

**NATIONAL CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION QUALITY
ASSURANCE, FOUNDATION**



REPORT

**PILOT INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION OF YEREVAN “GLADZOR”
UNIVERSITY**

YEREVAN – 2013

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BRIEF INFORMATION ON YEREVAN “GLADZOR” UNIVERSITY

Yerevan “Gladzor” university educational–industrial co-operative (the former company name–“Gladzor” management university educational–industrial co-operative) was established in 1990. In the past years the students have specialized in the following specialties: law, international economics, finance and credit, international relations, accounting and audit, management, foreign languages (French, English and German), translation, Armenian language and literature, computer science and computer engineering. Since 2006, in parallel with the Bachelor Degree programs, the university has carried out Master’s Degree programs as well. In 2005 the university launched post-graduate studies. 22 YGU alumni have defended their post-graduate theses.

Since 2006–2007 academic year the university has established the academic credit system. The Center of Educational Reforms has been operating in the university since 2007, which has been re-established into the Quality Assurance Center.

The university has a Student Council, Student Scientific Council, as well as it publishes the “Nor Gladzor” youth student newspaper.

The university’s highest management body is the Scientific Council, and all the university sub-divisions are guided by the decisions taken at the Scientific Council’s sessions.

The university has introduced continuous education program and respective procedure including the high school-college-Bachelor-Master-PHD cycles.

COMPOSITION ¹ OF EXPERT PANEL

The external evaluation of the Yerevan “Gladzor” university self-evaluation, the implementation of the educational and quality assurance processes was conducted by the following expert panel:

- Professor Harutyun Marzpanyan, the panel chair
- Fabrice Henard, France, panel member
- Associate Professor Gurgen Hovhannisyan, panel member
- Associate Professor Samvel Mkhitarian, panel member
- Arpine Mkrtchyan, student representative, panel member

The panel activities were coordinated by Anna Karapetyan, employee of the Institutional and Program Accreditation Unit, the National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance, Foundation (hereinafter ANQA).

¹ APPENDIX 1. The autobiographies of the panel members

PROCESS OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW

The preparatory phase

Yerevan “Gladzor” university has applied for Pilot Institutional Accreditation by submitting to ANQA the respective application form, the copies of the license and its appendices.

The ANQA Secretariat has analysed the data presented in the application form, the appendices and the electronic questionnaire completed by the university.

Following the decision on accepting the application form, a tripartite agreement was signed between ANQA, the Center for Education Projects and the university. The timetable of activities was prepared and approved respectively.

Within the timeframes stipulated by the timetable the university has presented the self-evaluation report (SER henceforth) of its institutional capacities in Armenian and English based on the ANQA format, as well as the relevant document package.

The self-evaluation was conducted by the group formed by the Rector’s order for that particular reason.

In the receipt of positive reflection from the coordinator appointed by the ANQA Director, the secretariat has handed the SER to the expert panel for analysis: the composition of the panel was agreed with the university in advance and appointed by the order of ANQA Director.

The expert panel, analyzing the university SER and relevant documentation package, conducted a preliminary assessment based on the relevant format, made up a list of documents, issues and questions that require further investigation, as well as specified the target subdivisions and groups.

Preparatory visit

The coordinator, based on the revealed questions and issues to be clarified, has made up the site visit agenda² together with the expert panel: the agenda was agreed with the university during the preliminary visit by the coordinator and panel chair. Guided by the ANQA Accreditation Manual, the meetings of the panel with all target groups, the open and closed meetings, the desk review, the visits to the subdivisions etc. were included in the agenda. The list of documents requiring additional investigation was also presented to the university.

The university representatives noted, that the expert panel would be provided with a relevant working room equipped with the necessary facilities, as well as an auditorium for implementing the meetings.

²APPENDIX 2. agenda of the site-visit of the expert panel for pilot institutional accreditation

Site-visit

The expert panel has conducted the site visit on December 3-7. The site visit activities have launched according to the timetable with a meeting held at ANQA, which aimed at discussing and agreeing with the international expert Fabrice Henard on the evaluation framework, as well as the issues to be clarified during the site visit.

The group as a whole participated in the site visit, including the coordinator, the translator, and the secretary.

The site visit was launched and closed with a meeting with the Rector. The faculty and students were selected randomly by the panel for the clarification of the questions highlighted. All the meetings envisaged by the agenda were respectively held. During the site visit the panel has conducted desk review, observation of resource³ in a number of university subdivisions.

The major findings were summarized during the closed meeting at the end of the site visit.

The external evaluation by the experts was conducted according to the State Criteria and Standards for Accreditation in the Republic of Armenia, as well as within the frames of ANQA procedures, that stipulates three-level evaluation scale: **does not meet the criterion, partially meets the criterion and meets the criterion**. The expert panel has evaluated the university performance in accordance with separate criteria, also with separate standards.

Expert panel report

After the site visit the experts presented their individual reports in two week's time. Based on these individual reports the panel chair and the coordinator prepared the initial accreditation report which was agreed with the experts. The findings of the report were sent to the university for comments and suggestions. Taking into consideration the considerations made by the university the accreditation report was prepared, including the considerations, evaluation and recommendation. The final report was approved by the signatures of the panel chair and the coordinator.

³ APPENDIX 3. reviewed documents

APPENDIX 4. resource observations and visits to units

SUMMARY OF ACCREDITATION CARRIED OUT IN YEREVAN “GLADZOR” UNIVERSITY

CRITERION I. MISSION AND PURPOSE: The mission of Yerevan “Gladzor” university complies with the RA National Qualifications Framework (NQF). When setting the strategic goals and objectives of the university an attempt was made to consider the changing character of educational content, labor market requirements, current challenges of globalizing education, international laws and principles of the field, however, the imperfection of strategic planning mechanisms does not enable the university to thoroughly conduct needs analysis of the stakeholders, that fosters to highlight the peculiarities of the university, as well as the competitive previledges.

CRITERION II. GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION: The university has a hierarchical management system, whose decision making activities are directed towards the implementation of the university mission and goals. The university organizational structure, the shareholders, the peculiarities of the management system and the absence of some managerial units proves that the university management system faces risks connected with the regulation, collegiality and effectiveness of the decision-making process. Administration is not yet implemented through the plan-do-check-act cycle based on the needs analysis of the internal and external stakeholders.

CRITERION III. ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES: The academic programs (AP) in general are in concord with the RA NQF, the university’s mission, strategic goals and objectives. However, the descriptions of separate APs do not reflect clearly enough their distinctive features, particularly, quantitative and qualitative requirements with regard to necessary resources, methods and procedures applied to check and assess the achieved learning outcomes, organization of individual works, provision of students with study materials. All the mentioned limits the possibility to plan, do and check the mentioned relevant procedures. An important incentive for student-centered learning and student mobility is the introduction of the credit system at the university, ablest its conten components are not yet thoroughly established. The incomplete benchmarking activities and the absence of relevant policy and procedures do not enable the university to specify the current educational service trends in the market, the distinctive features of its APs, strengths and weaknesses, that prevents tuning of provided programmes. Hence, the comparability and recognition opportunities of APs taught at the university are significantly limited.

CRITERION IV. STUDENTS: A brief reflection of effectiveness of the student recruitment, selection and admission processes, is the number of applicants and students, which has gradually decreased in recent years. The university tries to compensate the decrease of the number of bachelor's programmes applicants by expanding distance learning and Master's Programs. The university yet does not have the opportunity to conduct complex evaluation of the educational, consultation, administrative and other services or the effectiveness of their quality assurance mechanisms, since it does not have stable feedback mechanisms. The implemented sociological are not based on appropriate methodology, they are meant for reflecting students' opinion about different aspects, rather than revealing their real needs. The student involvement mechanisms in research are also less effective.

CRITERION V. FACULTY AND STAFF: The institution’s policies and procedures promoting selection, recruitment and firing of the teaching and supporting staff are reflected in the university charter,

strategic plan and respective regulations, but the actuality of the faculty selection and professional development mechanisms is not justified. The policy promoting faculty sustainability is not effective enough since the teacher professional development system is in need of substantial improvement, particularly in term of establishing financial allocation procedures. In fact, the university does not analyze the effectiveness of the administrative and support staff either.

CRITERION VI. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT: The institution has a clear strategy promoting its research interests and developments, and its general aim is to analyse challenges of the modern civilization, however, the effectiveness and actuality of the strategy is not analyzed. Research is linked to teaching, but it is not made clear what are the research targets of the university, and whether research can play a practical role in improving the quality of teaching. The university takes measures to promote research, but the applied procedures are not clear enough.

CRITERION VII. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES: The university has all the necessary resources for the educational performance, as well as relevant infrastructures, which is considered as one of the basic competitive advantages of the university. University financial resources are almost entirely formed out of the tuition fees and are used for strategic and current issues. The financial equalization policy adopted by the university makes it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the fund allocation policy promoting the achievement of goals within separate APs and their continuity. The university highlights the importance of ensuring safe and secure environment for its students and staff, however the measures for awareness raising and avoiding possible risks are not regulated. The university has an electronic docflow system.

CRITERION VIII. SOCIETAL RESPONSIBILITY: The university is accountable to the internal stakeholders through introducing the performance results and discussions during the sessions of the Scientific Council, which are regularly published in the “Nor Gladzor” monthly newspaper. In order to ensure the transparency and publicity of its procedures and processes YGU tries to apply a number of mechanisms, however, it still lacks basis and tools for external stakeholder needs analysis, officially adopted policy and procedures for societal accountability, which has indirectly brought to the formation of ineffective feedback practice. The mechanisms of transferring knowledge/values to the society are not clarified either.

CRITERION IX. EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONALIZATION: The university stresses the importance of establishing regulated external relations and internationalization processes and attempts to carry out some plans in that direction, however, the envisaged steps basically of conceptual nature, are not stipulated in a respective working plan, and the material and financial resources are still insufficient to provide appropriate mobility level for students and teachers. The university has not carried out benchmarking of external relations and internationalization policy and procedures.

