



**EXPERT PANEL REPORT**  
**ON INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION CARRIED OUT AT ARMENIAN STATE INSTITUTE**  
**OF PHYSICAL CULTURE**

**YEREVAN– 2016**

## INTRODUCTION

The institutional accreditation of Armenian State Institute of Physical Culture (hereinafter ASIPC) is carried out based on the application presented by the Institute. The process of institutional accreditation is organised and coordinated by the National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance, Foundation (ANQA).

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

The expertise was carried out by the expert panel formed according to the demands of ANQA Regulation on the Formation of the Expert Panel. The expert panel consisted of 4 local and 1 international experts.

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

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

The report refers to the expertise of institutional capacities of the ASIPC according to the state criteria and standards for accreditation as well as to the peer review from the perspective of integration in the EHEA.

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## SUMMARY

### **EXPERTISE OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES OF THE ASIPC ACCORDING TO THE STATE CRITERIA AND STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION**

The expertise of the ASIPC was carried out by an independent<sup>1</sup> expert panel formed according to the requirements of ANQA Regulation on the Formation of the Expert Panel. The evaluation was carried out according to 10 criteria set by the RA Government on 30 June, 2011 N 959-Ն decree.

While carrying out the expertise the expert panel took into consideration the fact that the ASIPC is the only state specialised HEI in the Republic of Armenia (hereinafter RA) and is aimed at becoming a student-centred, academic environment, which prepares its alumni for the active, social life and for the role of educating young generation, for professional career and continuous education in line with the requirements of globalised society and modern demands of the labour-market.

In the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan (hereinafter SP) the ASIPC has made the mission statement precise by targeting the latter at preparing professionals in the field, further development of sport and physical culture in the country, establishment of healthy lifestyle, creation and dissemination of sport knowledge, rendering quality academic, scientific-research and consultation services satisfying the needs of the modern labour-market.

There are certain steps undertaken by the ASIPC which are worth being mentioned:

- Elaboration of an SP on Development with the aim of implementing its mission,
- Elaboration of a timetable for the realization of strategic aims which includes the planned operations to be undertaken with the aim of implementing strategic objectives, the deadlines of implementation and the people responsible.

With the aim of defining its mission, aims and objectives, the ASIPC has a framework aimed at involving internal and partially external stakeholders. However, the Institute lacks a holistic approach aimed at assessing and improving the outcomes of mission and aim implementation. This, in its turn, hinders the targeted assessment of the outcomes and based on the latter the improvement procedures.

The ASIPC lacks an organisational structure reflecting the SP. Notwithstanding the fact that throughout 2014-2015 the Institute has undertaken structural reforms, the organisational structure is not flexible, different organisational units have repetitions of some functions, horizontal ties are incomplete. The scope of responsibilities of different organisational units and the ties between the latter are not obvious. The administrative apparatus is characterised by the practice of having one and the same person responsible for different positions. In certain structural units one and the same person is responsible for different posts.

The ASIPC is guided with its 5-year long-term planning. However, there are no mid and short-term operational plans. As far as the annual operational plan is concerned, the latter corresponds more to the planning of on-going operations of the Institute.

The Institute tries to involve internal stakeholders into the procedures of decision-making; however, the communication with external stakeholders is not regulated. At all levels and in all organisational units of the Institute there is the system of accountability, however, there are no

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<sup>1</sup> APPENDIX 1: CVs of Expert Panel Members

critical analyses on the effectiveness of its assessment tools and operations. De facto, the Institute lacks data-collection procedures and those for examination of external and internal factors. The PDCA cycle does not thoroughly function at the ASIPC. The Institute lacks qualitative and quantitative publications on degrees awarded and the mechanisms of their assessment.

The Academic Programmes (hereinafter AP) of the ASIPC are elaborated in line with its mission, moreover, the said consistency is especially visible as far as the mission embedded in 2016-2020 SP is concerned. The intended learning outcomes of the APs are generally speaking in line with the NQF; however, they still need precision and amendment. De facto the institution lacks a precise mapping of its teaching methods and intended learning outcomes. Generally speaking, the methods of assessment of students are in line with the intended learning outcomes (hereinafter ILO).

The ASIPC is preoccupied with the effective organisation of academic studies of students. The number of entrants is guaranteed through orientation works carried out among high-school pupils, college graduates and army soldiers who are about to be demobilised. The Institute is trying to implement surveys – one of the tools of revealing the needs of the students, however, the operations targeted at satisfying the needs revealed are not yet regulated. The ASIPC renders assistance and guidance to students. Generally speaking, the students are contented with the academic environment and the organisation of academic process.

The expert panel evaluates positively the fact that the ASIPC has a policy and procedures of teaching and support staff recruitment and assessment. The fact that more than 90% of the teaching staff is a permanent one, has qualifications and sport awards in line with AP requirements allows to conclude that the ASIPC takes into account teaching qualities and direction and guarantees the sustainability of the staff. The intention of the Institute to formulate its teaching potential from the existing data-base (66%) is praiseworthy. This is done by the involvement of their PhD young specialists. The ASIPC carries out training aimed at retraining of the teaching staff; however, the expert panel is preoccupied with the lack of educational and didactic training from the perspective of continuous development of the teaching staff and mobility. The fact that the TLI has elaborated a procedure on ensuring promotion and progression of the employees is praiseworthy, however, it has been implemented quite recently and its effectiveness is not yet analysed.

The ASIPC has the research field and strategic aims reflecting its interests. Research is not limited within the borders of the Institute but rather involves the interests of Olympic and Sport Committees of the RA and this is how the ASIPC grounds its inclination of becoming a scientific-research centre. The expert panel concludes that the TLI has long-term strategy and short and mid-term programmes expressing its interests in this domain. The TLI encourages the involvement of teachers and students into research and implements mechanisms aimed at linking research and academic operations. The TLI has certain steps to be undertaken as far as internationalization of research is concerned, since the number of publications in international reviewed journals are but a few, there are no international research exchange programmes and joint research projects.

The ASIPC organisational units and resources are enough for carrying out professional education. Throughout the site visit the expert panel found enough evidence of the fact that the operations aimed at expanding academic environment, improvement of organisational units and reconstructions are in process. However, the vast majority of premises, material-resource base still is in urgent need of modernization.

The financial flow of the ASIPC is carried out via 2 directions: 1. budgetary and 2. extra-budgetary, which is mainly allocated from tuition fees. It can be ascertained that the TLI has limited financial resources which are not enough for the thorough implementation of objectives

adopted in the SP. Having said all this, the expert panel evaluates positively the fact that the ASIPC is trying to lead a policy of saving resources on the one hand and has initiated the procedure of expanding financial flows on the other hand. The latter is partially being realised via applying to grant projects and beneficiaries.

The Institute has an elaborated system of internal and external accountability. The transparency and availability of its operations and regulations to the public are ensured via its official web-site, newspaper and through the information provided by its organisational units. However, the expert panel is of the opinion that the amount of information posted in the webs-site needs augmentation. The expert panel evaluates the fact that the ASIPC successfully implements the function of knowledge transfer to the society by rendering additional academic, consultation and benevolent services. With the aim of establishing feedback with the society the ASIPC has certain mechanisms and organisational units; however, it is impossible to make considerations referring to their effectiveness since there are no corresponding analyses.

With the aim of establishing environment conducive to internationalization, the ASIPC has determined a strategic aim and formulated a corresponding department (with its own charter) in charge of its realization. However, the operations of the said Department are mainly limited with admission procedures of learners and PhD students from the Diaspora, which is the token of the fact that the Institute lacks a holistic and regulated policy on internationalization. The ASIPC undertakes certain steps aimed at internationalization; however, it still lacks environment conducive to experience exchange, development and internationalization. The ASIPC cooperates with local establishments; however, the facts of effective cooperation are but a few.

The ASIPC underlines the importance of quality education and quality assurance; however, the Institute still lacks a systematic approach and a holistic perception of quality culture. Certain human, material and financial resources are allocated for the organisation of QA operations, series of documents have been elaborated; however, as far as operation planning is concerned, there is still a need for making the latter equitable. The internal system of QA is still in its formation. Certain operations are being carried out; however, the involvement of external stakeholders is quite loose. The lack of mechanisms and toolkit aimed at regulating QA operations of the Institute does not allow to assess the influence of QA procedures on the improvement of Institute operations as a whole.

## **STRENGTHS OF THE ASIPC**

1. Reformulated mission precisely indicating the inclination of the TLI.
2. Consistent strategic planning of the mission and objectives.
3. Decent level of participation of internal stakeholders in decision-making directed at them.
4. Elaboration of APs in line with TLI mission.
5. Outcome-driven approach to student assessment.
6. Rendering corresponding support to students aimed at satisfying their academic needs.
7. Provision and sustainability of teaching and support staff having necessary professional qualifications.
8. Existence of research priorities special to the field. Research operations carried out not solely inside the TLI but also within the framework of interests of Sport and Olympic Committees of the RA.
9. Existence of mechanisms linking research and academic operations.
10. Existence of QA policy and ratified procedures.

## **WEAKNESSES OF THE ASIPC**

1. Lack of mid and short-term planning emerging from the SP.
2. Lack of procedures of PDCA assessment and improvement as far as management and quality assurance is concerned.
3. Low level of involvement of external stakeholders in the operations of the Institute.
4. Lack of a Policy on teaching-learning method selection conducive to learning and in line with intended learning outcomes.
5. Lack of holistic approach and methodology of benchmarking (international).
6. Lack of prediction of the number of entrants (applicants).
7. Low level of international research operations of the Institute.
8. Lacks of regulated policy on establishing environment conducive to internationalization, experience exchange and development.
9. Low level of cooperation with international organisations and foreign language acquisition.
10. Lack of the culture of QA.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### ***Mission and Purpose***

1. To reformulate the Mission of the TLI with the aim of making it more profiled, relevant and transparent for the stakeholders.
2. To expand external stakeholder involvement in SP elaboration and implementation procedures.
3. To regularly assess the effectiveness of mechanisms of stakeholder involvement by improving the mechanisms aimed at revealing the needs of internal and external stakeholders.
4. To render indicators of assessing the outcomes of aim and objective implementation measurable.

### ***Governance and administration***

5. To review the organisational structure of the Institute by making the link between all the organisational structures and functional relations precise, to determine the functions of all the employees of the Institute.
6. To elaborate a policy on HR Management in line with the SP of the HEI aimed at provision of necessary human resources.
7. To examine and analyse external factors influencing the operation of the TLI, to implement measurable tools of examination, to elaborate procedures and assessment mechanisms on necessary data collection aimed at examining the factors influencing the operations of the TLI.
8. To elaborate short and mid term operational plans aimed at SP timetable implementation. To elaborate precise KPIs and toolkit aimed at implementation, monitoring and assessment of short, mid and long-term plans.
9. To improve the mechanisms of involving external stakeholders in decision making.
10. To improve the system of mechanisms aimed at data-collection, analyses and assessment of implementation of current APs and the effectiveness of ongoing operations.

11. To make the policy on financial resource allocation more precise in line with strategic priorities.
12. To establish a system of risk management.

### ***Academic Programmes***

13. To define different intended learning outcomes of all APs at BA and MA levels.
14. To ensure the link of teaching, learning methods with the intended learning outcomes and assessment methods through the insertion of student-centered approaches.
15. To elaborate criteria on knowledge assessment based on peculiarities of every single discipline.
16. To elaborate tools ensuring academic honesty.
17. To implement the best practice of international benchmarking of APs.
18. To foster the culture of AP elaboration, regular monitoring, assessment of effectiveness of implementation and improvement of operations in the Institute through involving stakeholders and revealing the needs of the labour market.
19. To disseminate the best practice of AP elaboration and review, modernization and improvement existent in the Institute.
20. To implement interdisciplinary approaches of AP elaboration.

### ***Students***

21. To elaborate a Student Guide of the ASIPC
22. To reformulate the operations of the Career Centre by directing the latter at examining the needs of the labour market, employability of the alumni and the provision of stable feedback with the latter.
23. To improve the procedures and mechanisms of revealing and assessing the academic needs of the students by involving the latter.

