003 he received the degree of Candidate of Physical and Mathematical Sciences. In 2009-2013 worked as a specialist in the department of elaboration and development, head of Secretariat, head of the department of Institutional and Programme Accreditation at National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance, Foundation. Since 2012 he has been working in Yerevan State Academy of Fine Arts, first as the Head of Academic Affairs Department, then as the Vice-Rector for Education and Research. M. Ayvazyan is the author of numerous scientific articles.

Levan Khetaguri – In 1986 L. Khetaguri graduated from Georgian State Theatre Institute, in 1991 from GITIS, HIGH School Moscow. He is a PhD in Foreign Theatre, President of Stichting Caucasus Foundation, since 1989 producer and coproducer for theatre and TV in Georgia in cooperation with a number of countries. From 1997 to present he is the Coordinator and moderator of several cultural programs, festivals and seminars. Since 1999 L. Khetaguri is an invited professor and expert, consultant and coacher in a number of Universities. In 2010-2015 professor and Director of Arts Research Institute of Ilia State University. He is an international expert in Higher Arts Education.

Iuri Mgebrishvili – In 1979 I. Mgebrishvili graduated from Tbilisi State University, faculties of Cybernetics and Applied Mathematics and Arts Science. Leading Ph.D, MA and BA Programmes in Cultural Management, Associative Professor at Ilia State University, Head of Cultural Management and Cultural Policy Research Centre at the Arts Research Institute. I. Mgebrishvili is the author of a number of research works.

Geghetsik Grigoryan – In 1979 G. Grigoryan graduated from YSU faculty of Law. She is a candidate in Law, associate professor. From 1998 she participated in trainings on human rights, gender issues, as well as in several international seminars and conferences both in RA and abroad /Hungary, Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, the USA — Berkeley and Hastings Universities /. Since 1997 she has been an expert in a number of local and international organizations and since 2013 at National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation. G. Grigoryan is the author of a number of textbooks, manuals and articles. She works at ASUE chair of Political Science and Law, concurrently, she is the dean of the Faculty of Law and International Relations of "Haybusak" University.

Misha Tadevosyan – Third-year student at the Faculty of Education, Psychology and Sociology of Armenian State Pedagogical University after Khachatur Abovyan. Since 2015 he has been the President of Students' Scientific Society of ASPU faculty of Education, Psychology and Sociology. M. Tadevosyan participated in a number of trainings — "Quality assurance", "Students' participation in Quality assurance processes in Scotland" (sparqs), "Cultural-historical psychology and practical approach in education (МГППУ)", as well as in the training course for the preparation of student-experts at National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance, Foundation.

APPENDIX 2. SCHEDULE OF THE SITE-VISIT

16.05 – 20.05.2016

	16.05.2016	<i>Launch</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1	Close meeting of the expert panel	9:15	9:45	30 minutes
2	Meeting with the Rector of the Institute	10:00	10:30	30 minutes
3	Meeting with the self-assessment working group	10:30	11:45	75 minutes
4	Meeting with the vice rectors	11:45	12:45	60 minutes
5	Lunch, internal discussions	12:45	13:45	60 minutes
6	Observation of resources / library, film archive, laboratories, defense of theses /	14:00	15:00	60 minutes
7	Meeting with the deans, heads of the educational process management subdivisions	15:15	16:15	60 minutes
8	Meeting with the representatives of employers	16:30	17:30	60 minutes
9	Close meeting of the expert panel	17:30	18:45	75 minutes

	17.05.2016	<i>Launch</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1	Close meeting of the expert panel	9:30	10:00	30 minutes
2	Meeting with the heads of the chairs	10:00	11:30	90 minutes
3	Meeting with the lecturers	11:45	12:45	60 minutes
4	Lunch, internal discussions	12:45	13:45	60 minutes
5	Observation of resources / Centre of International Relations and Supplementary and Continuous Education, Human Resources Division, IT and PR centres, chairs/	14:00	15:45	105 minutes
6	Meeting with the graduates	16:00	17:00	60 minutes
7	Close meeting of the expert panel	17:00	18:15	75 minutes

	18.05.2016	<i>Launch</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1	Close meeting of the expert panel	9:30	10:00	30 minutes
	Meeting with the staff members of Quality Assurance Centre			
2	Meeting with the representatives of Students Council and film club	10:00	11:00	60 minutes
3	Meeting with the BA students (local and international)	11:15	12:45	90 minutes
4	Lunch, internal discussions	13:00	14:00	60 minutes

5	Meeting with the MA students	14:15	15:15	60 minutes
6	Meeting with the part time students	16:00	17:00	60 minutes
7	Close meeting of the expert panel	17:00	18:30	90 minutes