CRITERION X. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE: The university attempts to establish compound and effective internal quality assurance, whose objective is the periodical review and improvement of the current mechanisms and tools. The university has taken some positive steps in that direction: the establishment of the Quality Assurance and Career Centers, pilot institutional accreditation process

and a grant project meant for the establishment of the system. However, the quality assurance processes are not yet thoroughly coordinated at the university, the university has not developed a respective guide-handbook, it lacks internal and external stakeholder involvement procedures and coordinated process, YGU has not carried out benchmarking of the QA processes, policy and procedures. The university plans to build up the resource allocation policy on the current internal and external QA challenges, however, in the current financial situation such an approach is difficult to implement.

CRITERION I. Mission and purpose:	partially meets the criterion
CRITERION II. Governance and administration:	partially meets the criterion
CRITERION III. Academic programmes:	partially meets the criterion
CRITERION IV. Students:	partially meets the criterion
CRITERION V. Faculty and staf:	partially meets the criterion
CRITERION VI. Research and development:	partially meets the criterion
CRITERION VII. Infrastructure and resources:	partially meets the criterion
CRITERION VIII. Societal responsibility.	does not meet the criterion
CRITERION IX. External relations and internationalization:	does not meet the criterion
CRITERION X. Internal quality assurance:	partially meets the criterion

THE FINAL CONCLUSION - **partially meets the criterion**

The chair of the expert panel and the coordinator declare that this report is made up based on the panel members' reports. The panel has analyzed the report and agrees with the judgments included in the report. The panel members confirm that the evaluation was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the principle of independence.

15.04.2013թ.

Prof. Harutyun Marzpanyan

Anna Karapetyan

THE FINDINGS OF THE PILOT INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION CARRIED OUT IN YEREVAN “GLADZOR” UNIVERSITY

I. MISSION AND PURPOSE

CRITERION. The institution’s mission and purpose are in accordance with the relevant reference levels and are consistent with the policies and practices that guide its operations.

FINDINGS

1.1. The main type of the activity of Yerevan Gladzor University (YGU), as an industrial co-operative, is educational. The University has a mission that reflects the relevant goals and objectives, which is also formulated in the Charter, as well as in the 2006-2011 and 2012-2017 Strategic plan. The main mission of Yerevan Gladzor University is the formation of a model, intelligent citizen with deep professional skills and the spirit of patriotism, national statehood, led by cosmopolitan values, as well as implementation of research.

When setting up the mission and goals, the university tried to encounter the variability in the content of education, the demands of the job market, the challenges of globalizing education, the international norms and principles in the field, but the university did not introduce the university characteristics in regards to differentiated teaching and learning approaches, investing research in the APs, practice-oriented APs and other areas.

Hereby, the university mission, goals and objectives are basically introduced in general terms and do not indicate university’s characteristics and peculiarities.

1.2. In order to reveal the needs of internal and external stakeholders the university applies different mechanisms and tools. The needs of internal stakeholders are basically introduced by heads of chairs at the Chair’s or Scientific Council’s sessions. The Student Council was active in reflecting the students’ needs by participation in the Scientific Council’s sessions given the right to express their ideas.

The references, the grade given to students by the supervisors of the educational practice, as well as the reports of the Examination Boards on annual exams.

An important tool for revealing the needs of internal and external stakeholders is the thorough sociological survey, which has been implemented only in 2012 and was mostly meant for evaluating different areas of university functioning.

In order to maintain and promote feedback mechanisms the university plans to improve stakeholder needs analysis mechanisms and tools basically by means of the Quality Assurance Center (QACenter) and the newly opened Career Center.

1.3. The basic procedures meant for the evaluation of performance outputs and improvement are the annual and ongoing reports on implemented activities by heads of chairs and other subdivisions at the Scientific Council’s sessions, different sociological surveys, non-regular discussions with different stakeholders.

The institution does not have formal and stable mechanisms and/or procedures to evaluate the achievement of its mission and strategic plan.

According to the self-assessment university's Strategic Plan for 2006-2012 has provided for the achievement of its mission and purpose, that is, it has met a person's need for mental, spiritual and moral development. However, not in all cases the university succeeded to achieve more specific goals stipulated by the Strategic Plan. For example, the 2006-2012 Strategic Plan has set a goal to train the faculty, and this goal was not actually realised/according to the sociological survey 78% of the faculty has not been trained in the recent years/:

The university considers as a means to carry out its goals and objectives through the continuation of the courses defined by general educational (Philosophy) or national (History of Armenia) components, and this, for sure, deals with all the universities in Armenia.

CONSIDERATIONS

The performance of the university mission is somewhat vague, since there is lack of systematic and practical coordination process in the following functions of the university: 1) the non-state university as an educational-industrial cooperative, and 2) the university as a scientific-educational unit. YGU management system does not set a goal to differentiate educational goals from business-oriented goals, or at least to classify them.

The general character of the basic strategic planning tools, the imperfection of the development, adoption, implementation and review mechanisms does not enable the university to carry out stakeholders' complete needs analysis, which, in its turn, serves as an obstacle to highlight the university characteristics, as well as competitive advantages.

Although the university has applied some mechanisms and tools to reveal stakeholder needs, but they haven't ended up with high effectiveness, sometimes even having no purpose.

For example, the current image of performance at the university was not built up based on the factual exam results, but on a less reliable method- the sociological survey results conducted in 2012. The characteristics and grades given to the students in the result of the pre-graduation internship were not reliable enough either, since most of the internship passports were not even filled properly. Weak involvement of stakeholders prevents YGU to effectively link academic education and practical experience, and the content of reports by the heads of examination boards shows it.

The needs analysis results among the internal and external stakeholders of the university are not meant sufficiently to the quality assurance, since the sociological survey lacked methodology, hypothesis, implementation regulation, quantitative and qualitative indicators. In fact, there is no clear policy and effective procedures for stakeholder (particularly external) needs analysis, and the methods and approaches applied do not have a systematic character.

CONCLUSION

The criteria is partially met.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Specify the university mission, strategic goals and objectives as much as possible through activating the performance of the university Quality Assurance Center and Career Center in the direction of revealing the needs of internal and external stakeholders.

Carry out systematic sociological surveys in order to assure evaluation and feedback procedures, also provide for application procedures. Develop other tools and means for gathering reflections, suggestions.

Stipulate internal qualifications framework.

II. GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

CRITERION. The institution's system of governance ensures ethical decision-making and efficient provision of human, material and financial resources to effectively accomplish its mission, educational and other purposes.

FINDINGS

2.1. The university management is carried out based on the RA legislation and university's Charter. The peculiarity of the university organizational structure and management system is that the university's organizational status is educational industrial cooperative, and its highest managerial unit is the general assembly of the cooperative's members, which is prescribed the right of final decision in the most important operational and managerial issues, thus being authorized to implement the functions of the non-existing Governing Board at the university. The university's management basic collegial body is the Scientific Council, that adopts the University Strategic Plan, the charters of the university's subdivisions, regulations, procedures, teaching plans, discusses the reports of the heads of the chairs and different sub-divisions of the university on the realized works. The Scientific Council involves the university internal stakeholders. The current activities of the university in the period between the sessions of the academic council are managed by the Rectorate.

The university lacks a dean's office, units for international and public relations and cooperation, a department of science and the position of the vice-rector on science, and the functions of the mentioned unit were distributed among the existing management units.

The university management regulations generally dwell from the university mission, although they mostly stipulate the appointment, rather than selection policy/except the head of the Student Council (SC), the managers of all other units are appointed by the Rector, who, ex officio, become members of the Scientific Council/.

The Quality Assurance Center and the Career Center have already been established and currently operate. The university plans to set up a separate subdivision responsible for international cooperation, and it is reflected in the university's new strategic plan. During the site visit the university rector assured us that he plans to change the university organizational status to Limited Liability Company or Joint-Stock Company.

2.2. The university provides for student and teachers input in decision making in matters directly affecting them through discussing the issues raised by them during the chairs', scientific council's and student council's sessions, as well as by addressing their suggestions and complaints. The university lacks student and teachers involvement in officially adopted policy and systematic procedure in the decision making process.

2.3. The institution has some planning practice consistent with its mission and purpose, and this practice is based on the strategic plan and the activity implementation plan. But there are some flows in this process, and we can specify the following ones:

- The analysed plans most frequently set up outcomes that can not be checked or measured, as well as the deadlines and activities, as well as monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and responsibilities are vague,
- The planning process is basically limited to general introduction of planned activities and does not imply such issues, as maintenance and effective application of financial, human and material resources,
- Most of the activities and events that require tangible financial investments are not set out in respective plans and are implemented whenever relevant funds are available,
- The functions and competences of the Scientific Council lack the issues of financial planning, allocation and control, although it is the basic institutional unit responsible for planning and accountability.

2.4. The policy, mechanisms and tools for analyzing the internal and external factors influencing the university are still in the developmental, planning phase. The university has initiated environmental scanning by means of the Quality Assurance Center and the Career Center, however the applied procedures are not clarified.

2.5. The university gives high importance to the administration based on the plan-do-check-act cycle, although it still lacks clear quality assurance mechanisms and procedures. The university has not developed an activity plan for improving the administration based on the quality management principle either. The involvement of separate subdivisions in the quality assurance system is not clearly regulated, as well as their cooperation with the Quality Assurance Center.

2.6. The basic body responsible for evaluating the academic programs and educational processes is the Scientific Council, which also discusses and approves the academic programmes (AP). Another means of evaluating the APs are the reports by the heads of the state examination boards, the characteristics given to students by the organizations that held internships. The level of external stakeholder involvement in the university APs evaluation and review process is rather low, the feedback system is also rather poor.

The frequency of reviewing APs and their syllabi is decided based on the interview results among the faculty, and it brings forth the fact, that more frequent reviews are encouraged serving as effectiveness indicators. The chairs do not have syllabi review, as well as new programme adoption procedures.