### ***Teaching and support staff***

24. To determine and document the competences of the teaching staff in line with AP requirements.
25. To elaborate mechanisms of revealing the needs of the teachers, to support the improvement of professional qualities of the teaching staff, to encourage professional development of the teaching staff having scientific ranks and degrees.
26. To elaborate job descriptions of teaching and support staff.
27. To determine normative acts on administrative staff formulation.
28. To carry out performance assessment of the support staff.

### ***Research and development***

29. To determine progress indicators of research field in the SP.
30. To encourage interdisciplinary approach of research and to determine new priorities of intra-institute research in line with the latter.
31. To take into consideration the need of merging organisational units in charge of scientific-research and scientific-informative operations.
32. To undertake certain operations aimed at international research cooperation and creation of research network.
33. To augment the number of publications in international reviewed and renowned journals.
34. To elaborate tools aimed at assessing the social impact of scientific-research works.



### ***Infrastructures and resources***

35. To expand financial allocations aimed at refreshing the material-technical base and provision of new equipment.
36. To allocate financial resources in accordance with the SP.
37. To carry out financial-economic audit.
38. To assess the effectiveness of tools evaluating the applicability, availability and effectiveness of academic resources.
39. To assess the annual usage of auditoriums and to optimise resource allocation (savings on heating and else).
40. To establish corresponding environment for organising the academic process of students with special needs.

### ***Societal responsibility***

41. To assess the effectiveness of the system of accountability.
42. To elaborate and implement formal mechanisms of feedback with external stakeholders.
43. To analyse the effectiveness of current mechanisms aimed at feedback with the society.
44. To elaborate programmes for life-long learning in the fields of sport and physical training for the society. These APs can expand financial flows of the Institute.

### ***External Relations and Internationalization***

45. To elaborate a regulated and holistic policy and strategy aimed at experience exchange, development and internationalization.
46. To elaborate measurable indicators aimed at assessing international operations.
47. To expand the scope of cooperation with employers.
48. To carry out international exchange programmes conducive to teacher and student mobility.
49. To activate and expand the cooperation and its scope with international establishments and organisations.
50. To improve the level of English of both the teachers and students, to review programmes of the courses and the methodology.

### ***IQA***

51. To carry out assessment of the policy and procedures of QA.
52. To elaborate precise mechanisms of assessing human, material and financial resources allocated for the management of QA operations.
53. To determine the functions of the QA Department.
54. To expand the involvement of internal and external stakeholders of QA operations and to assess the effectiveness of the latter.
55. To elaborate mechanisms assessing the effectiveness of organisational and contextual reforms aimed at QA of education.
56. To determine and implement mechanisms of data-collection, which will formulate necessary grounds for internal and external assessment of QA.
57. To carry out analyses on the effectiveness of mechanisms used for disseminating information about the quality of operations.

## **PEER REVIEW FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF INTEGRATION OF GYUMRI STATE PEDAGOGICAL UNIVERSITY INTO THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA**

The international expert hopes that this part of the holistic report will be constructively used to the development of the ASIPC.

The Armenian State Institute of Physical Culture has the vast intention to join the European Higher Education. Coming out of a long period of stability in a country joining globalisation, undergoing the economic crisis and rather bureaucratic policy, the university has to tackle change in in Armenian society and the world in general.

Confronted to more institutional autonomy, accountability and academic freedom, ASIPC is coming out of his cocoon. In the coming years it will have to deal with the challenges coming from the outside, if it wants to be effective, successful and survive.

Making observations in this context, it should be kept in mind that the language bias was a main obstacle during the visit at ASIPC, as only the self- evaluation report was fully available in English. The translator provided me with an executive summary of the strategic plan of the university and also the website has information available in English.

### **Observations**

The Armenian State Institute of Physical Culture( ASIPC) includes in its strategic plan the ambition to be part of the European Higher Education Area. As an international expert my observations deal with the implementation of the different tools and dimensions of the Bologna process. I will also try to benchmark them with the implementation report on the implementation of Bologna the European Higher Education Area(EHEA), Yerevan 2015, as background. As far as the Quality Assurance concerns, course most of the members of the EHEA are in the process of implementation of the new European Standards and Guidelines(ESG )approved at the Declaration of the Ministerial Conference in Yerevan, 2015.

This has the consequence that the ongoing implementation processes of the Bologna process are most EHEA countries based on the Bucharest Communiqué and the 2005 version of the ESG's.

### **Observations**

#### **- The TLI includes the Bologna process in its strategic plan**

The implementation of the Bologna reforms are partly achieved and the university acts now on managing and improving the implementation of the QA processes and student- centred learning.

The strategic plan puts focus on the effectiveness of Quality management through training of administrative staff, integrated operation of the governing bodies and the implementation of a system for decision making.

Also the improvement the intra- institutional basis for reforms is on the agenda.

In the field of student-centred learning improvement of participation of students in decision making, the Role of the Student Council and the ties with external student organisations is intended.

No action plan was available.

#### **- ASIPC implemented the Bachelor – Master structure and a credit system**

According to the Bologna process, a 4+1 Bachelor- Master structure was implemented in line with the Armenian legislation. The creditsystem is still based on a year system with rather strict

conditions to pass to another study year. This is not really in line with the Bologna process, but still the situation in many EHEA countries.

In the credit system the curricula have the structure of a traditional year system, which is not really favourable for flexibility of individual learning paths/tracks and a good balance between majors and minors

The ASIPC has clear requirements and procedures on access.

#### **- Curriculum development at ASIPC**

The ASIPC has two faculties. One is centred on Pedagogical programmes and the other one on Sports and Health Recovery. I could not control the rationale of the Faculty structure and the coherence of the programmes in the faculties.

Curricula are based on intended learning outcomes, but no model for the definition of learning outcomes is available in the institution. Some of the academic programmes are generic and based on traditional disciplines( e.g. social sciences), while other are rather specialised ( e.g. chess)

There is no systematic review of curricula, based on a developed method, involving external stakeholders. The ILT gives no proof of linking the level of its curricula, intended learning outcomes and diplomas to the EQF, which is crucial for international cooperation and the transparency of the level and quality of academic programmes

ASIPC organises postgraduate courses and courses on correspondence. These courses were out of scope during the visit.

Graduates receive a diploma supplement.

The institution has no policy and procedures on the recognition of prior learning.

The mission and functioning of the department of Academic affairs in curriculum development and educational development in general was not made clear during the visit.

#### **- Research at ASIPC**

The TLI has a well- established strategy, structure and methodology in the field of research. The priorities and the decision making processes are defined.

Research policy and the implementation of its different elements are the responsibility of the Vice- Rector for Research and the Scientific Department. Decision making is the responsibility of the Scientific Council. All programmes are involved.

As far as the Strategic plan concerns there are 4 priorities. The output of research is defined in different categories of outcomes : publications and Scientific Conferences are considered as the most important outcomes of the research activities. There is no scientific output in English. Abstracts of articles are published in Russian and English. A strategy for knowledge transfer does not exist.

The ILT has a restricted equipment in research laboratories and the support of research by appropriate ICT is almost inexistent. The TLI has no scientific databases available. Laboratories have small seminar library, not connected to the ILT Library.

Students are involved in the organisation of Scientific Conferences. It is not clear what the policy is towards doctoral students.

The ILT has a museum on the history of Sports in Armenia. The scientific, didactical and public potential of the museum is not fully exploited.

#### **- ASIPC implemented a system of QA, still under construction**

The institution has done a considerable effort in acquiring knowledge on the concepts and methods in QA, through the publication of a QA manual.

The institution set up a central unit for Quality Management and a structure for Quality management ( Quality Management committee in which all programmes participate).

The main issue in QA is that the university has no profiled mission. This has a consequence the vision on quality and a true basis for an institutional strategy is missing.

Students and staff are involved in QA through reviews, but external stakeholders are not consulted in a systematic way.

The TLI has a developed policy on the evaluation of staff, through student reviews and class hearings. Staff are provided with feedback and the retraining of staff members is one of the developed actions of QA management.

Students are involved in the governance of the university;

- **Student numbers are declining**

This is a major challenge for ASIPC as the financial sustainability is under pressure. This phenomenon has also a consequence on the critical mass of students and staff in academic programmes and could affect the quality of the academic programmes and research.

University management is aware of the tendency and takes action.

- **Major lack of internationalisation**

The international relations of the TLI are limited to the access and integration of students of the Armenian diaspora. While sports are international par excellence, the University is not involved in international activities as intended in the Bologna process. There are no active cooperation agreements with universities from abroad. There is no systematic and intensive student and staff mobility with partner institutions abroad. The TLI has an international office in charge of the international students. It is also the international office that organises English courses.

- **Student centred learning, social inclusion**

Students are involved in all governing bodies of the ASIPC and the Student Council has his own office and library.

Student centred- learning in education is inherent in sports, as there are many practical courses. These courses require a personalised approach and the involvement of the students in the day- to-day activities of education is essential. Students and alumni asked for more practical training and better equipment during the visit.

Students are enthusiastic about their study period at the University and where the participants in the visit with the most 'to the point answers' to the questions of the panel.

The ASIPC has a policy for including students with financial problems.

- **Stakeholder involvement**

At ASIPC , stakeholder cooperation is based on a long tradition and not on an explicit strategy. The TLI has many contacts with the Ministry of sports, sports federations, sports clubs and schools. Consultancy is provided on request of the stakeholders.

Stakeholders endorsed the cooperation with and the quality of ASIPC during the visit.

- **Infrastructure and resources**

Renovation of infrastructure was the top priority of ASIPC during the last decades. After the collapse of the Soviet Union buildings were in a very bad condition and over the last twenty years a huge investment programme was instigated and is still going on.

In the coming years a new swimming pool and a tennis court will be built. Improvement of laboratory equipment for biochemistry, anatomy, sport medicine and physiology is planned. The IT equipment, including computers, network and wifi is available in a minimal way. The equipment of sports halls is completely outdated and modern electronic equipment for coaching and monitoring sportsmen is not available. The TLI has a medical centre acting as a prevention agency for illness, accidents and the overall fitness of students. Students are well supervised as far as their physical condition concerns.

## **Recommendations**

- 1) The university is confronted with the decline of students and with the issue of financial sustainability as a consequence. ASIPC has to develop a profiled mission and vision and a strategic plan in cooperation with the stakeholders. This can be realised through valid knowledge of the origins of this decline. As the attractiveness of the ASIPC for candidate students is an issue, only an evidence-based strategy can be an answer to the decline. The outreach, transparency and strategic communication of the university based on a modern educational concept/approach and research quality are critical in this. There is no evidence available that the existing strategic plan can be an answer to this major challenge of the university.
- 2) The university needs an explicit vision on teaching and learning and its consequences for curriculum development. The university needs structural involvement of stakeholders, mainly of the world of work, in the design and delivery of academic programmes. The focus on employability of graduates in the academic programmes is urgently needed. The ASIPC has to make a paradigm shift in the structure of curricula, which is now still based on a year system and not on a modern concept of a credit system making a flexible learning path possible, a logical, multi-disciplinary learning track available and recognition of prior learning effective. Flexibility is not possible without the use of distance learning as a part of a blended learning model. The use of e-learning needs equipment but also training of staff in the concepts and the use of e-teaching.
- 3) The implementation of the Bologna tools is under construction. Expanding and deepening the use of the tools in the different fields is needed, especially in defining (internationally) validated learning outcomes and defining and validating the intended learning outcomes and programmes in terms of the EQF level will be critical.
- 4) The institution has to develop the full design of quality management and tools as they are too partial today. External stakeholders involvement in a systemic way is critical for the relevance of programmes. The implementation of QA, needs to provide the university with an instrument for strategy development and not only with procedures of control. The quality culture in terms of a PDCA-approach is still not installed at all levels of the university.
- 5) The university has to develop its vision on research and knowledge management and knowledge transfer and translate this in a concrete research policy. An explicit functional relation between the library and research/education has to be developed. The introduction of 'anywhere, anytime learning' and information broking and disclosing has to be part of the libraries mission. The research agenda can be inspired and developed in cooperation with relevant sectors. The scientific output has to be relevant for the region and Armenia. The ASIPC has to elaborate (international) strategic alliances for knowledge development. For the acquisition of scientific electronic databases, the development of an institutional repository cooperation with other universities is urgently needed.