Site-visit in YSITC Gyumri branch

	19.05.2016	<i>Launch</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1	Departure to Gyumri	8:30	10:30	120 minutes
2	Meeting with the director of the branch	10:45	11:00	15 minutes
3	Meeting with the heads of administrative and education subdivisions	11:15	12:15	60 minutes
4	Meeting with the representatives of Students Council and students	12:30	13:30	60 minutes
5	Lunch, internal discussions	13:30	14:30	60 minutes
6	Meeting with the representatives of the teaching staff	14:45	15:45	60 minutes
7	Observation of resources	16:00	17:00	60 minutes
8	Close meeting of the expert panel	17:00	17:45	45 minutes
9	Meeting with the director of the branch	17:45	18:00	15 minutes
10	Departure to Yerevan	18:00	20:00	120 minutes

	20.05.2016	<i>Launch</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1	Close meeting of the expert panel	9:00	9:30	30 minutes
2	Meeting with the Scientific secretary and the employees of Scientific department	9:30	10:30	60 minutes
3	Meeting with staff chosen by the experts panel	10:45	11:30	45 minutes
4	Observation of resources /observation of documents, discussions/	11:30	12:30	60 minutes
5	Open meeting with the expert panel	12:30	13:00	30 minutes
6	Lunch, internal discussions	13:00	14:00	60 minutes
7	Meeting with staff chosen by the experts panel	14:15	15:00	45 minutes
8	Close meeting of the expert panel	15:15	16:15	60 minutes
9	Meeting with the Rector	16:15	17:00	45 minutes
10	Close meeting of the expert panel	17:15	19:00	75 minutes

APPENDIX 3. THE LIST OF OBSERVED DOCUMENTS

N	NAME OF THE DOCUMENT	CRITERION
1.	YSITC self-evaluation of institutional capacities	1-10
2.	Charter of YSITC	1-10
3.	YSITC Strategic plan, 2013-2017	1-10
4.	Schedule of Strategic plan	1-10
5.	Rectorate regulation	2
6.	Agenda of YSITC Council	2
7.	Regulation of YSITC Scientific Council	2
8.	YSITC collective agreement	2
9.	YSITC Faculty Exemplary Regulation	2
10.	Regulation of the Methodological Council of the Faculty	2
11.	Regulation of YSITC Methodological Council	2,3,5
12.	Charter of YSITC Chair	2
13.	Annual plans of subdivisions	2,8
14.	Camera work (academic program)	3
15.	Theatre Studies (academic program)	3
16.	Program descriptors	3
17.	Course description	3
18.	YSITC Regulation on students' assessment	2,3,4
19.	YSITC regulation on the transfer of students specializations	2,4
20.	Academic program development, approval, monitoring and regularly review	3
21.	YSITC regulation on Master's program admission for 2015	4
22.	Admission requirements for foreign applicants to YSITC Bachelor's program	4, 9
23.	Charter of YSITC Career and practice centre	4
24.	Strategic Program of Career and practice Centre, 2013-2017	2,4
25.	Internal disciplinary rules for YSITC Students	4
26.	Charter of YSITC Student Council	4
27.	Regulation of the formation of the teaching staff	2,5
28.	Distribution of permanent and concurrent teaching staff according to qualifications and chairs	5
29.	YSITC film equipment provision and regulation on its application	7
30.	Charter of Student Theatre-Laboratory	4,7
31.	Regulation of Quality assurance center	10
32.	Strategy of QAC	1,2
33.	QAC Report for 2015	8, 10

34.	The grounds and analyses of the survey conducted among students, graduates, lecturers and administrative staff in 2013-2014	4,5,10
35.	Annual plans of Scientific Council	6
36.	Concept of technical and other standards for the publication of research works in scientific methodological Journal «Handes»	6
37.	List of scientific and methodological discussions, seminars, conferences, festivals and creative competitions with the participation of leading specialists from YSITC and International HEIs during the last 5 years.	5

APPENDIX 4. RESOURCES OBSERVED BY THE EXPERT PANEL

1. Department of Education and Methodology
2. Dean offices
3. Chairs
4. Student theatre-laboratory
5. Solo cabinets
6. Quality Assurance Centre
7. Career and Practice Centre
8. Library, Reading Hall
9. Medical centre
10. Film archive
11. YSITC branch in Gyumri
12. Two cinema halls
13. Dance halls, cabinets
14. Video and sound editing and cartoon pavilions
15. Auditoriums

The members of the expert panel watched:

1. The performance of graduating students of acting department
2. The performance of graduating students of acting department in Gyumri branch
3. The performance of first- year students of acting department in Gyumri branch
4. Works of graduating students from the faculty of Film, TV and animation