2.7. The mechanisms providing up to date, objective and impartial quality (quantitative and qualitative) information on the academic programmes offered and qualification awards are not yet complete and systematic. The sociological survey conducted among the internal stakeholders does not indicate the effectiveness of the operating mechanisms.

CONSIDERATIONS

The university has a management system capable of regulated decision-making, however, the organizational structure, the shareholders, the peculiarities of the management system and the absence of some managerial units proves that the university management system faces risks connected with the regulation, collegiality and effectiveness of the decision-making process.

The current management system does not enable the university to use more effectively the human, material and financial resources for educational and other purposes; some functions of the Scientific Council are not realistic, for example, monitoring of the APs.

The university's short, medium, and long term planning consistent with its mission and purpose, as well as appropriate monitoring policy and procedures ensuring implementation and effectiveness evaluation of the plans are not clear enough and require redevelopment. There are no effective mechanisms ensuring involvement of teachers and students in the decision making process directly affecting their professional development, internationalization and research activities.

The university tries to do environmental scanning, although it bears general character, is mostly communicated as external influence and is not subjected to dynamic analysis, and this implies serious risks connected with the compliance of the university's academic offer and other services, quality and sustainability.

The university APs evaluation system still needs to be improved, in particular, there is vast need of involving the internal and external stakeholders in the process.

The data obtained in the result of APs monitoring can be valid information in the development of syllabi. However, the incomplete information on the effectiveness of appropriate procedures can not be used in their evaluation process, since they lack analytical approach.

CONCLUSION

The criteria is partially met.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Change the university into LLC or joint-stock company, assuming that joint stock company is a more prospective variant and will ensure involvement of new shareholders and attract new financial means,
- Involve the external stakeholders too in the university management system,
- Reduce the internal combinations as much as possible,
- Establish a financial allocation procedure and its accountability mechanisms,
- Increase the transparency of the decision-making process, develop a clear policy and procedures, to enable more effective involvement of students and teachers in the decision-making process,
- Develop a clear timetable for sociological surveys.
- Involve the stakeholders and subdivisions in the environmental scanning of the university through developing clear procedures for revealing, analyzing and evaluating the influence factors.
- Appoint the external stakeholders as master's theses and research managers, involve them in the development of the topic.
- In order to increase the effectiveness of the APs development, approval, monitoring and review processes establish a methodological council next to the scientific council.
- Develop mechanisms evaluating the objectiveness of the university publications.

III. ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES

CRITERION. The programmes are in concord with the institution's mission, form part of institutional planning and resource allocation, are intellectually credible and promote mobility.

FINDINGS

3.1. The academic programs (AP) in general are in concord with the RA NQF, state academic standards, university's mission, strategic goals, and dwell from the need to solve current issues, however, the professional competences defined by academic program learning outcomes are not clarified enough to the level of certain professions.

Bachelor Degree courses cover the following sectors of general and vocational training- the overall humanitarian and socio-economic, general mathematical and natural science. The role of specialization courses in the achievement and evaluation process of learning outcomes is rather insignificant since the selective and facultative courses are not implemented within the frames of all academic programs. The final examination and assessment of learning outcomes is carried out merely through state final exams since the university does not envisage final papers within the frames of any taught specialty.

The university has taken steps in the direction of implementing academic programme benchmarking, although the activities do not cover all the APs and academic degrees.

3.2. The issues of selecting appropriate teaching and learning approaches that align with the intended learning outcomes and evaluating their effectiveness, are not clearly regulated and are mostly discussed at the chair meetings, and students are also invited to take part in those meetings. The university has taken actions in the direction of revising curriculums of courses taught at the departments, making

their structures identical, as well as providing compliance with the credit system requirements, and these procedures and results are reflected in the chair records, revised programs.

An important incentive for student-centered learning is the introduction of the credit system at the university, albeit its content components are not yet thoroughly established. The issue is that the credit value is set based on the “importance” of the current course in the academic programme, whereas the workload for students engaged in different specialties of the same discipline is the same.

3.3. Student assessment is a regulated process at the university. During the assessment of the learning outcomes, the oral and written exams are used based on the specifications, orientation of the given course, and the selection of a concrete evaluation form by the teacher. The majority of exams is oral, moreover, the university lacks any methodological justification for determining the appropriateness of this or that exam form.

As to ensuring student impartial assessment, the university values academic honesty and fights against plagiarism, however the university has not yet developed and integrated any unified and effective policies, procedures and mechanisms to promote academic integrity and fight against plagiarism.

3.4. The university has taken some steps to provide compliance of its APs with other universities, although no special policy is implemented for that purpose. The culture of benchmarking its academic programmes is yet at the development phase at the university.

Most of the teachers simultaneously work in other universities as well, and from this perspective, we can say there is some teacher mobility. Another evidence of programmes’ compliance provision and student mobility is the engagement of bachelors from other universities (both state and private) in university’s master programmes, and it proves therecognition of relevant master programs taught at the university.

The university lacks agreements with other institutions promoting the exchange and mobility of its students and academic staff, it does not also have developed complex procedures for student and teacher mobility.

3.5. In regard with adopting the three cycle education credit system the university has revised and somewhat improved all its APs and individual syllabi. However, the AP revision policy is not yet thoroughly based on the needs analysis of its internal and external stakeholders. Particularly, the students are not involved in the revision of curricula, although they are given an opportunity to express their position during the sessions of the scientific council.

Monitoring of APs at the university is an ongoing process, and its results are summarized during the scientific council’s session at the end of the academic year with the aim to obtain relevant information on the program performance.

The university still lacks official policies and procedures analysing, revealing and applying stakeholder needs in the formation and review process of intended learning outcomes, as well as ensuring academic programme approval, monitoring, and periodic review. The university management also accepts this circumstance.

CONSIDERATIONS

The descriptions of separate APs implemented at the university do not reflect clearly enough their distinctive features, particularly, quantitative and qualitative requirements with regard to necessary resources, methods and procedures applied to check and assess the achieved learning outcomes, organization of individual works, provision of students with study materials. All the mentioned limits the possibility to plan, do and check the mentioned relevant procedures.

Although the university lacks officially adopted policy, clarified procedures and mechanisms ensuring academic programme approval, monitoring, and periodic review, the implemented processes/that need to be regulated/ at the university can serve as basis for making relevant reforms in the field.

The university tries to adopt a commendable practice: to promote feedback from students and alumni when discussing the effectiveness of the teaching and learning methods, to continue regular review of the assessment system, the learning outcomes; although the mechanisms through which the university will implement the above mentioned steps are not yet vivid. The imperfection of stakeholder feedback mechanisms limits the formation of required competences and may prevent the increase of effectiveness of APs taught at the university.

In particular, the absence of graduation papers for all specialties at the bachelor degree does not bring to sufficiently high effectiveness, since it cannot promote the thorough development of research competences and skills among students. Especially in a university providing three-cycle education, the graduation paper and its grade usually become a criterion for passing to the next level. The application of oral examination form for assessing knowledge and skills in all subjects and its effectiveness is not also justified. In that case there is a risk to reduce the appeal opportunity to the minimum. The defects in the actual policy and system promoting student impartial assessment and academic integrity are a serious challenge for the university and are observed as primary issues by the internal quality assurance system.

The APs taught at the university provide some ground for student mobility- from one program to the other. In fact, there are some incentives for the student internal mobility, as to the external mobility, the general incentive is integration into the credit system. At the same time, the credit system established at the university can create ground for misinterpretation and subjective approaches and prevent even internal mobility, since the established system enables to distribute different credits to the courses with the same workload within different APs, which contradicts the principle of the credit transfer and accumulation system.

The incomplete benchmarking activities and the absence of relevant policy and procedures do not enable the university to specify the current educational service trends in the market, the distinctive features of its APs, strengths and weaknesses, the required amendments etc., that prevents tuning of provided programmes.

The above-mentioned circumstances significantly limit the comparability and recognition opportunities of APs taught at the university by other HEIs at the same time decreasing their attractiveness.

CONCLUSION

The criteria is partially met.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Finally complete the credit system establishment at the university.

With the aim to develop students' research competences and skills, especially in a three cycle education institution, it is important to establish the practice of graduation papers, at least by a limited number of excelling students. Foresee and organize selective and facultative courses irrespective of the student number.

Develop a regulation on examinations with appropriate appeal and exam retaking mechanisms. When selecting measures against plagiarism, also involve students in the process.

Continue benchmarking for all specialties, in all educational cycles, for all processes. Establish a separate committee in the university, which will analyse the comparability of APs with other well-known programs and based on the analysis will set up policy provisions for student and staff mobility.

Hereafter anticipate student, staff transfer and mobility provisions in international contracts.

The SWOT analysis of Criterion 3 includes some contradictory or non-grounded conclusions, in particular, with regard to budget allocation and student involvement. It is necessary to clarify them.

IV. STUDENTS

CRITERION. The institution has student advising and support services which provide for productive and learning environment.

FINDINGS

4.1. The university gives great importance to the student recruitment, selection and admission procedures and for this purpose carries out PR campaigns, advertising, media and other activities, however, despite the implemented measures, the number of students and applicants is rapidly decreasing. Next to the university Gladzor Secondary School has been functioning since 2006 and had only 36 alumni since then, 30 of which became Gladzor students.

Distance Learning and Master's Programs are the steps through which the university tries to compensate the decrease of the number of bachelor's programmes applicants. According to the self-

assessment the number of the master degree programme students has increased rapidly, however the numbers indicate a different picture-their number did not change tangibly during the last three years.

The inflow of students is mostly from other non-state universities of Armenia (during the last two years the number was twice reduced), as to the outflow, the university does not possess any information about these universities.

4.2. The university highlights the issue of revealing, assessing and meeting student educational needs, and for this reason the university carries out different sociological surveys, meetings with responsible persons, discussions etc, and these prove the application of some tools.