- 6) ASIPC has to develop a set of paid services based on valid market needs. Consulting in sports, renting sports facilities, development of the campus as an international conference centre could be possible options.
- 7) The University has to invest in the attractiveness and modernisation of sports facilities, sports equipment and up- to- date laboratories. Cooperation with( sports) business and universities abroad is needed. Expanding basic IT- facilities and widening the use of the learning platform for staff and students has to be acquired. The investment plan has to be in line with the strategic options in education and research.
- 8) If ASIPC wants to participate in the EHEA, internationalisation is the condition sine qua non. Cooperation agreements with relevant international partner institutions is more than urgent. Mobility of staff and students, alignment of programmes and qualifications.
- 9) The development of a professional electronic and integrated administrative system is critical for the support of education and research, service to students and the availability of indicators in a management dashboard based on the KPI's of the strategic plan, can support the monitoring of processes and decision making at the university.

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**Mkrtich Avagyan**  
Expert Panel Chair

**08.06.2016**

## DESCRIPTION OF EXPERTISE

### EXPERT PANEL COMPOSITION

The external expertise of the SER and QA operations of Movses Khorenatsi University was carried out by the expert panel having the following composition (see appendix 1 for the CVs):

**Mkrtich Avagyan** – candidate of philosophical sciences, associate professor. Armenian State University of Pedagogy after Kh. Abovyan, Head of the Department of Education Reforms and Quality. Expert Panel Head.

**Johan Cloet** - Secretary General of EURASHE (European association of Institutions in Higher Education), Belgium. Member of the expert panel.

**Gayane Marmaryan** – doctor of biological sciences, associate professor. Armenian State Agrarian University. Member of the expert panel.

**Sona Sargsyan** – candidate of medical sciences, associate professor. Yerevan State Medical University. Member of the expert panel.

**Davit Petrosyan** – French University in Armenia, Faculty of Management, 3<sup>rd</sup> year student. Member of the expert panel.

The works of the expert panel were coordinated by Lilit Pipoyan – a specialist at ANQA Institutional and Program Accreditation Department.

The translation was provided by Zaruhi Soghomonyan – Head of the Chair of Foreign Languages at French University of Armenia.

The composition of expert panel was agreed upon with the University and was appointed by ANQA director.

All the members of expert panel including the coordinators and the translator have signed impartiality and confidentiality agreements.

### Application for state accreditation

The ASIPC applied for institutional accreditation by submitting to ANQA the application form, the copies of the license and respective appendices on 25.08.2015.

The ANQA Secretariat checked the application package, the data presented in the application form, the appendixes and the ANQA electronic questionnaire completed by the Institute.

According to the decision on accepting the application request (decision made on 18.09.2015) a bipartite agreement was signed. The timetable of activities was prepared and approved.

Within the deadline set in the schedule the ASIPC presented the Armenian and English versions of its self-evaluation report according to the form set by ANQA and also the package of attached documents.

The self evaluation was carried out by a team formed on the order of the ASIPC rector.

### Preparatory phase

ANQA coordinator observed the report with the aim of revealing its correspondence to the technical requirements of ANQA. Armenian and English versions of the SER and adjacent documents were accepted by the ANQA on 26.11.2015 after the consent of the process coordinator.

Then ANQA secretariat sent the self-evaluation report to the expert panel (for preliminary assessment) the members of which were agreed upon with the institute and were confirmed by the director of ANQA.

Four trainings on the following topics were organised for the expert panel members by L. Zakaryan and A. Makaryan to prepare the expert panel and to ensure the effectiveness of the activities:

1. Main functions of expert panel.
2. Preliminary evaluation as preparatory phase of developing expert panel report, the main requirements of writing the report.
3. Methodology of observation of documents and resources
4. Techniques and ethics of meetings and questions to be posed.

Having observed the self-evaluation and documents of the University, the expert panel conducted the initial evaluation (01.02.2016-18.03.2016). According to the format, the list of questions for different target groups and also the list of additional documents needed for observation have been prepared.

Within the scheduled time the expert panel summarised the results of the initial evaluation and formed a time schedule of the site-visit<sup>2</sup>. According to the ANQA manual on the expertise the intended meetings with all the target groups, close and open meetings, document and resource review, visits to different organisational units and else were included in the time schedule.

### **Preliminary visit**

On April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 the preliminary visit was paid by the coordinator, expert panel head, and the Head of the Department of Institutional and Programme Accreditation.

The plan-schedule of the site-visit was agreed upon, the list of additional documents was presented, discussions and mutual decisions were reached referring to organisational, technical, informative questions of the site visit. Questions related to the conduct and the norms of ethics of meeting participants were also touched upon. The rooms prepared for focus groups and expert panel discussions were also discussed, the issues related to the equipment and facilities were clarified.

### **Site-visit**

The day prior to site visit all the members of the expert panel (international expert including) and the coordinator met at the ANQA. Throughout the said meeting the expert panel agreed upon the framework of assessment, the scale of criteria for assessment, which following the ANQA procedures has two levels: 1. satisfactory (is in line with criteria requirements) 2. unsatisfactory (does not comply with the requirements of the criteria). The strengths and weaknesses of the Institute per criteria, the procedure of focus group meetings, the norms of ethics of conducting meetings have been finalised and further steps have been determined.

Site visit of the expert panel took place from 21 to 24 March, 2016. The site visit initiated and culminated with the meeting with the Rector. Representatives from the teaching staff,

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<sup>2</sup> Appendix 2. Schedule of site visit at ASPU



students, deans, heads of chairs, employers and alumni were selected randomly from the list provided beforehand. All the meetings were organised according to the schedule. Throughout the site visit the expert panel had document review, resource observation and focus group meetings in different organisational units of the Institute. The expert panel highly evaluates the open discussions with the participants.

During the close meetings of the panel at the end of each working day the interim results of peer review were discussed and at the end of the site visit the main outcomes of the site visit were summarised during the close discussion. The expert panel discussed the main outcomes and reached an agreement first on accreditation standards and criteria. The final conclusion referring to criteria was reached through open discussions of all expert panel members via consensus.

### **Expert panel report**

The expert panel has conducted preliminary evaluation according to the self-evaluation report of the Institute, the documents attached to it and the observations during the site-visit as a result of regularly organised discussions. Based on the observations after the discussions the head of the panel and ANQA coordinator prepared the draft of expert panel report which was agreed upon with the panel members. The international expert prepared his conclusion and a separate document of peer review. The said documents were translated and handed over to expert panel members. The responsibility of including the approach and opinion of the international expert into the report lies on the chairman of the expert panel and the coordinator. The document of peer review was thoroughly included into the report. The preliminary report agreed on by all local members of the panel was translated and sent to the international expert. Based on the comments of the latter the preliminary report has been modified.

The preliminary report was submitted to the Institute on May 5, 2016. The feedback on the preliminary report by the ASIPC was sent to the ANQA on 16.05.2016. Studying the preliminary report the HEI did not submit any observation and comment with the exception of a correction in number of teachers based on which the expert panel composed the final report which was approved by the panel on 08.06.2016

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**Lilit Pipoyan**

Signature of the coordinator

**08.06.2016**

## **EXPERTISE ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA**

### **BRIEF INFORMATION ABOUT THE TLI**

**HISTORY** – The history of the ASIPC dates back to the 1930s, when the VET of physical culture was established in Yerevan. It offered three-year courses. It was the first professional TLI in the republic, which was in charge of preparing teachers of physical culture for secondary schools. On the 21st of July, 1945 on the decision of the Soviet National Commissars N 557, the Armenian State Institute of Physical Culture was established offering a 4-year higher education. For the first time a specialised HEI, in charge of educating high-quality national professional in the spheres of physical culture and sport was established.

**EDUCATION** – The Institute has 2 faculties, 18 chairs. There are 4 APs in full-time and 4 APs in part-time studies. There are 4 APs in full and part-time studies at an MA level. At present the Institute has 2779 students.

**RESEARCH** – Being a scientific-academic institution, the ASIPC strives for becoming the leading organiser and centre for implementing practical and scientific research in the field of physical culture and sport of the RA, implementing academic process and scientific elaborations, developing and improving the academic process.

**INTERNATIONALIZATION** – Through international relations and internationalization, the ASIPC's mission is to:

- Integrate in international education area.
- Carry out international academic-scientific and exchange programmes.
- Ensure integration of its student-sportsmen and employees in international academic operations.
- Raise the rating of the Institute in the scientific-methodical, health, and academic-sportive fields as well as the one of physical culture.

**QUALITY ASSURANCE** – The aim of the ASIPC is the implementation and development of stable internal system of quality assurance in line with its mission and policy on internal/external quality assurance. In particular, it aims at elaborating and improving the mechanisms and tools of the system of quality assurance and management.

While carrying out the expertise, the expert panel was led by the principle “fitness to purpose” and has regarded the above-given information as ambitions and aims of the Institute.

## I. MISSION AND PURPOSE

**CRITERION: The Tertiary Level Institutions' (TLI) policy and practices are in accordance with its mission, which is in accordance with the Armenian National Qualifications Framework (ANQF)**

### FINDINGS

**1.1** In its 2011-2015 SP the ASIPC has formulated its mission which is aimed at creation, transfer and dissemination of knowledge, the development of personal and mental qualities of teachers and students, increase of social and cultural wellbeing of the society within the framework of state strategy on education development.

The key goals of the Institute operations are as follows:

- To elaborate and implement academic and research programmes in line with the needs of physical education of the youth, development of psychical culture and sport, and healthy lifestyle of the society.
- To prepare the students for their work within existing conditions of professional enhancement and modern society.
- To establish conducive environment for the multifaceted and harmonious development and formulation of law-abiding and responsible citizen

In its 2016-2020 SP the ASIPC has made its mission statement precise by targeting the latter at preparing high-level professionals, development of physical culture and sport in the republic, establishment of healthy lifestyle, creation and dissemination of athletic knowledge, rendering quality academic, scientific-research and consultation services in line with modern labour market demands.

The TLI carries out its operations in two levels as determined by the National Qualifications Framework (hereinafter NQF): Bachelor's and Master's. The qualifications awarded to students are in line with levels 6, 7 as described in the NQF.

With the aim of implementing its mission, the ASIPC has elaborated a strategic plan on development, the main operations of which cover 8 fields:

- Academic, scientific,
- Consultation and informative operations,
- Improvement of TLI management,
- QA,
- Modernization of material-technical base,
- Financial-economic,
- Improvement of social field,
- Internationalization.

Throughout the site-visit it became apparent that the stakeholders are informed about strategic goals and share the latter and render their assistance as far as their implementation is concerned.

**1.2** For the implementation of its mission, goals and objectives, the ASIPC has a framework of involving internal and partially external stakeholders. There are several mechanisms of revealing the needs of the stakeholders:

- Involvement of internal and external stakeholders in the collegial governing bodies of the ASIPC and different structural units,
- Participation of different cycles of stakeholders in pan-institute and an array of faculty committees and groups,
- The operations of student organisations functioning in the ASIPC.

Internal stakeholders had their participation in the process of SP elaboration, which can be witnessed by the working group in charge of SP elaboration, which was quite representative, since representatives from all structural units were involved: administrative workers on institutional and faculty levels, teachers and students. The SP project was posted in the web-site to be available for both internal and external stakeholders and with the aim of generating discussion around the document. The SP has been discussed and ratified by Scientific and Management Councils with both internal and external stakeholders as members.

Except for the aforesaid information, it also became clear throughout the site-visit that with the aim of revealing the needs of internal stakeholders the Quality Assurance (hereinafter QA) Department has elaborated formats of myriad surveys, however, this mechanism has not yet been implemented on a large scale: there is no holistic analyses of data and hence there are no sufficient grounds for assessing their effectiveness. The Institute still lacks precise mechanisms and procedures aimed at revealing the needs of external stakeholders.