2014-2015 graduating year

“The Way” /30 minutes/ A. Baghdasaryan – *Film/* director

“The Girl on the moon” /20 minutes/ A. Malakyan – *Film/* director

2015-2016 graduating year

“Breathing” /18 minutes/ K. Hambardzumyan - *Film/*director/

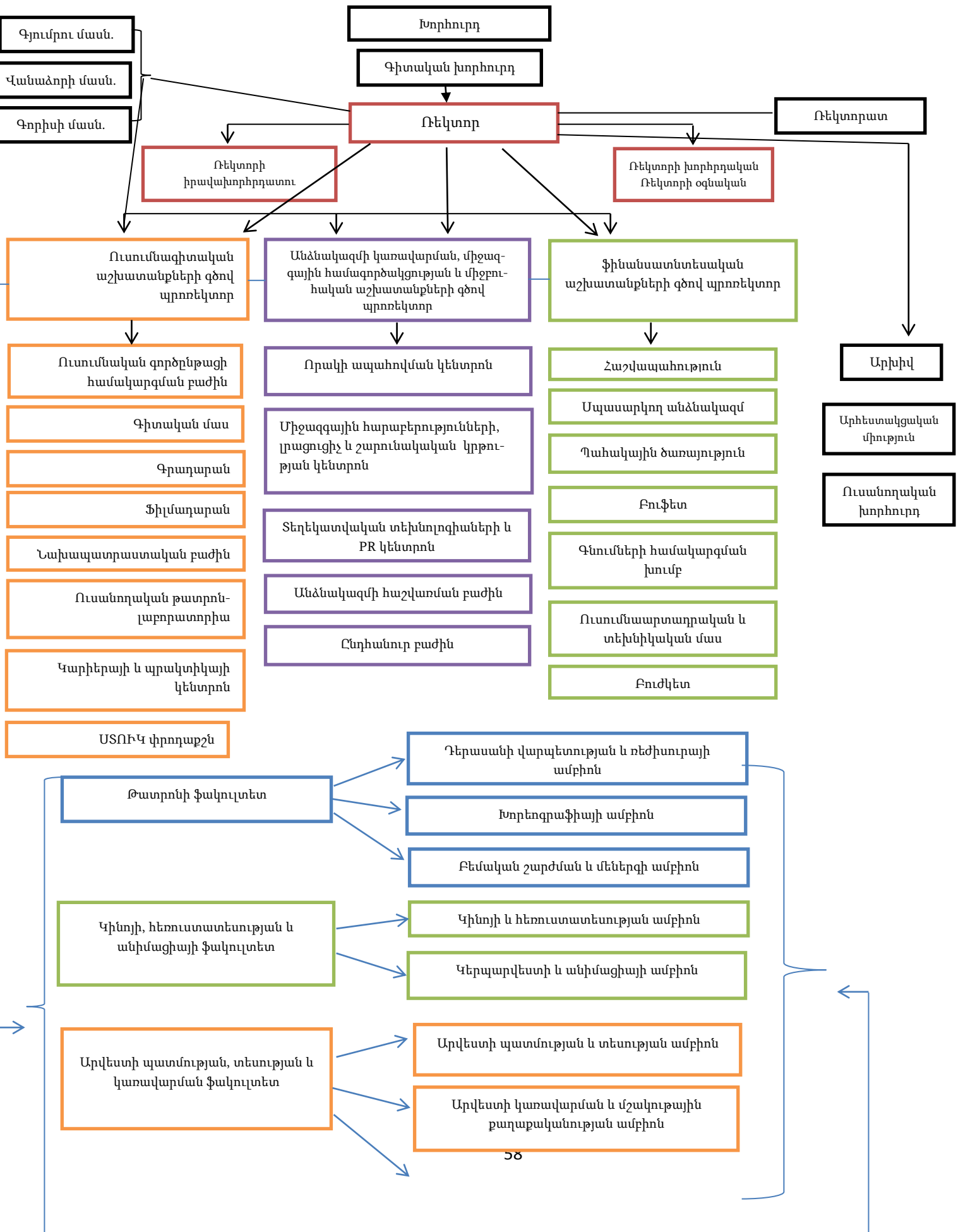
"A pause" /16 minutes/ G. Ghukasyan- *Film /* director

“Pastoral” /10 minutes/ R. Pashinyan- Camera work

“Portrait” /10 Minutes/, N. Ghazaryan – Camera work

Expedition /3.5 minutes/ G. Khachatryan – Animation

APPENDIX 5. THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF TLI



Հումանիտար գիտությունների ամբիոն

Հեռակա ֆակուլտետ

APPENDIX 6. LIST OF THE ABBREVIATIONS

EHEA-European Higher Education Area
HEI –Higher Education Institution
YSITC - Yerevan State Institute of Theatre and Cinematography
RA-Republic of Armenia
AP-Academic program
TLI- Tertiary Level Institution
QA-Quality Assurance
QAC - Quality Assurance Centre
NQF - National Qualifications Framework
PDCA – Plan-do-check-act
SP-Strategic plan
STUK - Creative Technologies Educational Centre
PIU – Project Implementation Unit
USSR - Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
PR- Public Relations
SWOT- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
KPI - Key Performance Indicator
GITIS - Russian University of Theatre Arts
VGIK – The Gerasimov Institute of Cinematography