Taking into consideration the students' needs the university has initiated acquisition of professional literature, new methodological materials, improvement of the infrastructure, redevelopment of the taught courses. The university lacks officially adopted and operating clear policy and procedure for analyzing and meeting student needs, as well as for evaluating the effectiveness and review of the mentioned processes. In fact, the implemented sociological surveys are not systematic and are not based on appropriate methodology, they are meant for reflecting students' opinion about different aspects, rather than revealing their real needs. No dynamic analysis of the revealed needs and their solutions has been carried out, the functions of appropriate responsible units are not regulated.

4.3. The university chairs have timeframes for extra-curricular activities, and the students can address the faculty on this or that issue within the specified hours. The faculty provide the students with some consultation in regard with specialization, development of practical skills, ensuring their participation in particular courses, foreign language proficiency, computer literacy etc.

The university provides contradictory information about the extra-curricular activities. According to the self-assessment only 23% of students is aware of the extra-curricular activities, but 45% are involved in them, and 57% are satisfied with these services. The effectiveness of these activities is low, because actually about 15% of students are satisfied with them, generally, students do not yet properly use the given opportunity.

The university does not provide additional hours to the newly- wed students or those with low progress, students who have missed lessons for this or that reason, who work or have been engaged from other universities.

The purpose, plans, procedures, consultant selection and attachment mechanisms of the extra-curricular activities are not clarified. The consultation hours are not included in the teachers workload.

4.4. In order to provide additional guidance and support to students the university has attached the respective responsibility to the educational department and chairs' staff, and can include not only issued concerning the educational process, but also provision of relevant documents (references, testimonials, guarantees).

As a rule students are provided such service in out of class hours. According to students, there is no clear procedure for addressing the administrative staff, they can even approach the rector whenever

necessary. This speaks of non-formalized procedure at the university, there are no clear timeframe and procedure for visiting the faculty administrative staff.

"The Students' Guide" which is available only for some individual specialties, mostly includes summative descriptions of the taught major courses and requires redevelopment.

It is not posted in the university official website and is provided not to all students. No mentors are attached to student groups or to individual students, who would provide appropriate guidance and support on administrative services.

4.5. The university has some student career support services and has already established the Career Center, which is prescribed by the Charter the authority of carrying out further measures promoting students employment, although the procedures are not yet thoroughly clarified.

The level of student awareness and satisfaction from the Center's functions and career enhancement opportunities is rather low (based on the self-assessment 5% of students).

The university has adopted the principle "In Gladzor Only Gladzorians", which supposes the outstanding students with good progress and discipline are given a chance to replenish the staff of the University.

The university does not publicize the individual experience the Gladzorians who succeeded in their career /there is not a hint about it in the website/. Based on the surveys most of the students came to learn about the university from their acquaintances, the advertisements and the website play a little role.

4.6. The university supports its PHD students in their research activities by organizing scientific sessions, publishing journals with scientific articles. Individual research activities of the Bachelor degree students is supported by the Student Scientific Association (SSA), although the number of students involved in the latter is not satisfactory enough (10% of BA students). The SSA has no charter, the students' reports are not published.

Poor involvement of BA students in research stems from the absence of requirement to write graduation papers. Research is not supported by extraction of additional credits.

The involvement of students in research is limited to the Master's or PHD research activities. There are no mechanisms assuring student participation in the research areas the university majors in.

4.7. The bodies responsible for the protection of students rights are the rector's office, the chairs, the Student Council, and there is the necessary documentation in place regulating the process- the Charter of the Student Council, the Charter of the Rector's Office (Rectorate), «Discussion Procedure of the Students Complaints and Suggestions in Yerevan Gladzor University»: According to the mentioned document the students are given the right to come to the Rector with their suggestions and requests.

The university chairs' charters are not prescribed any legitimacy, responsibility, procedure or mechanism for the protection of student rights. Separate provisions on student rights and

responsibilities are included in the contract signed with the student, albeit the awareness of students about the protection of their rights is low/based on the self-assessment- 23.3%/:

There are no annual analysis of students' requests and their solutions, no statistical data exist, that is why it is difficult to judge the effectiveness of the students' rights protection mechanisms.

4.8. The university evaluates the effectiveness of services provided to the students through sociological surveys, as well as through other means meant for revealing student satisfaction rate. This function is given to the QA Center and is stipulated in its Charter. Another way of evaluation are the suggestions, complaints on the quality, availability and transparency of the extra-curricular, consultation services presented by the students during the Chairs', Scientific Council's sessions.

The university has not presented any complete data for the past 5 years on students who work or continue their education or the graduates. The university hasn't developed yet sustainable feedback mechanisms with the graduates and other external stakeholders, which are important tools in the evaluation of the quality of the services provided to the students.

The role of the students in the quality assurance processes is not stated clear enough as well. The fact is that YGU students are satisfied with the educational process and their learning without having any discussions on the effectiveness of YGU educational system.

CONSIDERATIONS

Sharing the increasing competitiveness arena with the state universities the YGU has lost its attractiveness during the last years. One of the basic competitive advantages of the university was the comparably easy entrance, which also disappeared after adopting the unified exam system and wasn't covered by the university through raising the quality of its academic programmes or taking other necessary steps. The university does not have any lifelong learning policy, that could satisfy the needs of adults and employers. The university did not analyze the basic issues in raising the effectiveness of student recruitment, selection and admission processes.

If the university establishes a more regular survey system it will be able to conduct more systematic educational needs analysis among student. The surveys currently implemented at the university do not have clear logics, procedure, frequency, and the findings prove that the university lacks analytical thought and demanding nature, on the contrary, the level of satisfaction is rather high, that can be an obstacle in realistic analysis of different phenomena and justified decision making.

The university still lacks systematic performance in setting up goals for extra-curricular activities and consultation, revealing the educational needs, YGU also lacks a clear timetable and procedure for students to visit administrative staff with the aim of providing support and guidance to the students,. There are no criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of the respective processes, the individual steps taken in this direction are not goal-oriented.

The principle « In Gladzor Only Gladzorians» is not effective and convincing enough, especially in regard with the teaching staff. Let alone the heads of Chairs, none of which are the graduates of Gladzor, this principle does not succeed in practice among the comparably young teachers as well.

Thus, for example, only 2 of the 13 teachers of the Chair of Foreign Languages are the graduates of Gdansk University.

The university has no officially adopted policy and procedures to provide for student active involvement in the research, despite the many steps taken in that direction. Since the university does not envisage graduation papers, this restricts the opportunities of students to engage in research, and individual works with their topic and content cannot replace graduation papers. The university assumes that research is initially invested in higher education, but such an approach can be really applicable only for classical academic universities.

The university has some practice of student rights protection, but the respective functions need redevelopment, and this picture is proved also by the result of the sociological surveys conducted at the university, which reflected low awareness level of their rights among the students.

The university yet does not have the opportunity to conduct complex evaluation of the educational, consultation, administrative and other services or the effectiveness of their quality assurance mechanisms, since it does not possess relevant complex information.

CONCLUSION

The criteria is partially met.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Review the student recruitment, selection and admission policy and procedures from the perspective that will enable the university to increase its attractiveness resulting in the increased number of applicants.
- Pay proper attention to the content of the university website, its regular update and information provision.
- Provide for scientific grounds of student needs analysis policy, develop procedure for sociological surveys. Set up a committee of students, teachers and administrative staff, that will regularly discuss the raised issues and suggest respective solutions.
- Regulate the extra-curricular activities to provide academic support and guidance to the students, in particular, envisage additional courses for the students with low excellence by raising their level.
- Develop a procedure and a timetable for visiting the administrative staff. Annually publish the student guide and provide access for every student on the very first day of the academic year. Develop rules of exemplary behavior for students.
- After active cooperation with the employers review the learning outcomes, curricula and syllabi.
- Awaken the activities of the Career Center by promoting a link between the students and the employers. Inform the students about the vacant job positions.
- Establish a unit responsible for coordinating research at the university that will include also the activists from the Student Scientific Association. Envisage and carry out joint research projects on the university and department levels, providing for teacher and student involvement.

The SWOT analysis of the Criterion 4 includes contradictory or false judgements. Herein the point “Timetable provided to students for extra-curricular activities” is repeated both as a strong, and as a weak point. A judgement is made according to which the number of students engaged in all academic programs has decreased during the last 5 years, but the number of distance learning students has increased four times during the last 4 years.

V. FACULTY AND STAFF

CRITERION. The institution provides for a high quality faculty and staff to achieve the set goals for academic programmes and institution’s mission.

FINDINGS

5.1. The institution’s policies and procedures promoting selection, recruitment and firing of the teaching and supporting staff are reflected in the university charter, strategic plan and respective regulations. One of the basic distinctive features of this policy is the following principle “In Gladzor Only Gladzorians”, that assumes encouragement of postgraduate education of the university graduates and recruitment as specialists in the university.

Based on the SER/page 106/ most of the university graduates fulfill the university staff, which, of course, is not true.

The university does not have Faculty selection contest procedure: in most cases(80%) faculty are hired by university invitation or their own initiative.

The professional skills of the teaching and support staff comply with the university mission and strategic goals.

5.2. The university has a regulation on the formation and release of the faculty, which sets up more strict requirements for associate professors and professors as compared to other universities.

The university highlights not only the basic education of the faculty, the postgraduate education, but also their specialization in the courses taught and relevant experience. Although the university has in place a practice of reviewing the requirements for professional qualifications of the faculty, it is in need of formalization. The professional development of the faculty basically stems from their individual needs and is guaranteed through their individual efforts. The requirements set forth the teaching and support staff highlight foreign language proficiency and computer literacy.

5.3. The regular evaluation of the faculty is stipulated by the university strategic plans and in the following documents: “Assessment procedure of professional qualifications of Yerevan “Gladzor” university’s professorial staff” and “The policy and procedures of Yerevan “Gladzor” university’s professorial staff’s professional development”, which create some ground for evaluating the effectiveness of the faculty performance, although processes carried out in that direction are not systematic and compound yet.