**1.3** A timetable-plan has been elaborated for the implementation of strategic goals. The said document includes planned operations aimed at implementation of strategic objectives, their deadlines and people responsible. However, the formulations of the indicators assessing their effectiveness are not precise, there are no qualitative and quantitative indicators involved.

The only mechanism used for assessing the outcomes of mission and goal implementation is the annual report of the rector on academic-scientific and financial-economic operations. Similar reports are being elaborated and presented by administrative financial service and chairs. However, the Institute still lacks a holistic approach on assessment and improvement as well as precise and effective mechanisms of their implementation. This hinders the process of targeted assessment of achieved outcomes and based on the latter steps on improvement.

**CONSIDERATIONS:** The expert panel evaluates positively the fact that the ASIPC has an amended mission which indicates quite precisely the profile of the Institute. However, the long-term mission can render stakeholder comprehension perplexing.

The TLI has established goals aimed at rendering academic services, adjacent objectives and indicators of intended learning outcomes emerging from the mission. It 's worth mentioning that in 2016-2020 SP the goals have been rendered more precise and linked with implemented operations.

The TLI has elaborated a timetable-plan for the realization of the SP on development. The said timetable-plan includes operations aimed at implementing determined goals, as well as responsible organisational units. However, the said document lacks a precise timetable for carrying out the above-mentioned functions: there is no division of short, mid and long-term goals which can result in the decline of effectiveness of organisation.

The ASIPC underlines the importance of revealing the needs of internal and external stakeholders and undertakes certain steps aimed at them. Internal stakeholders are involved in

different cycles of management and participate in the elaboration, discussion and adoption of the SP. The TLI elaborates and implements new mechanisms of revealing the needs of stakeholders, however, many of the latter are still in their formation and need amendments (some portion of questionnaires has not yet been implemented or has just undergone probation period). The mechanisms ensuring external stakeholder involvement are not precise and do not bear procedural nature which obstructs the processes of feedback provision with stakeholders.

The only tool aimed at assessing the effectiveness of achieved goals as set in the SP on development is the system of accountability. The lack of holistic mechanisms and procedures aimed at assessing the effectiveness of mission and SP implementation hinders the systematic implementation of their improvement procedures.

**Taking into consideration the fact that** the Institute has a novel and precisely formulated mission, strategic operational plan covering goals and objectives of all spheres, decent level of awareness of internal stakeholders and their participation, it can be concluded that the policy and operations of the Institute are in line with mission of the ASIPC which, in its turn, is in concord with the NQF of the Republic of Armenia.

**JUDGMENT: The correspondence of the ASIPC institutional capacities to the requirements of criterion 1 is satisfactory.**

## ***II. GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION***

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

### **FINDINGS**

**2.1** The procedure of decision-making and implementation aimed at realization of its goals is ensured through the organisational structure of governance, the functions and relations between the elements of which are regulated in corresponding documents.

The governance of the ASIPC is carried out based on the laws “on Education”, “Higher and Postgraduate Education”, RA law and different other normative acts, based on the principle of self-management as settled in the Charter of the ASIPC and ratified by the decision of the RA Government. The governance of the Institute is carried out on the principles of autonomy, one-person governance and collegiality.

ASIPC decisions are made on the order of the rector. Throughout the site-visit it became apparent that decisions are made following the norms of ethics, however, the latter have been established only throughout the recent year. What is more, the TLI lacks mechanisms, which will guarantee the transparency and effectiveness of decision-making procedures, as well as the ones which would monitor the realization of the said orders and decisions.

As compared with 2010-2011 academic years, in 2014-2015 organisational reforms were introduced to the system of governance in line with SP goals. However, the functions of the

organisational units are not precisely separated and in certain organisational units there are repetitions of functions. The administrative apparatus is characterised by the practice of having one and the same person responsible for different positions.

At different organisational levels of the ASIPCS the recruitment, dismissal, assessment, promotion of employees is carried out based on the ASIPC statutes and procedures. The ASIPC has enough human resources for the realization of its academic goals. The academic, scientific-research, financial-economic operations, governance and administration of the TLI are carried out through different services and departments of the Institute. The TLI undertakes certain steps with the aim of rendering its management system in line with SP goals and objectives.

**2.2** Based on functioning regulations, the ASIPC is trying to ensure the participation of internal stakeholders in decision-making procedures, as well as to take into account their standpoint while making decisions. ASIPC teachers and students are involved in different administrative and governing bodies and either directly or indirectly participate in the procedures of governance of the Institute, discussions and solutions made.

The Institute has a general or otherwise called collective body of the ASIPC which is aimed at settling vital issues related to the Institute. Teachers and students, not evolved in governing bodies, are informed about the decision made in the chairs, student council, where regular discussions are organised. The official documents related to operations of the Institute are posted in the official web-site of the ASIPC, whereas the paper-based documents are being disseminated inside the Institute. However, it is worth mentioning that not all documents related to Institute operation are posted in the web-site. The students are of the opinion that they are given opportunities to participate in the management of the Institute, and teachers claim being heard throughout chair and collective meetings.

**2.3** The ASIPC is guided by its 5-year SP (2011-2015) as a long-term plan in line with its mission and goals. However, the said plan lacks subdivision into mid (except for the scientific-research field of the Institute) and short-term planning. The TLI has an annual operational planning, which more corresponds to the planning of on-going operations of the Institute. It is a common practice to carry out planning in separate organisational units.

The annual reports of the rector and units are viewed as mechanisms of monitoring and based on the outcomes of the said report the operational plan of the year to come is elaborated. Having said all this, it is important to underline, that the Institute lacks precise mechanisms aimed at assessing the outcomes of operations undertaken. As far as mechanisms and tools aimed at implementation and monitoring of annual goals are concerned, they are not precisely defined. The ASIPC lacks mechanisms of elaborating, implementing and assessing short, mid and long-term plans as an interrelated system.

**2.4** The TLI is in the process of academic reforms and the latter views environmental scanning and decision-making procedure as necessary to be integrated in Bologna process.

Operational reports of ASIPC organisational units are the sole mechanism of data-collection. Surveys are also viewed as a tool for environmental scanning; however, the latter do not bear systematic and regular nature and hence, is not conducive for the thorough examination of factors influencing the operations of the TLI. De facto, the TLI lacks procedure and method of internal and external environmental scanning and information collection.

**2.5** It is foreseen that the administration, policies and procedures must be carried out based on PDCA principles by attaching an utmost importance to the quality management. The creation of Quality Assurance of Education System Unit (2012), the elaboration of the manual on QA and the development of QA policy and concepts are the tokens of the aforesaid assumption. The functioning policy of administration is bottom-up accountability.

Each organisational unit of the TLI plans its operations and ratifies them in the Scientific Council. The level of implementation of what was planned and the outcomes are assessed through the mechanism of reports: from chairs to corresponding faculties or from departments to corresponding vice-rectors. However, no tools and mechanisms of assessing the outcomes have been elaborated hence far. The governance, which is carried out in line with the PDCA cycle is in “plan” and partially “do” cycles. There are no mechanisms of feedback.

**2.6** Having an aim of implementing procedures on quality assurance, the ASIPC is trying to elaborate and implement mechanisms of assessing the analysis and implementation of data-collection on the effectiveness of operations. In 2014 the Charter of monitoring and renewing the academic programs was elaborated and ratified. The TLI carries out data-collection on the effectiveness of APs, curricula and course descriptions and based on the information gained undertakes certain steps (e.g. targeted optimization of programmes). However, the TLI lacks mechanisms assessing the effectiveness of the said procedure.

Surveys have also been carried out with the aim of revealing the evaluation of teachers and students with the quality of courses, as well as services rendered, however, no holistic analyses on the outcomes have been carried out and consequently the effectiveness of tools has not been analysed.

**2.7** The information on the APs and degrees awarded is posted in the official website of the ASIPC and published in the official newspaper. De facto, the Institute possesses information on programmes and degrees awarded, however, there are no qualitative and quantitative publications referring to quality and no mechanisms of assessment which is being mentioned by the Institute itself in its SER.

**CONSIDERATIONS:** The ASIPC has a regulated process and corresponding procedures aimed at decision-making of the system of governance. Structural changes have been introduced in the system of governance with the aim of making the latter in line with SP goals and objectives. However, the said changes were introduced in 2014-2015 and hence there are no analyses on the effectiveness, and consequently the TLI is still in the “do” cycle of the PDCA.

The TLI has elaborated an organigram of administrative structure, which, alas, is not systematic, which can result in fraudulent perception of the aforesaid structure of the Institute among its stakeholders.

The information on the decision of the Scientific Council, intra-Institute normative acts posted in the official website of the ASIPC is in urgent need of refreshment and rapid enrichment, since the lack of information hinders the awareness of external stakeholders about the administrative procedures of the Institute.

The Institute has elaborated a planning of strategic and ongoing operations, amended the SP (2016-2020) aimed at rendering academic services. All the changes have been reflected in the official web-site of the Institute. However, the non-precise division of the timetable into short, mid and long-term programmes endangers the effectiveness of organisation and administration as well as the “Check” and “Act” cycles of the PDCA.

A mechanism of accountability is functioning at all levels of governance and in all organisational units; however, the lack of assessment tools and that of critical analyses on the effectiveness of functions can hinder the process of academic reforms, revealing the weaknesses and shortcomings. Consequently, this will violate the conclusions to be drawn as well as the process of improvement.

The ASIPC has elaborated corresponding regulations, charters and procedures aimed at implementing its administrative functions. The mechanism of bottom-up accountability is there.

With the aim of improving APs and academic services, the TLI carries out data-collection; i.e. reports and surveys, which is not yet thoroughly implemented. The lack of precise mechanisms on assessment and feedback can endanger the improvement of quality of services rendered.

Two main tools, aimed at disseminating information about the operations of the ASIPC in general, and that about academic programmes in particular, is implemented: official website and official newspaper of the TLI. However, the current publications on APs and degrees awarded lack mechanisms on assessment, which can hinder professional orientation of the applicants and the operations carried out among external stakeholders.

**Taking into consideration the fact that** the TLI lacks mechanisms on assessing the effectiveness of the system of governance, the organisational structure is not flexible, the functions of certain organisational units are being repeated thus hindering the operationalization of horizontal ties, the effectiveness of decision-making is not assessed, there is no short, mid and long-term planning interconnected system, the surveys, which are considered to be the mechanism for revealing the factors influencing the academic process of the TLI, are but experimental, the PDCA cycle is not thoroughly functioning, it can be concluded that the system of governance, administrative units and their operations are not effective and are not thoroughly targeted at the implementation of the mission and the goals of the TLI.

**JUDGMENT: The correspondence of the ASIPC institutional capacities to the requirements of criterion 2 is unsatisfactory.**

### ***III. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS***

**CRITERION: The programmes are in concord with the institution's mission, form part of institutional planning and promote mobility and internationalization**

#### **FINDINGS**

**3.1** The ASIPC has determined a goal in its SP of raising the quality of education and the effectiveness of all APs in line with the objectives of Bologna process. It has also determined an important objective of improvement and modernization of the content and structure of APs in line with criteria of European programmes. Moreover, with the aim of implementing the latter, the TLI has planned to continue the improvement of curricula and APs taking into account the necessity of international exchange of the staff and the mutual recognition of academic documents.

The following specializations are carried out at BA and MA levels:

1. Physical Culture and Sport
2. Physical Culture for those Having Health Issues (Adaptive Physical Culture and kinesiology).
3. Journalism
4. Rescuers.

It can be stated that the APs of the ASIPC have been elaborated in line with the mission of the Institute.



As is stated in the SER, the components of the APs – curricula and course descriptions, are formed based on state academic standards of higher professional education and are ratified in the Scientific Council of the ASIPC.

The APs are formulated with intended learning outcomes, which are in line with the NQF of the RA. However, following the expert panel observations, the intended learning outcomes need amendments. In particular, the division of knowledge, skills and competences is not enough precise, in separate cases the APs at BA and MA levels have the same intended learning outcomes.

The ASIPC has undertaken steps with the aim of implementing modular courses; however, from this prospective the course descriptions have gaps: in particular, the formulations of outcomes of academic modules are frequently descriptive.

Course descriptions are regularly examined by the Methodical Council and are sent to be amended if need be. While elaborating the APs, the ASIPC has been guided by the experience of leading institutions of the field:

1. The Russian Federation: The State University of Physical Culture and Tourism
2. Saint Petersburg's State University of Physical Culture after P. F. Lesgaft

**3.2** At present the ASIPC carries out exclusively traditional teaching process. It's praiseworthy that throughout the recent years technologies have been incorporated into teaching methods in some chairs.

However, as it is stated in the SER, the TLI lacks a policy on teaching/learning method selection in line with the intended learning outcomes. Teaching method selection is not yet systematic and is preconditioned only with the peculiarities of the discipline. On the one hand, it is being carried out on the initiative of the teacher and on the other hand there are no necessary conditions for organising the teaching process in line with modern requirements of certain disciplines.

De facto, the TLI lacks a precise mapping of teaching/learning methods and intended learning outcomes. The practice of student-centered teaching/learning still needs improvement. Theoretically the Institute has adopted the student-centered approach and separate chairs are trying to make teaching methods in line with the intended learning outcomes. However, the intended learning outcomes and the grounds witnessing corresponding teaching/learning methods and approaches are incomplete and do not prove the effectiveness of the aforesaid operations.

**3.3.** Student knowledge is checked and assessed in accordance with the regulation on knowledge assessment. A multifaceted system of assessment has been implemented in the TLI, which has been reviewed upon necessity. The said review has resulted in changes in the thresholds and the weights of components forming the overall summative assessment. The Institute has a 100-scale system of assessment, where 60 is the minimum threshold. The outcomes of summative assessment are also expressed in letters. The expert panel has noted that the majority of teachers and students is contented with the existing assessment system and find that assessment methods allow to measure the level of acquisition of intended learning outcomes.

Positive is the fact that the ASIPC has a procedure on appealing the marks, and committees to examine the appeals. Students can be present as observers at exams of their peers. However, the fact as to what extent academic honesty is ensured is still arguable, since it became apparent throughout the site-visit that the number of appeals is but very few and all were made orally. The expert panel states that the requirements to academic honesty are not determined, the pan-institute approach to plagiarism throughout mid-term, summative exams, MA theses is not precise.

**3.4** The ASIPC underlines the importance of contextual concord of its APs with other renowned APs.

From the perspective of ensuring the contextual concord of its APs with those of European countries and the mobility of its teachers and alumni the ASIPC has carried out a meaningful benchmarking of its AP “Physical Culture and sport for the people with disabilities” with Belgium leading Leuven University, the department of Kinesiology within the frameworks of “High education quality and compliances” program. The AP on “Sport Journalism” has thoroughly been benchmarked with the corresponding AP of Saint Petersburg State University of Physical Culture after P. F. Lesgaft.

Notwithstanding everything said above, the ASIPC does not have clearly elaborated holistic approach and methodology of carrying out benchmarking.

Throughout the last 5 years, the mobility of the teaching staff has been carried out within the framework of signed documents (Artsakh, Turkmenistan, Georgia and USA). However, the said visits have not been analysed from the perspective of improvement of academic process or modernization of teaching methods, which otherwise would have allowed to make judgments about the effectiveness of the said visits as well as the grounds enhancing mobility and internationalization. Notwithstanding current opportunities of student mobility (current student exchange programmes with Turkmenistan and Greece) it is not being implemented: the level of foreign language acquisition among the students is rather low.

With the aim of improving international transparency of qualifications and academic recognition, the TLI has a diploma supplement which corresponds to the template elaborated by UNESCO/CEPES. Following its new SP, the Institute strives for expanding the opportunities of international mobility of its students and teachers.

**3.5** The monitoring, assessment of effectiveness and improvement of APs is foreseen to be implemented based on the regulation on AP Elaboration and Monitoring, which determines the main concepts and cycles of AP improvement. The monitoring of the APs is carried out both throughout the academic year (by the Head of the Chair of corresponding AP), and at a large scale, at the end of one cycle of the AP. A questionnaire on separate disciplines has been elaborated. The template of curricula has also been ameliorated. Generally speaking, the Policy on Monitoring, Effectiveness Assessment and Improvement of the APs is still novel and has not been assessed and reviewed.

The reports of the presidents of final attestation committees, the feedback received about internships, as well as the examination of internship reports of the students are viewed as an impartial mechanism of AP monitoring and improvement. However, it is worth mentioning that the tools enumerated above are incomplete, since they do not allow to thoroughly reveal the needs of employers and the labour market and often bear but formal nature.

**CONSIDERATIONS:** The APs are elaborated in line with the mission of the ASIPC. The concord is more precise as far as the mission of 2016-2020 SP is concerned. It is important to state that the TLI is undertaking steps to create up-to-date specializations. As an example, it has successfully elaborated and implemented the AP of Rescuers based of the demands of the society and labour market.

The intended learning outcomes of the APs are generally speaking in line with NQF; however, they still need precision and amendment. The formulation of knowledge, skills and competences, included in course descriptions, also needs precision. The fact that they are not concrete jeopardises the assessment of effectiveness of teaching method selection and competences gained.

The inclination of the Institute to become a student-centered academic environment is highlighted as an important part of the mission in the SP; however, currently, the selection of teaching methods is mainly carried out on the initiative of the teacher based on the peculiarities of the disciplines. The lack of elaborated policy endangers the process of formulation of student-centered system of teaching. The insertion of up-to-date teaching methods in the academic system is not yet satisfactory.

Positive is the fact that the ASIPC has a policy on student assessment, has carried out a procedure of knowledge assessment reforms, teaching methods are mainly in line with the intended learning outcomes; however, the expert panel is of the opinion that the unanimous approach exercised against the component weights of summative assessment can hinder the process of rendering the acquisition of the intended learning outcomes per separate discipline measurable. The implementation of precise rubrics of assessment will foster the increase of transparency and objectivity of assessment criteria and will reflect more precisely the level of acquisition of intended learning outcomes.

The expert panel is of the opinion that the TLI does not refer back to the mechanisms of the struggle against plagiarism. These are one of the most important circles of maintaining academic honesty and hence it is of vital importance to undertake certain actions (usage of corresponding computer programmes) for revealing cases of plagiarism and preventing them, which, in its turn, would be conducive to the establishment of an environment fostering honesty.

The APs of the TLI have defined intended learning outcomes, the concord of which is more evident as far as the mission of 2016-2020 SP is concerned. The APs need unification of vision, since the operations undertaken hence far are but on the level of organisational units. There are no precise policy and unanimous mechanisms of carrying out AP reforms. It is evident, that while carrying out reforms no particular attention is given to revealing the needs and analyzing the latter.

The ASIPC realises the importance of teacher and student mobility and internationalization; however, it does not regard the improvement of APs as a prime factor for internationalization. There are no data as to what research the ASIPC has undertaken while comparing its APs and while reforming the latter. Notwithstanding the fact, that the TLI has a policy on regular monitoring, effectiveness assessment and improvement, a key question related to the duration of MA studies (1 year) has not been revealed. According to ASIPC stakeholders, the said duration is not enough and can result in incomplete formation of applied and research competences. The systematic realization of monitoring, benchmarking, dissemination of best practice will allow the ASIPC to have up-to-date programmes ensuring favourable positioning of the Institute in the academic services of the region.

**Taking into consideration the fact that** the APs of the TLI are in line with its mission, are in concord with state academic standards, are formulated with intended learning outcomes in line with NQF of the RA, the fact that the TLI has a policy of students assessment, which, generally speaking, is outcome-driven, underlines the importance of contextual concord of its APs with other renowned APs, has a ratified policy on AP elaboration and monitoring, it can be concluded that the APs are in line with Institution mission, form an inseparable part of institutional planning and are inclined to enhance mobility and internationalization.

**JUDGMENT: The correspondence of the ASIPC institutional capacities to the requirements of criterion 3 is satisfactory.**

## ***IV: STUDENTS***

**CRITERION: The TLI has student support services that provide for productive learning environment.**

### **FINDINGS**

**4.1** The flow of the students is guaranteed through orientation works carried out among high-school pupils, college graduates and army soldiers who are about to be demobilised. The official website of the Institute has the section “Applicants”, where the entrants can find information about ASIPC specializations, admission procedures and other necessary documents. The admission of BA students is carried out in accordance with the regulations on admission elaborated by the RA Ministry of Education and Science through centralised state exams and intra-institute exams. The admission to part-time studies is carried out based on the outcomes of exams organised by the Institute.

The admission to MA has two cycles. Throughout the first cycle the BA alumni of the current year, who have a comparatively high attainment are admitted. The second cycle foresees admission for the alumni of other HEIs and demobilised soldiers (system of tuition fees).

**4.2** The meeting with the rector and the deans are considered to be tools aimed at revealing the academic needs of the students, however, the said meetings lack a determined timetable. In case the student has issues related to learning, he/she can apply to the teaching staff, head of the chair or consultants.

The functioning system of faculty consultants is viewed as a mechanism of revealing the needs of the students. The functions, rights and responsibilities of the consultants are determined by the charter. A Regulation on Scholarships and Reduction of Tuition Fees is functioning at the ASIPC. The latter takes into account the financial-economic situation of the students. Throughout the recent years, the number of students who make use of the system of fee reduction has rocketed.

In 2013 a survey has been conducted among the students with the aim of revealing their satisfaction level with the TLI resources and services rendered. However, the said surveys were but experimental and do not bear a systematic nature. The TLI has not carried out operation planning aimed at improvements based of the outcomes gained.

**4.3.** The former institute of “curators” which is now called “institute of consultants” is functioning at the ACIPS. The main role of the consultants is to actively participate in academic-educational, sport and societal activities. The consultants are accountable to faculty councils and the latter to deans. The timetable and the list of those responsible can be found in the chairs. The institute has a regulation of duties: each week one chair is responsible for consultations, information and assistance as well as for discipline. Additional consultations are also organised throughout internships. A meticulous heed is attached to additional (extra-curricular) classes. The TLI has a precise timetable for their realization, a register for marking absenteeism, however, the Institute lacks mechanisms of assessing the effectiveness of extra-curricular and consultation services.

**4.4.** With the aim of receiving assistance from administration, the students apply to the Student Council, the latter, in its turn, voices the issue in faculty or Institute Scientific Councils, in front of Chair Heads or Deans. With the aim of being familiar with the issues voiced by the students, the

rector of the TLI has a reception day: every Thursday. There is no regulation on applying to administration; however, every single student can apply to them whenever he/she finds it necessary.

The QA Department also organises consultations referring to questions related to academic system. There is a system of tuition fee reduction aimed at rendering financial assistance to students.

In 2015-2016 academic year elaboration of regulation and timetable on applying to administrative staff is foreseen.

**4.5.** From 2012 the organisational unit responsible for rendering services conducive to students' career is Career Centre (hereinafter CC), the goals and objectives of which are determined by the charter of the centre. The goal of the Centre is to guide, systematise and summarise the procedure of entering the labour market (both the students and alumni) and to ensure the cooperation between the employers and the alumni.

The observations of the expert panel witness that cooperation projects with the stakeholders are mainly carried out through the chairs; however, it is worth mentioning that the said function is ascribed to the CC (in line with the CC charter). Not a single fact, related to operations of the CC has been singled out throughout the meetings. No systematic steps, aimed at encouraging career development of the students and raising the effectiveness of the aforesaid ties have been undertaken hence far. CC is not yet thoroughly integrated into the life of the Institute.

**4.6.** The Students Scientific Organisation, Scientific-Research Centre and Scientific-Informative Department are in charge of ensuring the involvement of students in research-scientific operations. The said procedure is carried with joint efforts of the chairs. Each chair has a representative in charge of scientific affairs, who renders assistance to the organisation of research operations of the students. The topic of research works of the students are being elaborated. The Scientific-Informative Department carries out their planning, coordination and monitoring.