A teacher's professional development depends on his evaluation which is carried out by relevant the head of the Chair through regular assessment of the teaching procedure. The peer-assessment is also valued, but the university does not yet have formal mechanisms to ensure the effectiveness of these processes. The assessment of teachers by students are nor carried out on regular basis as well, and they have no procedures. It is not regulated what procedures should be in place to carry out evaluation of faculty professional qualities and growth.

The university lacks a clear procedure for external evaluation of its faculty monographs, educational handbooks, textbooks and other works. As an incentive measure, the university publishes their works without any fee.

5.4. The teacher professional development policy and procedures are usually developed by the Scientific Council at the university, where the basic directions of professional development are set and the process and outputs are controlled.

The university does not systemize and stipulate the areas for faculty professional development, the measures, the timetable and certain forms of development. The faculty professional development usually dwells from their individual need.

The funds of the university limit the faculty professional development opportunities. The budget does not stipulate the portion for professional development.

The university has sufficient technical equipment for investing new educational technologies, however the equipment is not yet thoroughly and publicly used in the teaching-learning processes.

5.5 In the 2011-2012 academic year the APS were provided by 66 teachers, 38 of them (58%) are full time staff, and 43 have a scientific degree. In the 2010-2011 academic year the university had 83 teachers, 43 of them full time staff (52%).

When giving certain courses to a particular teacher the university takes into account his achievements in a given field of science, their specialization, basic and post-graduate education, research activities. The university experiences difficulties in recruiting faculty for the narrow field of specialization and with appropriate qualification, especially in Master's Degree programmes, which also raises the issue of the quality of learning outcomes.

In the recent years connected with the student number decrease the number of the teaching staff is also reduced.

5.6. The university has developed appropriate policy and procedures for the staff promotion. The SER and the site visit proved that the current staff promotion system provides for publicity, transparency, objectiveness and pluralism, without clarifying mechanisms and procedures for considering stakeholder needs, without analyzing the effectiveness of staff promotion policy and procedures for the last few years. Based on the presented information, the university carries out financial promotion particularly for the young teachers, however the budget allocation, teacher selection principles and mechanisms are not clear. The university does not have mentorship policy for the young teachers.

The university realizes the wide need for the improvement of the teacher professional development system and plans to establish a scientific-research center for this reason aiming to foster the development of narrow qualities of the teachers. This, however, is not stipulated by any document, there is no decision on establishment of this center.

5.7. All the organizational structures operating within the university have certain regulations, and the responsibility for assuring the stability of administrative and teaching staff, controlling their quality and implementation of functions was on Rectorate on behalf of the Rector himself. These processes were implemented, however, they were not systematic and were not stipulated by relevant documents, the clear mechanisms and tools for implementation were missing, for example, attestation. On the other hand the limitations of financial allocation have led to the absence of some very important organizational units, and their functions were distributed to other units.

Students have their certain role in the quality assurance of the performance of administrative and teaching staff by participating in the Rectorate's sessions.

The university has not analyzed the effectiveness of the administrative and teaching staff performance, and the introduction of the age groups of employees most was useless.

CONSIDERATIONS

The university has appropriate documentation package on faculty assessment policy. However, the quantitative and qualitative data on the faculty are not enough to evaluate the sufficiency of teachers for the AP, especially because the teaching staff compliance criteria to the learning outcomes for each programme, or the evaluation methods and procedures are not comprehensively stated. Accordingly, the policy and procedures ensuring faculty sustainability cannot be effective. The list of faculty needs to be redeveloped, especially from the perspective of bringing it to similar format.

The attempt to evaluate the faculty professional competences and teaching effectiveness against the average age indicator is not correct and acceptable, since age cannot be a reliable means of assessment. It would be more effective to present qualitative analysis of the faculty.

The current teacher professional development system is in need of improvement, in particular, from the perspective of establishing clear procedures for upgrading the evaluation system, developing appropriate training programmes and fund allocation.

The professional development of the faculty mostly dwells from their individual needs and is implemented through their own efforts.

The faculty is usually formed out of the university graduates. However, there are no selection mechanisms; hence they are supposed to be excellent students. The university has not developed faculty job descriptions that complicates the task of evaluating their work.

The university has set a task to assure a high level of foreign language proficiency and computer literacy among its faculty, which, if the university succeeds, is an encouraged initiative, an important way to ensure quality enhancement.

CONCLUSION

The criteria is partially met.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is necessary to set up an attestation committee at the university, which will analyze and justify that the professional competences of the faculty are up-to-date especially at the level of Master's and Postgraduate degree programs. There is need to develop attestation, peer-review, performance analysis and other procedures, that will enable to evaluate more clearly the compliance of faculty professional competences to the AP goals and learning outcomes.

Besides indicating directions of faculty professional development, develop appropriate procedures for fund and resource allocation for this purpose.

Establish contest procedure of staff selection. Pay special attention to the young teachers, the future teachers by preparing them for teaching profession.

Establish a multi-functional system of faculty professional growth evaluation that will serve as basis for their promotion.

Analyze the university staff effectiveness with dynamic approach taking into account the compliance of faculty qualifications, as well as appropriateness for internal combination by developing relevant effectiveness evaluation criteria.

The SWOT analysis of the Criterion 5 includes some contradictory conclusions:

1. It is stated that there is "a clear policy for recruiting the university graduates as teachers", whereas theSER states that only 11% of the teachers are university graduates.
2. It is assumed that there are "Operating mechanisms promoting scientific activities of the faculty", which does not reflect the real situation.
3. "The impossibility of recruiting only full time faculty" is brought as a weak point, which is not a priority for any university.

VI. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

CRITERION. The institution has a clear strategy promoting its research interests and developments.

FINDINGS

6.1. The institution has a clear strategy promoting its research interests and developments, and its general aim is to analyse challenges of the modern civilization. The research strategy highlights the

continuation of scientific research, the development of scientific potential and the development of young faculty members.

Research is an important part of faculty work at the university, and is considered the basic occupation of post-graduate students. In the result of research activities the faculty and reserchers of the university published monographs, teaching handbooks, articles, lectures etc. Some of them were placed in the five journals published by the university.

The research findings of the faculty are used in the sillabi, term, individual papers assigned to the students, scientific articles.

The university strategic plan sets multiple objectives for assuring serious progress in this field, which are not interpreted into timely outcomes and workplans, the effectiveness and contemporaneity of the selected strategy is not analysed either.

6.2. The university stresses the importance of modernizing its research directions in its 2012-2017 strategic plan. However, the university introduces some measures taken in that direction, which are somewhat fragmented and cannot be described as research development strategy or medium-term/short term projects.

In the coming years the university plans to consider faculty's research effectiveness when stipulating their salaries, to coordinate with other unviersties, research institutes and organizations aiming at research development, to organize inter- institutional, national and international scientific conferences, to involve the Master's degree and PHD students in the research activities of chairs on condition that their dissertations will be the parts of general scientific topics of each department.

In conditions of lacking medium and short-term programs, and not sticking to stratedic interests and ambitions, it is difficult to evaluate the coordination, relevance and effectiveness of research in the recent years.

6.3. The implementation of research activity is stated in the mission of the university, however, the university has not yet developed a compound strategy on research development and innovation.

For promoting the research activity of students and for establishing relevant conditions,the provides postgraduate education and strives to promote students' research activities.The authority to carry out postgraduate education granted in 2004 has significantly contributed to enhancing the university's reputation, since YGU enrolls not only gladzorian students, but also graduates from other educational institutions.

For the development of postgraduate education and research the university has allocated tangible funds that were mainly used to form the postgraduate department, to remunerate the research supervisors and tp publish scientific works of lecturers, as well as researchers; there are no other mechanisms to promote research activities of the young and innovative teachers.The financial allocations are not regulated by clear procedures.

6.4. Since its establishment YGU has not participated in any international grant project on research, or any state financed research activity.

The university still lacks mechanisms and procedures promoting student and teacher involvement in international research activities, although activities in that direction are highly encouraged by the university management. In particular, there are no procedures promoting publishing in journals with international censorship.

The majority of faculty's scientific articles is published in Armenian specialized journals and collections of scientific articles. Up till now the articles published in CIS or international scientific journals were the initiative of the faculty, not the university.

The analysis of the published articles for the last 5 years reveals the following facts:

- a) 90% of the publications are in RA professional journals, and only 1,3% in international magazines.
- b) Only a part of the faculty are engaged in active research activities: at present more than 10 teachers did not publish any research article during the last 5 years.
- c) Involvement level of different chairs in research is significantly different.

6.5. The research topics are developed and approved by the chairs based on on the range of courses studied by the students. The link between research and educational process is reflected in the following way: the respective research activities are carried out either within the time frames of a given course, or in Master's Degree programs during the whole learning process. At the Bachelor's Degree the basic incentives for linking educational process and research are the term papers. The university justifies the effectiveness in the link between education and research with the high grades given to the term and individual papers, which cannot be considered a sufficient ground for such a conclusion.

Because of the absence or limitation of financial means the university does not carry out separate targeted and coordinated research activities, furthermore, the research conducted by individual teachers out of the university boundaries is interpreted as university's achievements.

CONSIDERATIONS

Based on the SER, "the research articles published by the university are set to reflect the current achievements in the field of science and reflect the level of development of modern society". In practice, the mechanisms for validating research outputs are imperfect, since the articles published in the university journals are not subject to censorship or edition.

The university in fact lacks clear short and medium term planning procedure that will reflect the university's research interests and ambitions, and this results in general research goals, strategy and directions, vagueness of required resources, intended outputs and deadlines.

The post-graduate education is brought to justify the effectiveness of the policy and procedures meant to promote the research activities of the younger staff, which itself is an obligatory function of the

relevant educational programs. The university takes some measures to promote research activities of the faculty and new staff, but the applied procedures are not clear enough, particularly in regard with budget allocation and assuring academic integrity.

The university has not yet developed and invested mechanisms and procedures promoting student and teacher involvement in international research journals, which also proves the limited funds and non-targetted planning.