The ASIPC has presented data on student involvement in research-scientific operations (2011-2015). According to the data, 50% of BA students (all APs included) and all the students of MA are involved in different scientific-research projects (the number of scientific works published in republican scientific-methodical and other manuals has increased with 51% (students being co-authors of publications)).

**4.7.** Student Council is an independent body of students' right protection, the scope of operations of which is defined in its charter (ratified in 2012 in the Scientific Council of the Institute). The functions of the Students Council foresee protection of student right in the academic process. The Student Council of the ASIPC participates very actively in voicing the issues directed at students, carries out consultations, in particular among the freshmen (academic, cultural and other), as well as has its participation in solving societal and social issues. Students demonstrating social activity and having high attainment can become members of the Student Council; however, the conducive environment of the said organisational unit creates opportunities for every students to be integrated into the Student Council and to participate in all its operations.

The right and responsibilities of the students are defined in bilateral contracts signed between the students and the ASIPC.

**4.8.** The ASIPC has elaborated a manual on QA, a Concept of Internal Quality Assurance which includes approaches on assessment and QA of academic, consultation and other services rendered. Lesson observations, surveys are considered as tools for assessing academic services rendered to students, however, the effectiveness of the said tools has not yet been analysed by the TLI. According to the SER QA Department organises meeting and seminars among the students with the aim of shredding light on the issues related to academic process.

The ASIPC still lacks mechanisms of monitoring, assessing and QA of academic, consultation and other services rendered to students.

**CONSULTATIONS:** The TLI has mechanisms of student recruitment and admission, the inflow of students exceeds the outflow. The TLI is undertaking steps to minimise the reasons for dismissal and throughout the 5 recent years dismissals were but in extreme cases. The TLI is trying to implement surveys, which are considered to be one of the tools of revealing the needs of the students; however, the lack of operational plan aimed at outcome analysis and that of improvement endangers the effectiveness of the mechanism.

The ASIPC renders assistance and shows guidance to students, the TLI has a functioning system of reducing tuition fees; however, the lack of determined regulation and timetable of applying to the administrative staff with the aim of getting assistance can result in decrease of the effectiveness of revealing the needs of the students. The said operations still need regulation.

Generally speaking, the lack of a systematic approach of revealing the needs of the students hinders the establishment of a system of effective multifaceted assistance rendered to students.

It is a long time, since the Career Centre has been functioning; however, it is not clear to what extent the latter prepares the students for entering the labour-market, carries out labour-market analyses. The lack of mechanisms of monitoring, assessment and quality assurance of academic, consultation and other services can be a hindrance from the perspective of effective student-HEI relations, whereas the coordination of the operations listed above would allow drawing trustworthy information about the level of satisfying the needs of the students.

Though the Student Guide, elaborated by the National Institute of Education is accessible for the students, the Institute has not yet elaborated its own guide, which can result in decline of the awareness of the students about their intra-institute rights.

**Taking into account the fact that** that the TLI has policies and procedures on student recruitment and selection, approaches on their career path, the operations of the Student Council targeted at academic, societal and social issues, satisfaction level of students with academic environment and the fact that the students are viewed as colleagues, it can be concluded that the TLI renders sufficient amount of assistance to the students with the aim of ensuring the effectiveness of academic environment.

**JUDGMENT: The correspondence of the ASIPC institutional capacities to the requirements of criterion 4 is satisfactory.**

### ***CRITERION V: FACULTY AND STAFF***

**CRITERION: The TLI provides for a highly qualified teaching and supporting staff to achieve the set goals for academic programmes and institution's mission.**

### **FINDINGS**

**5.1** In its 2011-2015 SP goals the TLI has foreseen the formation and development of quality staff potential.

The selection of the ASIPC teaching staff is carried out based on the regulation on “Teaching Staff Formation” ratified in the Scientific Council in 2009 based on the exemplary regulation of competitive selection and substitution of posts elaborated by the Ministry of Education and Science of the RA. The said regulation determined competitive selection of the teaching staff, categories and criteria for promotion. Criteria which underlie the policy on teaching staff selection, take into account the pedagogical achievements, as well as the ones in a given sport, as well as organisational skills of the teachers.

213 teachers are currently employed at the ASIPC, 89.6% of who are full-time. The ratio of categories is as follows: professors – 14.2%, associate professors – 18.4%, teachers – 24.5%, assistants – 42.9%<sup>3</sup>. It is worth mentioning that there are certain chairs, where the article of the law – having 3 teachers with scientific degrees, is not adhered to. Notwithstanding the fact, that throughout the span of 4 years (2011-2015) an increase in the number of those having scientific degrees can be traced (4.4%), the peculiarity of the TLI must be taken into account, since 24.3% of the teaching staff is masters of sport, 13.1% - honoured workers of sport, 8% - honoured trainers, 3.3% - honoured workers.

The recruitment of the support staff is carried out based on the peculiarities of the APs. The selection is mostly done among the best alumni, which have graduated from the MA of the said AP. An order on support staff appointment and their attestation has been implemented by the rector since 2012. The laboratory rights and obligations of the support staff have been highlighted. The TLI has 43 support staff members: 17 assistants, 18 senior assistants, the rest is support staff.

The regulation on assessment and promotion of operations, lesson observations, sociological surveys, conclusions on attestation are mechanisms of the policy of re-selection and dismissal of teaching and support staff. The said policy is mainly novel and hence the effectiveness has not yet been analysed.

**5.2.** Notwithstanding the fact, that while recruiting teaching staff the ASIPC takes into account professional education, qualification, experience of teaching (teaching, training, medical), techniques and methodology of certain sport types, sport achievements and awards, students’ opinion, the rating (in case of re-selection), as far as stakeholders are concerned, the recruitment procedure still needs precision and documentation.

Throughout the site visit it became apparent that while formulating the teaching staff, the ASIPC makes use of its own potential (approximately 66%), the rest of the candidates are from Yerevan State University (10%), pedagogical (6.5%) , medical (5.6%), linguistic (4.7%) and other universities. The TLI has not yet elaborated job descriptions of either teaching or the support staff.

**5.3.** An array of procedures has been determined for regular assessment of the teaching staff: regulation on "Rating of Teaching Staff Activity", regulation on “Assessment and Promotion of Teaching and Support Staff Activities (self-assessment, involvement of internal and external stakeholders in assessment procedure), assessment of lesson observations, assessment of teachers by students, annual competitions.

During the site visit the expert panel noted that the templates of assessing the teaching staff have been amended and improved and that the level of satisfaction of students with the qualities of the teachers is rather high.

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<sup>3</sup> The change was made on 16.05.2016 on the basis of the statement submitted by the Insitutite.

No holistic analyses aimed at the effectiveness of teacher assessment procedures and policy has been conducted hence far, there are no precise examples of teacher promotions based on the outcomes of the assessment.

**5.4.** In 2012 the ASIPC has ratified the Regulation on Qualification Enhancement and Retraining of the Teaching Staff (including trainees and young teachers). Following the said regulation, the teachers must undergo trainings once in every 5 years, the directions being: foreign language, computer skills and reforms of education system (based on the principle of credit accumulation). Since 2012 till now 3 intra-institutional and 2 international courses have been carried out aimed at qualification enhancement and retraining of teaching and support staff. Two teleconferences targeted at new approaches on teaching have been organised jointly with Thomas More University colleges of Belgium and Leuven Kinesiology Department. However, no analyses of effectiveness have been conducted hence far.

Notwithstanding the fact, that the ASIPC undertakes certain steps aimed at professional experience exchange of teachers, throughout the site-visit it became apparent that the Institute still lacks a precise policy of enhancing professional qualifications. The latter mostly has but individual nature, which is not that reassuring. The employers also highlighted the importance of teacher mobility, underlining the fact that this will enhance the improvement of professional qualities. The TLI carries out operations aimed at teacher retraining, however, the professional needs of the latter have not been revealed and the effectiveness of retraining courses has not been assessed.

**5.5.** The sustainability of ASIPC teaching staff is ensured by the fact that more than 90% of the teaching staff are permanent contractual employees, they have corresponding professional qualities in line with AP requirements, and the ratio teacher/student is 1/10 respectively. The expert panel evaluates positively the fact that the alumni continue their career inside the TLI and the fact that the vast majority of the teaching staff is formed from the alumni of the Institute. Likewise, positive is the fact that feedback mechanism is established via the alumni of the ASIPC. Notwithstanding the fact that approximately 21% of the teaching staff are those aged 65 and over, the TLI is inclined to rejuvenation of its staff. In this respect it is foreseen that a system of staff potential maintenance and gradual generation change in the scientific-academic will be elaborated and implemented. The ASIPC carries out reinforcement of its staff potential among its PhD students. The overwhelming majority of teaching staff is involved not only in intra-institute research activities but also in those of medical-biological examination of physical fitness of sportsmen of national and Olympic collective/representative teams of the republic, thus ensuring the link of scientific and academic operations.

The policy of teaching staff provision is still in its elaboration and it is foreseen, that the regulation on teaching staff enhancement will enter into force from 2015-2016 academic year.

The ASIPC has not carried out analysis of teaching staff flow and demand of specialists.

**5.6.** The ASIPC has elaborated procedures aimed at teaching staff promotion. In this respect, the statute on “Teaching Staff formation” has been ratified in the Scientific Council. The said document includes categories on teaching staff formation, criteria of taking up posts and promotion. In 2015 a Charter on Encouraging Teaching Staff was ratified and the latter has just entered into force. It is foreseen that certain monetary promotion or the one aimed at improvement of professional qualifications (probations, trainings) will be implemented.

With the aim of fostering professional promotion of young specialists, lesson observations, open classes, consultations are carried out by senior lecturers, academic-methodical committee, employees of deans’ offices.



The teaching staff can regularly publish their articles in the collection of works called “Collection of Materials of Scientific-Methodical Conference”. All publications are free of charge for the teaching staff of the ASIPC.

The ASIPC has not carried out analysis on the effectiveness of the policy on professional enhancement.

**5.7.** Rights and responsibilities of administrative and support staff are defined by the RA Labour Legislation, Statute of the ASIPC and the internal rules of conduct. The administrative staff of the TLI has 20 members, the support staff – 43; however, the assessment of their operations has been conducted hence far, Moreover, no retraining aimed at developing competences of the administrative staff are being organised.

The regulations on assessing the effectiveness of administrative and support staff operations are still in probation period. As the TLI states in its SER, the procedure of monitoring the operations of the support staff is not regulated and needs elaboration.

**CONSIDERATIONS:** The expert panel evaluates positively the fact that the ASIPC has a regulation on “Teaching Staff Selection”, categories of reinforcement and criteria guiding their implementation, a regulation on “Recruitment and Attestation of Support Staff” which will enhance the regulated selection of the staff aimed at AP implementation. It is worth mentioning that the TLI has elaborated mechanisms of re-selection and dismissal of employees; however, the fact that the said tools are still novel does not allow to carry out the assessment of their effectiveness.

The fact that a teaching staff is selected and operates in line with professional requirements allow to state that professional competence profile, qualities and competences of teachers are taken into account; however, the expert panel is inclined to believe that the TLI must precisely formulate the criteria of teaching staff selection per each AP and make it available for stakeholders.

The expert panel evaluates positively the fact that with the aim of rising the quality of academic services the TLI has determined procedures of teaching staff evaluation, has elaborated tools aimed at assessing the quality of lectures and that of a teacher; however, the lacks of mechanism analysis does not allow to make conclusions about the effectiveness of the policy.

It is worth mentioning that the ASIPC has determined procedures aimed at teaching staff training and quality enhancement. Certain operations and undertakings have been carried out targeted at implementing the latter; however, the expert panel is of the opinion that the lack of effectiveness assessment and that of revealing the needs endangers the process of revealing the main issues/needs and the thorough implementation of goals. The lack of a precise policy on competence profile, retraining of the teaching staff can result in serious issues from the perspective of goal implementation, continuous development of staff potential and mobility.

Though the TLI still faces the issue of rejuvenation, the expert panel is inclined to believe that the ASIPC has necessary teaching staff (with corresponding qualifications and sport awards) for the implementation of their APs and ensures their sustainability.

The ASIPC has determined procedures aimed at ensuring the enhancement of the teaching staff, assessing the operations and enhancement of the staff, carries out activities aimed at academic and scientific promotion of young specialists; however, the exert panel is of the opinion that the analysis of the effectiveness of the policy on professional enhancement of the teaching staff can boost the intensive progress, which will have an immediate impact on the quality of academic services.

The ASIPC is trying to formulate necessary administrative and support staff for the provision of its strategic goals through the implementation of determined regulations. However, in the scenario when there are no normative criteria on staff formation, no precise mechanisms and tools meant for assessing their operations, it will be impossible for the TLI to analyse and assess the effectiveness of works undertaken. The lack of analysis on the effectiveness of support staff will result in an incomplete implementation of academic process.

**Taking into account the fact that** that the TLI has procedures of teaching and support staff selection and assessment, each AP is ensured with corresponding teaching staff, who are real devotees, undertakes operations aimed at improvement, the expert panel concludes that the ASIPC has enough teaching and support staff (having necessary professional qualities) for reaching the TLI mission and implementing AP goals.

**JUDGMENT: The correspondence of the ASIPC institutional capacities to the requirements of criterion 5 is satisfactory.**

## ***CRITERION VI: RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT***

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

### **FINDINGS**

**6.1** In its 2011-2015 SP the ASIPC has a goal of elaborating and implementing research projects in line with the needs of healthy lifestyle of the society, the development of physical culture and sport and the physical education of the youth. The ASIPC has three spheres representing its research interests:

- The theory and methodology of physical education and culture,
- the history of physical culture, sport, management and sociology,
- the sport physiology and psychology.

It is worth mentioning that the employees of the Institute have the opportunity to undertake research operations out of the scope of above-mentioned directions. Throughout the site-visit it became apparent that the staff of the Institute is involved not only in the research within the scope of Institute interests but also in research interests of the Ministry of Sport and Youth, Olympic and Sport committees.

A Scientific-Research Centre, Scientific-informative Unit and an MA Department with their own charters, employee categories, functions and reports on performance operate at the ASIPC. The functions of the Scientific-Research Centre include implementation of research topics and provision of medical-biological examination of physical fitness of sportsmen of national and Olympic collective/representative teams of the republic, based on which sport norms will be elaborated. The functions of Scientific-informative Unit include planning and coordination of scientific topics, collection of informative materials related to Institute operations, posting the latter in the web-site and regular refreshment.

The expert panel is of the opinion that the ASIPC has strategic research priorities in the field and enough potential for the realization of the latter. However, the ASIPC lacks analyses and mechanisms aimed at assessing the effectiveness of the strategy expressing the interests and inclinations of the TLI in the field of research. SP indicators are still incomplete and are in need of improvement. Research is not viewed as a source of income.

**6.2.** Methodical instructions on scientific-research operations have been elaborated and implemented. The latter include information on duration of implemented programmes: long (5 years and more), mid (3-5 years) and short (until 3 years) planning and directives. The ASIPC has singled out strategic directions of research operations and all chairs and scientific centre are involved in their implementation. Within the framework of short-term programme (2014-2015), 80% of 18 chair representatives have been involved in inter-chair and individual scientific topics, in medical-biological examination of physical fitness of sportsmen of national and Olympic collective/representative teams of the republic, an array of programmes has been elaborated (doping and anti-doping monitoring, personalisation of preliminary trainings, assessment of functional condition based on cardiogram). The KPIs of a mid-term programme are:

- The outcomes of scientific-research service of sportsmen (57.2%),
- Scientific articles and thesis (23.8%),
- MA thesis,
- Academic and academic-methodical manuals,
- The acts on outcome implementation and,
- Dissertations.

**6.3.** With the aim of implementing its interests in the field of research, the ASIPC carries out examinations in collective/representative teams of the RA, sport schools, secondary establishments. A policy has been elaborated by the TLI aimed at implementing and developing research. The Vice-rector on Science and the research-scientific centre are responsible for the implementation of the latter. The permission to defend, review, publication of scientific articles, methodical manuals, graduation papers is regulated via corresponding procedures.

The indicators of policy implementation on research development are:

- Inter-chair cooperation (specialised, natural sciences, medical (sport medicine)),
- Scientific trips of scientists,
- Organisation of international conferences,
- Annual reports.

With the aim of rendering assistance to research implementation, the TLI is planning to annually augment budgetary financial flows to the development of scientific-research base, is undertaking certain steps with the aim of providing the researchers with up-to-date literature, organises an annual competition, within the limits of its opportunities publishes scientific works on its own and underlines the importance of assistance rendered by the chairs to researchers and students. Throughout the site-visits it became apparent, that there is a person responsible for research in each chair, who encourages the organisation of research works undertaken by the students and units. The expert panel is of the opinion that the TLI has determined a policy on research implementation; however, no monitoring of the effectiveness of mechanisms has been carried out hence far. The analyses of accountability and scientific operations of the Chair are incomplete, the tools of assessing the effectiveness and up-to-date nature of scientific-research operations are not elaborated.

**6.4.** The fact that the ASIPC has become a member of the international association on physical culture and sport is positive. Following this, an international Congress “Olympic Sport: Sport for Everybody” has been organised at the ASIPC in 2015. Representatives from 12 countries participated in the congress. There are certain data available on participation of the teaching staff in international scientific conferences, publications in CIS and other reviewed foreign journals. However, as far as the number of the teaching staff and that of publications is concerned, the expert panel is of the opinion that the latter are but scarce, and scientific potential is not being published in international reviewed journals (Scopus, Web of Science, Ritz and else) and do not have joint international articles. Throughout the site visit it became apparent, that neither students, nor young researchers, nor teachers participate in international research exchange programmes, in the meanwhile, the said participation would have contributed the availability of international sources for research financing. Instead, it can be highlighted that the lion portion of research (throughout 2011-2015) is published in professional, reviewed journals (Collection of scientific-methodical topics). The publications of 2015, as compared with the ones back in 2011, have increased with 27%. The expert panel is of the opinion, that as far as international recognition of research outcomes is concerned, the ASIPC is still undertaking its first steps and it still needs to elaborate a rout map (planning) aimed at research internationalisation.

**6.5.** The involvement of students into research, the implementation of equipments elaborated and patented by the teaching staff in the academic process, involvement of research outcomes in lectures, laboratory classes and academic-methodical manuals are considered to be mechanisms of interconnecting scientific-research operations and academic processes. All these procedures are preliminarily being discussed in chair meetings. The Charter of Academic-Methodical Council has been ratified where one can find the scope of responsibilities of committees adjacent to the council directed at academic-methodical works of the TLI.

The involvement of students in research is reflected in their works undertaken in student scientific groups, the outcomes of which are being summarised in student scientific conferences.

Generally speaking, all the mechanisms elaborated hence far are positive, however, there are no data available on the analyses of the effectiveness of mechanisms interrelating research operations and academic process.

**CONSIDERATIONS:** The expert panel evaluates positively the fact that the ASIPC has determined strategic goals in the field of research, it has its priorities and as it became clear throughout the site visit, it carries out its research operations not solely inside the Institute but also within the framework of interests of Olympic and Sport Committees of the RA hence justifying its inclination of becoming a scientific-research centre in the field. A Scientific-Research and Scientific-Informative Units operate at the TLI aimed at implementing strategic interests and priorities of the ASIPC; however, from the perspective of optimal allocation of resources, the expert panel does not consider the existence of two units with almost similar functions expedient. The lack of effectiveness of the strategy reflecting the interests of the Institute in the field of research can result in incomplete disclosure of the issues in the field.

The fact that the ASIPC has determined prior directions of the long-term research operations, presents KPIs of mid and short-term programme implementation, allow the expert panel to conclude that the TLI has a long-term strategy, as well as mid and short-term programmes reflecting its interests. However, the fact that the analyses of precise planning and implementation of programmes as settled in timetable is not completely reflected in the reports can somehow diminish monitoring of organisation of works and the assessment of effectiveness.

It is worth mentioning, that the ASIPC has elaborated an array of procedures, regulations, methodical instructions referring to scientific-research operations, there are certain indicators of research development and renders assistance to students and teachers aimed at ensuring their involvement in research operations. However, the expert panel is of the opinion, that the lack of monitoring of mechanism effectiveness will result in slowing down the operations aimed at improvement.

Notwithstanding the fact that the ASIPC is trying to undertake certain steps aimed at internationalization of its research operations (has become a member of international association of universities of physical culture and sport, organised an international congress), the expert panel is still of the opinion that the lack of international research exchange programmes hinders the mobility of teachers and students. De facto, no international joint research is undertaken. The internationalization of their own research output is at a very low level, which is proved by very rare publications in international reviewed journals and hence, international research cooperation is still quite low and is a challenge for the Institute.

It is worth mentioning, that the TLI has operating mechanisms targeted at linking academic and research operations; however, the expert panel is of the opinion that the lack of effectiveness analyses of the mechanisms can hinder disclosure of issues of linking education and science and further improvement.

**Taking into consideration the fact that** the ASIPC has interests and priorities peculiar to the field, research is not only confined by the Institute itself but encompasses the scope of interests of Olympic and Sport Committees of the RA, the TLI has determined a long-term strategy and mid, short-term programmes (with the involvement of a vast number of teachers and students), has elaborated procedures of implementing research, mechanisms of linking research and education, the expert panel concludes that the ASIPC carries out research operations and ensures the link of the latter with academic process.

**JUDGMENT: The correspondence of the ASIPC institutional capacities to the requirements of criterion 6 is satisfactory.**

## ***VII. INFRASTRUCTURES AND RESOURCES***

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

### **OBSERVATIONS**

**7.1** With the aim of improving and developing the Institute, in its 2011-2015 SP the ASIPC has adopted the goal of developing its material-technical base and providing the latter with up-to-date equipments. The TLI also underlines the fact that the expansion of the current auditorium fund and their technical provision are urgent issues to be considered.

For the provision of its academic procedures, the TLI currently has academic environment, which includes 3 buildings, sport-hall, premises for carrying out sports games, 11 stadiums, 1 open-air playground, laboratories, ambulatory, official web-site as well as swimming pool, tennis court and else on rental basis. There are free Wi-Fi zones at the ASIPC. Moreover, the ASIPC has

a reading-hall and computer rooms all having Wi-Fi coverage. The TLI has two book depositories meant for rendering library services. In certain auditoriums one can also find small seminar libraries, comprised of professional literature. The operations aimed at creating electronic catalogues are in the process. Throughout the recent 3 years considerable allocations have been made aimed at acquisition of new literature. The library fund has 9 new sport journals. An electronic library has been created which still needs stoking and has not yet found wide usage among the students.

In the SER it is stated that the overall surface of auditorium and laboratories is still lower than the normatives settled in the RA: the deficit of the surface of auditorium fund is approximately 55% per student, whereas that of laboratory surface is 95%.

Notwithstanding this data, throughout the site-visit the expert panel noted that the works related to expanding the academic environment, improvement of infrastructures and those of renovation are in process. However, currently, the considerable portion of the building needs renovation, not all APs are provided with necessary resources, in certain ambulatory centres and laboratories the equipments and materials need modernization, the number of computer classes, and those foreseen for interactive learning are but a few.

**7.2.** The ASIPC has determined a policy of financial management and leads its accountancy in accordance with accountancy standards, tax office statute and other normative acts. The rector is the one to carry out financial management (within the framework of responsibilities allocated to him by the ASIPC Charter).

The financial flow of the ASIPC is carried out via 2 directions: 1. budgetary and 2. extra-budgetary, which is mainly allocated from tuition fees and grants. The ASIPC states that the normative expenditures foreseen by state budget allocation mainly are lower than the average expenditures made per student especially in the scenario of rising prices.

Throughout 2011-2015 the financial flows from state budget decreased by 20%, whereas the extra-budgetary flows rose by 12%. Salaries account for more than 70% of budgetary expenditures, the rest is allocated for renovation, equipments, sport utensils and acquisition of computers.