Although research is linked to the educational process, but the university fails to assure the systematic and practical application of research outputs in the educational process. The university tries to justify it by mentioning “lack of attention from the state and other relevant authorities”, but it is not made clear what are the research targets of the university, and whether research can play a practical role in improving the quality of teaching.

The strategy of narrowing research topics cannot be considered definitely effective. It is more important to justify the innovation of research, the development of necessary competences and skills required for research.

CONCLUSION

The criteria is partially met.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Make the university’s research interests and strategy as concrete as possible. Develop a unified research direction for the university/chairs.

Involve well-known scientists as external reviewers in the publishing of research articles by the university. Organized presentation of published articles.

Develop medium and short-term plans on research at both university and chair levels.

Make more transparent and public budget allocation for research development and innovation.

Set up procedures promoting younger staff, academic integrity and struggle against plagiarism. Involve students as well in selecting topics for term papers, individual papers, graduation papers, Master’s thesis, set up effective mechanisms for revealing their interest.

It’s desirable to restore the once-existing practice of graduation papers at the Bachelor’s Degree.

The SWOT analysis of Criterion 6 set out as an external weakness “the lack of financial resources attracted from grant projects”, but this is rather an internal issue.

VII. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

CRITERION. The TLI has its own property and resources, which effectively support the implementation of its stated mission and objectives and create a learning environment.

FINDINGS

7.1. The university has all the necessary resources for the educational performance, as well as relevant infrastructures. Constant improvement of the infrastructure elements is considered as one of the competitive advantages of the university.

The university highlights the importance of the factor that it fulfills its educational activities in its own building built for that purpose which is considered to be a primary warranty of the effectiveness of organizing and realizing the educational activity. The university also has a library, a reading hall, an electronic library, a court hall, language labs and computer labs with the aim to provide quality education.

The educational resources are appropriate to the academic programmes offered, but in some cases/ ex. language labs/ it is not clear how frequently and intensely are these resources used, since there are no such indications on the info-desks, the university has not stipulated any procedure or order for their consumption.

Based on the SER 95% of students and teachers are satisfied with the resources, which proves that the university has a learning environment appropriate for the development of skills and knowledge set out in the learning outcomes of the academic programmes offered.

7.2. University budget revenues are almost entirely formed out of the tuition fees, the university has never received any state financing or fund allocations from grant projects, although YGU plans to develop a regulation on the allocation of the external funds.

The finances are used to solve the strategic and current issues and to provide for mission implementation, although the proportions of the budget are not specified, and the university does not carry out actual cost-effectiveness analysis. Budget distributions for different directions of university performance remain unclear: a) research activities, b) raising the faculty qualifications, c) financial promotion of separate employers. The university has allocated tangible funds to maintain and operate the basic facilities and equipment. The financial challenges have not effected the modernization of the learning environment and sustainable update processes.

7.3. The tuition fees of students engaged in different academic programs make up the university's unified budget, and YGU allocates this budget for the basic expenditure directions regardless of the number of students engaged in separate APs.

Budget expenditure proportions are determined by the financial inflow volumes, which is not stipulated by the university strategic plan as university tactics. The responsibility for managing finances

is put on the rectorate and the accountant's office. The university published its financial reports in the press or university website after the external audit.

The workplan of the Scientific Council does not include the discussion of financial affairs, which means that YGU lacks financial planning, maintenance and allocation policy promoting the integrity and continuity of the programmes offered at the institution.

7.4. The university faces an issue for carrying out rational distribution of resources and assuring maximum output for minimum cost. This issue can be efficiently solved only in the case of proper planning of resource formation and allocation processes, diversified formation sources, correctly set distribution proportions, and control of the allocated resources.

At the beginning of the academic year the preliminary reckoning of the student and teacher workload, which enables to clarify the proportions of means allocated for different directions, is a precondition for organizing any educational process, whereas it is presented as a regulated mechanism of resource distribution.

During the replenishment of the resource base the university considers certain needs of students involved in particular APs, as well as teacher suggestions, and based on the mentioned, the university carries out, for example, library fund replenishment. However, the mechanisms, processes and procedures promoting student and teacher needs analysis in regard with resource base replenishment, as well as timely allocation of resources.

7.5. The information and documentation flow processes at YGU are carried out through respective units (reception, accountant's office, the educational department) staff, whose functions are regulated.

The university, besides the incoming and outgoing documentation, also develops internal documents for solving the current issues, and the flow of these documents is carried out through the respective units and staff members.

The university does not yet have electronic docflow system. It also lacks separate regulations to manage information and documentation.

7.6. The institution ensures safe and secure environment for its students and staff, by establishing relevant services for health and security assurance: dispensary, rescue club, unit for protection of public order, security service. In the result of the sociological survey conducted in 2012 the majority of the people questioned highly estimate the level of secure and safe environment at the university, which is facilitated by the safe conditions in the classroom, appropriate hitting level, the facilities, the university's health and security services.

7.7. The university takes appropriate measures to assure applicability and availability of its resources, for this reason the resource base is regularly enriched and refreshed (ex. the language labs, the library). As a rule, the resources are open and available for the stakeholders, the university provides equal opportunities for using them.

Some of the resources used to have limitations in usage because of shortage of time, and taking it into account the university decided to improve the resource application process, to develop relevant mechanisms, in order to ensure their availability out of working hours and on non-working days.

The university has mechanisms in place that ensure applicability and availability of the resources, but none for effectiveness evaluation.

CONSIDERATIONS

Although much work has been done by the university management to assure relevant building conditions and other educational resources, but the university has not set up requirements for the learning environment appropriate to the academic programmes offered, has not carried out analysis of effectiveness of resource application, that is, the measures taken to improve the current state of arts were not put on regular basis.

The university has adopted financial equalization policy, which makes it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the fund allocation policy promoting the achievement of goals within separate APs and their continuity, since YGU lacks formal procedures and mechanisms to provide, maintain and operate the finances as needed to achieve the mentioned goal, and this lessens the level of aimed fund allocation.

The university's attempt to get maximum output for minimum cost, parallelly with the vague mechanisms revealing and meeting the needs of all stakeholders, bring to a number of undesirable results, in particular- lack of regular financing process for some structurally important units and research activities, refusal to do combined work on the part of support and administrative staff, refusal to mentor graduation papers etc.

The university is in need of diversifying its income sources, and for this reason YGU finds it necessary to participate in grant projects, develop parallel activity areas, etc.

The university did not review the information and documentation processes in the last years, but envisages some steps for their improvement.

The university gives due importance to health and security services by allocating tangible resources for this aim, although the expenditures are represented in absolute numbers, that makes it difficult to assess their real role, their portion in general expenditures.

The small size of the university and the Rector's excessive devotion ensure high level of security and care about the health and safety of students. However, youth is a risk category (addictions, behavioral violations, social and health vulnerability) and it is necessary to take some measures to inform students and prevent dangerous steps.

CONCLUSION

The criteria is partially met.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Conduct detailed analysis (particularly in regard with academic literature, texts of lectures, educational materials)on the relevance of educational resources to the qualifications framework.

Activate cooperation with other universities in order to attract additional resources and to improve the learning environment.

Plan an optimal scheme for budget expenditures and stick to it.

The limited resources bring forward necessity to establish compound and comprehensible reporting and monitoring system.

Clarify the additional directions of university performance that will attract additional revenues by bringing forward relevant technical-economic justifications.

Give the students broader opportunities to express their opinion and turn to relevant unit in regard with issues connected with the resources. Regulate the process of notifying or introducing the documents to relevant stakeholders, including the students.

Improve the system of informing the students, faculty and other staff about the safety rules.

To set up job descriptions for the staff performing the relevant services.

Develop effectiveness evaluation criteria for resource allocation based on the result analysis of educational process.

The SWOT analysis of the Criterion 7 includes discrepancies in regard with the names (abbreviations) of the state revenue and statistical bodies.

VIII. SOCIETAL RESPONSIBILITY

CRITERION. The institution is accountable to the government, employers and society at large for the education it offers and the resources it uses to meet these objectives.

FINDINGS

8.1. The university and its units are accountable to the internal stakeholders through introducing the performance results and discussions during the sessions of the Scientific Council, which are regularly published in the “Nor Gladzor” monthly newspaper.

Information provision for external stakeholders is limited, since the university has not stipulated a clear procedure for accountability. Most often YGU identifies accountability with the publication of information about the university in press and the relevant websites.

The university does not publish annual reports on its performance, but it provides the media with some information through the university website and the “Nor Gladzor” newspaper by introducing the university activities outputs for a given time-span. In addition, the website of the National Center for Educational Technologies www.studyinarmenia.org and www.amhe.org present some information about the university.

The university doesn't have appropriate perception of accountability to the state and the society. In his respond to the initial report by the expert panel the university rector expresses the upinion /pages 62-63/ that accountability concerns only state educational institutions, and “In private universities, that do not get any state financing and the educational process is organized and implemented exclusively from the funds of the University, accountability and accordingly a clear accountability procedure is not assumed”. Such an approach is not justified and acceptable.

8.2. In order to ensure the transparency and publicity of its procedures and processes YGU applies such mechanisms as TV and Radio programs, the official website of the university gladzor.am, the university mountly newspaper “Nor Gladzor”, different seminars, meetings, through which YGU strives to assure a certain level of awareness both among the internal and external stakeholders.

The university presents the means of introducing its activities to the society and plans of othe future, but still lacks official policy, procedures and mechanisms to increase the effectiveness of the accountability mechanisms.

The university plans to develop such accountability regulation that will enable information coordination and provision on each university unit. Until now such reports were not provided to the society, and it indirectly brought to ineffectiveness of the feedback mechanisms.

8.3. The establishment of links with the society and maintenance is regulated by several documents, in particular, by the strategic plan and Editor's office regulation, as well as the current practice. These functions are carried out by the Journalism Chair and Editorial staff.

In order to strengthen the links with the society the university plans to annually allocate some funds for information provision to the society through media, anyhow, the feedback mechanisms and procedures promoting links with the society are still in the development phase.

8.4. The university strategic plan stipulates the issue of investing additional paid services that can create supplementary opportunities for revenues, introduction of activities, increase of reoputation, new cooperation opportunities with the state, public and business organisations. The Educational center, which is in plans, will also serve that purpose by providing certain cervices to different target groups, that include foreign language courses, computer proficiency courses, accounting and audit.

However, the university has not yet developed appropriate basis and tools for evaluating the effectiveness of additional services provided to the society, as well as knowledge transfer, and the

mechanisms of transferring knowledge/values to the society are not clarified yet. The university lacks decisions, procedures to carry out additional services. The establishment of the Educational Center is not stipulated by any document either.

CONSIDERATIONS

The policy, procedures and mechanisms on the performance of the university and its separate units need vast improvements, in particular, in regard with the AP performance. It is not clarified either how the results of the reports will be considered in the improvement of the university performance. The feedback improvement mechanisms are not vivid.

The university still lacks clear plans for adopting effective policy, procedures and tools promoting feedback, and this is a real concern taking into account the tendencies of student and applicant number decrease, absence of diversifying revenue sources, the dependence of the university on the information from the external stakeholders etc.

CONCLUSION

The criteria is not met.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop appropriate mechanisms/ accountability regulation/ that will ensure the university that the accountability system to the internal and external stakeholders is effective enough.

Develop long term, sustainable cooperation projects with the state and public organizations, that will foster strong links with the public.

IX. EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONALIZATION

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

FINDINGS

9.1. The university highlights the issue of creating an environment conducive to experience exchange and enhancement and internationalization, which is stipulated in the 2012-2017 Strategic Plan, YGU also stresses the need to develop separate policy and procedures in that direction.

The three-cycle education system established at the university, as well as the establishment of credit transfer and accumulation system have created incentives for developing and practicing policy promoting experience exchange, development and internationalization. The university has already developed the fundamentals of international development strategy planning to develop the strategy itself in the nearest future.

The university still lacks established and regularly used strategy, policy, procedures and mechanisms, as well as relevant annual action plans and reports promoting external relations and internationalization.

9.2. The university highlights the need for developing internationalization and external relations policy and tries to carry out some programs in that direction. The university does not have a separate infrastructure responsible for external relations and internationalization, the respective functions are carried out by different units of YGU- the rectorate, the educational department, the chairs.

The university finances are not sufficient to provide for appropriate level of student and teacher mobility. Student mobility is also limited due to the peculiarities of the credit system established at the university, also due to the absence of credit accumulation, transfer and student mobility procedures and the diploma supplement (equivalent to European standards).

The university plans to set up a separate unit in the nearest future, whose activities will be entirely directed towards university internationalization and establishment of external links. The university ensures that teacher awareness of different grant projects should be increased, also necessary consultation should be provided. There is also need to search for donor organizations, find additional financing sources thus creating incentives for future development and internationalization.

9.3. In order to promote external connections, university recognition and internationalization, YGU collaborates with some universities, public and private organizations.

Yerevan Gladzor University signed collaboration agreement with Stavropol branch of Belgorod University of Cooperation, Economics and Law (a self-governing and non-commercial HEI). The agreement parties collaborate within the frames of academic, methodological and research activities. Since 2012 YGU has cooperation links with the Berdyansk Management and Business University's State and Right Department on collaboration in academic educational field.

The HEI's teaching and support staff also take part in different conferences, seminars, debates, but their participation in such undertakings is not followed with necessary financial support by the university.

Based on the SER, the basic obstacle of university external links and internationalization, is the insufficiency of financial means. The university plans to develop and implement cooperation projects with different international organizations, that will promote, in particular, the establishment of the career center, student exchange, internships, internationalization of APs. Up till now YGU has never carried out benchmarking of the policy and procedures on external relations and internationalization.

9.4. The university strives to assure relevant level of foreign language teaching stipulated by the educational criteria, even carrying out more foreign language (particularly English) courses than it is set out in the mentioned criteria. The importance of foreign language teaching in YGU is due to the fact that the university's initial goal was to provide higher education including the knowledge of a foreign language.

The university has established relevant opportunities for assuring relevant level of language proficiency among students by setting different levels of foreign language teaching and separate requirements for

learning outcomes at different levels, however these cannot be thoroughly comparable with the ABC scale of language proficiency accepted in the European Union, but there are some ties for future alliance.

The university has organized foreign language courses for the teaching and administrative staff as well, that, however, didn't have regular character and were not implemented within certain schedule. The university plans to take some measures in that direction.

The university regularly enriches the library with foreign professional literature.

The university does not carry out APs in a foreign language, there are no foreign students.

CONSIDERATIONS

It is an imperative requirement for the university to create an environment conducive to experience exchange, enhancement and internationalization, since taking into consideration the current trends of educational services and labor market globalization, a self-binding university cannot withstand the modern challenges.

The university highlights the establishment of regulated procedures for external relations and internationalization, however, the planned steps are mostly conceptual in nature, are not stipulated by a certain action plan and are not enriched with relevant resources. In this regard the university has certain expectations connected with activating participation in grant projects.

The university does not yet imply such modern tools for external relations and internationalization, as student exchange and credit transfer agreements, credit and grade recognition procedures, implementation of double and joint programs, establishment of European scale for foreign language proficiency.

According to the SER the university assures higher level of foreign language teaching than stipulated by the state educational standards, but the practice does not prove it, since the student does not continue his foreign language courses after getting a satisfactory grade from the first-year summative exam. It remains unclear how the student complements the credits.

The mechanisms revealing foreign language proficiency level among students and teachers are not clear, although the foreign language chair has taken some steps in that direction.

Judgements about the foreign language proficiency are based on the grades indicated in the substantive examination reports, no information is provided about the individuals who have a TOEFL or other foreign language proficiency certificate.

CONCLUSION

The criteria is partially met.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the development of external relations and internationalization strategy, set up a clear action plan for the next few years.

Assure the awareness of teachers and students on different grants and scholarships, promote their participation.

Reveal the reasons that failed internationalization and cooperation plans.

Provide the compliance of syllabi, achieved learning outcomes, teaching, learning, examination and evaluation methods and mechanisms with the European scale for foreign language proficiency.

Coordinate the foreign language courses for the staff. Set up effective mechanisms that reveal the foreign language proficiency level among students and teachers.

X. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

CRITERION. The institution has a set infrastructure for internal quality assurance, which promotes establishment of a quality culture and continual development of the institution.

FINDINGS

10.1. The university, within the frames of its potential, has proved serious attitude for the quality assurance issues for which financial and human resources were allocated to ensure positive developments in certain steps. However, the university has not yet developed and adopted quality assurance policy, procedures, effectiveness assessment criteria and mechanisms, the lack of which prevents the establishment of a sound and effective internal QA system. In this regard the establishment of the QA and Career Centers, participation in the pilot accreditation process and the grant for setting up internal QA system are considered to be vital steps. The QA processes at the university are still non-regulated, the university lacks appropriate guide- handbook.

Based on the SER the evidences of the university's quality performance are the accreditations stipulated by the RA law, the state exam results proving high level of student performance, which, in fact, do not directly prove the existence of internal quality assurance system and mechanisms.

10.2. The university attempts to build up the resource allocation policy on the current internal and external QA challenges. The university, within its potential, has set up sustainable resource base and regularly updates it with the aim to provide quality education.

The university management has also tried to assure the relevant human resources. However, the university is in need of recruiting more employers but cannot afford it due to state of the current financial inflows.

The university still lacks appropriate documentation and plans to regulate the resource allocation and its effectiveness evaluation processes, and the resources allocated for the quality assurance system are limited by the potential of the grant project given for this purpose.

10.3. The university students, teachers, administrative and support staff are involved in the quality assurance processes through some means, for example, participation in the Scientific Council's sessions. At the same time the university still lacks effective procedures and regulated process of involving the internal and external stakeholders in the quality assurance processes.

The university assumes that the involvement of the internal stakeholders in the QA processes is assures high effectiveness based on the survey results, which state that “the opinion of the students and teachers in most cases affects the decision making process” or “the opinion of the students and teachers thoroughly affects the decision making process”.

The employers had their input in the YGUQA process by the characteristics given to students in the result of internships, which include their opinion on the students' knowledge, skills and competences. Another evidence of external stakeholder involvement are the reports of the Examination Boards on annual exams, which, actually, are mandatory elements of the educational process. The university also proves the involvement of the Ministry of Education and Science in the education quality assurance process.

10.4. The responsibility to regularly review the quality assurance mechanisms and tools at the university was put on each subdivision, particularly the chair, within the frames of its authority.

At present the university strives to establish a centralized quality system, which will aim at regular review of the operating mechanisms and tools and their improvement. The YGUQA Center is a rather new unit at the university and cannot represent information and facts on the effectiveness of the review of the QA system, since the process was not carried out at the university yet. The latter will be implemented through the following mechanisms:

- Organizing and implementing surveys, as well as focus group discussions among the students, the teaching and support staff, the external stakeholders.
- Benchmarking of the QA processes.
- Usage of internal quality assurance handbooks, bulletins and other materials published by ANQA and other organizations.

10.5. The SER and the site visit did not provide sufficient evidences on the external quality evaluation processes.

10.6. The Scientific Council and the Chairs have a major role in awareness raising among internal stakeholders on quality assurance, who provide for the transparency of university activities through the “Nor Gladzor” newspaper, the university website or relevant announcements. The university has also publicized the 2012 audit results.

The university practice shows that the external stakeholders (particularly state organizations) have received such information basically due to their request or inspections.

The information provision process was and still remains transparent since the information requested by, in particular, state authorities is presented with relevant documentation followed by an introduction of the processes carried out based on this documentation.

The university has not yet established relevant processes and functions for stipulating the transparency provision process as a required practice, except the information provision process at the request of external stakeholders.

Currently the university attempts to set up a centralized information provision system on quality, however, YGU does not specify how it is going to implement the process to result in raising the stakeholder awareness level and provide for wider transparency.

CONSIDERATIONS

The university allocates sufficient material and financial resources for the organization of the educational process, despite the fact that the general outline of the internal QA system, the procedures, the handbook, the criteria and mechanisms for effectiveness evaluation etc. are not yet developed and adopted, without which it is not possible to provide for the system effectiveness and the compliance of the services with the university mission and stakeholder needs.

There is high risk that a QA specialist can be overloaded since he has to combine a wide range of functions: technical support, research and conceptual activities, preaching/disseminating the concept and convincing activities, cooperation with the staff, faculty, chairs and rector etc.

The future plans of the QA Center should be directed towards the coordination of the above mentioned processes, development of relevant regulatory documentation and the policy for human, material and financial resources allocation.

Currently the university aims at establishing internal quality assurance culture that will comply with the European standards and guidelines, as well as creating the necessary incentives for the continuous development. The university has not yet carried out benchmarking of QA processes, policy and procedures, although it highlights the importance of benchmarking, especially based on the example of foreign countries.

The university has not yet launched annual regular process of self assessment or reporting based on the institutional accreditation criteria and standards. This standard cannot be assessed only through the university QA Center's charter and action plan. Within the frames of this standard the university is still in the planning phase of its activities, the implementation mechanisms are not clear and vivid.

CONCLUSION

The criteria is partially met.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop a methodological handbook of internal quality assurance system with respective procedures.

Set up a QA Committee next to the Scientific Council, which should discuss and present to the Scientific Council all the issues connected with the internal QA system.

Develop and adopt the structure of the internal QA system, as well as distinguish the role, functions, responsibilities and authorities of separate units.

The SWOT analysis of the Criterion 10 states that a strong point is the assurance of higher than a medium level quality, but it does not stipulate the concept behind "medium quality".

APPENDIX 1. CVs OF THE PANEL MEMBERS

Harutyun Marzpanyan. In 1977 received a diploma degree in economics. 1984 defended his thesis and received his PhD degree in economics. In 1986 was awarded associate professor's, and in 2008 professor's academic title. In 2011 defended his doctoral thesis on "Economic development humanization: the historical background and modern issues" and received his doctoral degree in economics. The research activities include socio-economic problems of human development, migration, human capital reproduction, pro-poor policies, gender balance in RA. Mainly worked at Yerevan State University (YSU), in the positions of assistant, associate professor, professor, deputy dean of the Faculty of Economics, currently is the head of the General Economics Chair at the Ijevan branch of YSU. Was involved in grant projects of international organizations (UNDP, TACIS, GIZ) as an expert. Published more than eighty scientific and methodological works: monographs, articles, textbooks, manuals. Has won two individual and three group grants, has participated in a number of local and international conferences.

Fabrice Henard. Holds a master in urban planning from Sciences-Po (international university of social sciences, Paris, 1993). Hénard has been working for almost 15 years in the fields of evaluation of public policies and of quality in higher education.

Within the OECD's Programme on the Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE), Fabrice leads the project on quality teaching in higher education since 2007. He is also responsible for the Managing Internationalisation initiative which explores the effects of globalisation and the interplay between institutional and governmental policies. He is furthermore part of the Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO) feasibility study team.

In 2003, Fabrice joined the French Agency for Evaluation of Research and Higher Education, conducting institution-wide audits and European reviews. In collaboration with European Quality Assurance teams, he developed the evaluation methodology of European joint-Master programmes, explored the convergence of Quality Assurance mechanisms across Bologna Process countries and the epistemology of Quality Assurance, under the auspices of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

From 1999 to 2003, Fabrice was a senior consultant at the Centre for European Evaluation Expertise, where he carried out evaluations of social and educational policies for public authorities and contributed to several evaluation guidelines for the European Commission and the EuropeAid agency.

From 1993 to 1998, Fabrice was Secretary General of an inter-city organisation in France. He was in charge of economic and rural development, as well as life-long learning programmes.

Fabrice lectures in policy design and evaluation at the Master of European Affairs, Science Po-Paris. He has been contributing to several international projects on quality and accreditation, and has been discussant and keynoter in international conferences.

Gurgen Hovhannisyan. 1979-83 has studied and graduated with honors Yerevan State Pedagogical Institute after Kh. Abovyan (currently university) with major in geography, qualified as geography

teacher. 2006 has defended his dissertation and got his PHD degree in geography, is an associate professor since 2007. The dissertation topic is "The problems of improving the content of school geography in the RA". The published articles mainly concern geography at schools, the methodology. He is an author of school textbooks, methodological handbooks.

Since 1995 has taught in the Socio-Economic Geography Chair of the Geography department at YGU, currently is an associate professor of that chair.

In 2000-2006 was the Deputy Dean of the Geograpy Department. 2008-2010 was the secretary of geography (005) academic board. Since 2006 up to present is the head of bachelor division at YSU methodological department. 2009թ. 30.11-12.12 has participated in the winter school "The promotion of European Dimension in higher educational institutions". In 2010, October 7-28 has had a training program in the USA "Workforce development partnership between and with universities".

Samvel Mkhitarian. In 1973 received a diploma degree in Radioelectronics. In 1984 received his PhD Degree in Technical Science. In 1973-1993 was engaged in scientific research and experimental - designing activities in various areas, is the author of a number of devices, patents and articles, was the head of research and experimental - designing departments, the director of experimental - designing research institute, the chief engineer and deputy director on science in the mentioned institute. Since 1987 till present teaches in different universities of RA. Since 1998 up to present has worked in different international Capital Markets Development Project in Armenia, also served as the head or coordinator of different financial infrastructures and higher education reforms units. In 2004-2012 worked in Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) University as the head of of Quality Assurance Center. Has been involved as a specialist, project manager in a number of development projects funded by different donors that have reached success. Ha participated in educational reforms, various conferences and seminars on the establishment of three-cycle-education and credit system, strategic planning, quality assurance, mobility, postgraduate, lifelong learning in USA, Spain, Russia, Georgia and Armenia.

Arpine Mkrtchyan. A second-year Master's degree student in "Public Administration" at Yervan State Linguistic University after V. Brusov, specialization- "Education Management". Entered the program

Applied MA program in 2011 and prepares her master thesis on "Comparative Analysis of Established Format of Institutional Accreditation and Existing Quality Culture (on the sample of ESLU Self-Evaluation Report preparation)". In 2007-2011 studied at ESLU Faculty of Foreign Languages for Linguist / English-Greek / and got BA degree. In 2006-2007 went to High School after A. Lincoln in the USA/WA/Tacoma. In November of 2012 was involved in the preparation of YSLU Self-Evaluation Report. Regularly participates in workshops and seminar-discussions organized by ANQA.

APPENDIX 2. SCHEDULE OF SITE VISIT

3.12.2012

		Launch	End	Duration
1	Expert panel meeting	9:00	13:00	240 minutes
2	Lunch	13:00	13:30	30 minutes
3	Meeting with the Rector	14:00	14:30	30 minutes
4	Meeting with the self-assessment working group	15:00	16:30	90 minutes
5	Observation of resources	16:45	18:00	75 minutes
	Auditoriums			
	Laboratories			
	Library			
	Sport hall			

4.12.2012

		Launch	End	Duration
1	Meeting with the Vice-Rectors, Head of Educational Department and Head of Career Center	9:30	11:00	90 minutes
2	Meeting with students 10-12 students	11:30	13:00	90 minutes
3	Lunch (Expert panel discussions)	13:30	14:30	60 minutes
4	Meeting with teachers 10-15 teachers	14:45	16:15	90 minutes
5	Observation of resources and review of documents	16:30	18:00	90 minutes

5.12.2012

		Launch	End	Duration
1	Meeting with the Heads of the Chairs	9:30	11:00	90 minutes
2	Meeting with the self-assessment working group	11:30	13:00	90 minutes
3	Lunch (Expert panel discussions)	13:15	14:15	60 minutes
4	Meeting with the representatives of Student Council and Student Scientific Association	14:30	16:00	90 minutes
5	Observation of resources and review of documents	16:15	18:00	105 minutes

6.12.2012

		Launch	End	Duration
1	Meeting with Quality Assurance Center staff	9:30	11:00	90 minutes
2	Review of documents	11:15	13:00	105 minutes
3	Lunch (Expert panel discussions)	13:00	14:00	60 minutes
4	Individual meetings	14:15	14:45	30 minutes
5	Meeting with other staff members selected by the expert panel	15:00	16:30	90 minutes
6	Expert panel discussions	16:30	18:00	90 minutes

7.12.2012

		Launch	End	Duration
1	Review of documents	9:30	11:00	90 minutes
2	Meeting with the Rector	11:30	12:00	30 minutes

APPENDIX 3. LIST OF DOCUMENTS OBSERVED

1. Strategic plan implementation workplan
2. Curricula
3. Sillabi
4. QA Center's action plan
5. Chairs' research strategy
6. Student guide
7. Student internship contracts
8. Reports by the Exam Boards
9. Reports presented to the Scientific Council
10. Financial audit result carried out at the university
11. Scientific Council's workplan
12. Long-term action plan
13. Educational process schedule
14. Contracts on cooperation, including internship contracts
15. Academic programme descriptions
16. Benchmarking results of "International Relations" program, conducted by the Chair of International Relations
17. Internship programs
18. Schedule of consultations
19. Chair sessions records
20. Different reports

APPENDIX 4. RESOURCE OBSERVED AND VISITS TO UNITS

1. Auditoriums, language labs
2. Library (including the electronic library), reading rooms
3. Career Center
4. Quality Assurance Center
5. Educational Department
6. Chair of International Relations
7. Chair of Foreign Languages
8. Chair of philosophy and politology
9. Chair of General Economics
10. Court sessions hall
11. Gym
12. Medical room
13. “Nor Gladzor” newspaper editorial