The management of financial resources of the ASIPC is carried out annually. Notwithstanding the fact that corresponding resources are provided, the analyses of the effectiveness of budget allocations in line with SP goals and objectives is missing.

It can be stated that the financial resources of the ASIPC are limited and are not sufficient for carrying out objectives adopted by the SP, this issue is partially regulated by different beneficiaries.

However, it is worth to state, that even within the light of scarce financial resources, the ASIPC is trying to modernise the current material-technical base with little steps.

**7.3.** There is no planning on AP level, however, the requirement of necessary resources for the implementation of APs lies in the base of financial resource allocation. The list of prime resources necessary for the implementation of APs which are handed over by corresponding organisational units underlie annual financial planning. As it was ascertained throughout the site-visit, the regulation on budget formation, financial allocations, monitoring of expenditures and the reports on implementation are carried out in accordance with the spheres of operations of the Institute, which enhances the implementation and continuity of APs. The effectiveness of financial policy is being assessed in Scientific and Management Councils, throughout the reports of the rector.

It is stated in the SER that the Institute has not carried out any audit of its financial-economic operations; however, it became apparent throughout the site visit, that the ASIPC is planning the said operation.

**7.4.** Underlining the importance of raising the quality of academic and research operations, the ASIPC is undertaking steps aimed at modernizing and developing the material-resource base. Throughout the last 5 years the TLI has augmented the expenditures of material-technical and working resources with approximately 10%.

Grant projects have created favourable conditions for reinforcing Institute resources: buying computers, classroom furniture and else. However, the lion portion of undertakings foreseen by the SP (modernization of laboratory equipments, establishment of sport grounds, swimming pool, academic-athletic bases and else) has not been carried out because of insufficient financial resources. These operations are now reflected in 2016-2020 SP. The reinforcement of material-technical base is quite slow.

The observation and review of resources by the expert panel revealed, that at present the resource base of the TLI allows to implement the APs, however, because of being outdated, it cannot guarantee the continuous development of quality, creating risks for the future.

**7.5.** The operations of information and document flow are regulated by the internal rules of discipline.

The TLI has two channels of information transmission: top-down (from administrative bodies to chair via decisions and orders) and bottom-up (from organisational unit to the rector through the mechanism of accountability).

The TLI has elaborated an intra-institutional computer system of document flow, however, it is not thoroughly used.

It is worth mentioning, that throughout the site-visit certain drawbacks have been revealed in the process of documentation, the security system of intra-institute data-base needs improvement. There is an urgent need of IT implementation.

**7.6.** The ASIPC ensures healthy environment of its employees and students by rendering health services through its medical centre, which is also in charge of medical service to be rendered throughout entrance exams.

The ambulatory has its charter and is being financed from the budget of the Institute. It carries out both centralised and decentralised operations (e.g. throughout sport classes duties of medical staff are foreseen). The medical centre has 4 doctors and 5 nurses and the works are being headed by the chief doctor. In case of necessity, the medical centre organised transportation of the injured to hospital. It can be stated that the medical centre carries out its functions and has necessary resources for rendering medical services.

The sanitary-hygienic conditions of the Institute can be evaluated as satisfactory.

With the aim of ensuring the security of the staff evacuation schemes can be found in the Institute. Moreover, there is a guard service in all building of the ASIPC.

At present there are no students with disabilities at the ASIPC. Throughout the meetings with administration, it was stated that currently the infrastructural resources of the Institute are not adapted to the needs of those having disabilities. However, underlining the importance of inclusive education and the fact that the specialization of adaptive physical culture has been implemented at the ASIPC, the Institute is inclined to undertake certain steps in this respect.

**7.7.** The ASIPC lacks procedures and timetable on assessing the effectiveness, applicability and availability of resources rendered to teachers and students. The social surveys conducted among teachers, students and alumni are considered to be assessment tools, however, some part of the said tools has just undergone probation period and has not been implemented at a large scale. Their implementation is foreseen for 2015-2016 academic year.

**CONSIDERATIONS:** Notwithstanding the shortage of financial means aimed at implementing strategic mission and goals, the TLI undertakes certain steps aimed at expanding the surface of auditoriums and laboratories, augmenting the saturation of sport-halls and scientific-research laboratories, improving auditorium conditions, reinforcing library fund via provision of stable investments. In this respect, the works undertaken throughout the recent years are considerable; however, the slow reinforcement of material-technical base hinders the modernization and internationalization of academic process and research operations.

Due to grant policy and investments of beneficiaries the Institute has increased its extra-budgetary financial flow to a certain extent. With the aim of ensuring the stability of financial operations, the Institute strives to augment financial flows and to render their sources more diverse on the one hand and to lead a policy of savings on the other hand. Financial-economic audit is also of utmost importance from this perspective, since it will allow to reveal the weaknesses of financial resource allocation and to take them into account during budget planning.

Document flow and clerical work are regulated, however, as the TLI underlines itself, not all operations and works are being documented, which hinders the process of information analysis.

The medical centre of the ASIPC has its devoted and experienced medical staff and receives financial allocations from the Institute to render health services for the employees and students of the TLI. The ASIPC also undertakes certain steps aimed at ensuring the decent sanitary-hygienic conditions and the security of the staff. At present the TLI does not render any academic services to students with disabilities, the existence of which would highlight the applied importance of the specialization of adaptive physical culture and would enhance the rating of the Institute, moreover, it would augment the flow of the applicants.

The procedures and timetable of tools aimed at assessing the effectiveness, applicability and availability of academic resources still need elaboration and implementation. The lack of the latter can result in drawbacks in financial risk management and incomplete implementation of goals.

**Taking into consideration the fact that** notwithstanding scarce financial means, the TLI has established necessary academic environment for carrying out professional education, ensures safe environment for students and employees by rendering health and security services, has a regulated system of information dissemination and document-flow it can be concluded that the TLI has necessary resources for the establishment of academic environment as well as implementation of determined mission and goals.

**JUDGMENT:** The correspondence of the ASIPC institutional capacities to the requirements of criterion 7 is satisfactory.



## ***VIII. SOCIETAL RESPONSIBILITY***

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

### **FINDINGS**

**8.1** The ASIPC is inclined to raise the effectiveness of mechanisms ensuring societal accountability about academic services rendered, research and resources used.

The TLI has a functioning system of internal and external accountability.

The internal accountability is carried out by means of annual reports of the rector and those of all organisational units. With the aim of raising the effectiveness of the said reports, it is already for three years that the reports presented in the Scientific Council are published and handed over to different units.

External accountability is ensured by means of posting the information about services rendered in the official web-site of the Institute. The compact version of rector's report can also be found there. The report handed over to the Ministry of Education and Science of the RA is also viewed as one of the functioning mechanisms.

**8.2.** The ASIPC considers accountability and transparency of its operations as cornerstones of quality assurance. Having said this, it should be mentioned that the Institute publishes information about its operations and the reports in the official web-site; however, it is worth mentioning that the said info still needs to be enriched.

The ASIPCs keeps an eye on the visits to its web-site and the fact that the number of visits has registered a rising tendency is praiseworthy. The web-site allows to establish a feedback with Institute organisational units. Additional information can be reached by directly applying to corresponding organisational units.

The TLI disseminates information on its operations via the newspapers "Hay Ari" and "Marzashxarh".

**8.3.** Notwithstanding the fact that the Institute lacks a policy and procedures on feedback with the society, the TLI ensures the feedback on different levels via different methods:

- Electronic and paper-based letters to the heads of units as far as the issues related to the academic field is concerned,
- Regular meetings with the rector,
- Cooperation with international establishments, federations and schools.

In the field of science, as a means of feedback with the society, the Institute singles out the links with foreign scientists within the framework of international conferences and international contracts.

It is worth mentioning that the TLI has not undertaken any analyses of the effectiveness of feedback carried out via the official web-site. The mechanisms of providing feedback with the employers and alumni still need amendments and are often but informal.

**8.4.** With the aim of knowledge transfer to the society, the TLI undertakes certain steps, in particular:

- Training courses for civil workers of RA and Nagorno-Karabakh,
- Qualification courses for PhD full and part-time students,
- Consultation courses in the fields of physical culture and sport.

The review of reports showed that as far as the transfer of values to the society is concerned, the TLI has undertaken the following steps:

- The teachers and students of the TLI have jointly carried out certain operations in different organisations for disabled people: “Pyunik” company, “Zatik” Child Centre, asylum.
- They participated in training courses organised for sportsmen, physical culture teachers of the republic,
- □ The leading sportsmen cooperate with sport/athletic schools, are involved in different referee committees of the republic, are members of an array of sport federations.
- Have participated in consultations organised in the Ministry of Sport and Youth of the RA. In this respect, the NGO called “FIMA”, adjacent to the Institute, has its important role.
- The ASIPC undertakes certain works among the pupils of high schools and colleges, rendering consultation services aimed at their professional orientation.

The ASIPC disseminates professional information through published materials, seminars and courses organised and visits of specialists.

As is stated in the SER of the Institute, the TLI does not yet have tools on assessing academic and consultation services.

**CONSULTATION:** The ASIPC has a functioning system of external and internal (bottom-up, top-down) accountability, with the reports of the rector being the core element. The latter includes reports on the operations of all the spheres. Though accountability mechanisms of lower cycles and administration are not precise, the mechanisms of their regular presentation and regulation are not elaborated, it can be stated that accountability is an annual procedure at the ASIPC and bears a regular nature.

The Institute ensures the transparency and accessibility of its operations and procedures through its official web-site, newspapers and information provided by different organisational units. It is worth mentioning, that the information posted on the web-site is not thorough and needs enriching, since otherwise this can diminish the level of interest of stakeholders.

With the aim of establishing and ensuring feedback with the society, the ASIPC has functioning mechanisms and organisational units, however, there are no analyses referring to the effectiveness of its operations and the procedures of improvement emerging from the latter. This hinders the process of making precise judgments about the targeted and effective operations related to the establishment of feedback with external stakeholders and the society.

**Taking into consideration the fact that** that the ASIPC has an established system of internal and external accountability, implements corresponding tools aimed at ensuring the transparency of information dissemination (official web-site, newspapers and else), renders additional academic, consultation and benevolent services with the aim of transferring values to the society, has certain mechanisms of feedback with the society, it can be concluded that the ASIPC ensures a decent level of accountability to the state and the society as a whole.

**JUDGMENT: The correspondence of the ASIPC institutional capacities to the requirements of criterion 8 is satisfactory.**

## ***IX. EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONALIZATION***

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

### **FINDINGS**

**9.1.** Notwithstanding the fact that in its 2011-2015 Strategic Plan the ASIPC aims at ensuring the even development of external relations of the Institute, fostering current tendencies of internationalization and has determined an objective of improving international relations and the effectiveness of using the potential of the Institute making the TLI more competitive in academic-sportive and scientific-pedagogical international market, the determined mission of the Institute does not reflect the current inclinations of internationalization. The expert panel is of the opinion that the Institute is undertaking its first steps aimed at establishing environment targeted at internationalization by joining international associations of physical culture and sports, whereas its policy is still targeted at involving students from Diaspora - the number of the latter still being rather small.

From the perspective of integrating into Bologna processes it is of utmost importance to have international academic and research exchange programmes and to ensure the incoming and outgoing mobility of both teachers and students. However, the said procedures, as well as the ones of academic programme internationalization and implementation of best practice are still in planning. There is a lack of analysis determining international benchmarking. There are no sufficient grounds aimed at elaborating measurable indicators assessing the effectiveness of the TLI operations as well as developing international relations at a national level.

The expert panel is of the opinion that the TLI still lacks systematic approach and policy aimed at creating environment fostering experience exchange, development and internationalization. The latter is limited with the strategic aims and the issues emerging from the latter, the regulation on the operations of the Department of International Relations and hence the ASIPC still has many things to undertake in this respect.

**9.2.** The ASIPC has International Relations Department which aims at developing and expanding international relations. The said Department has its statute the main aim of which is the effective organisation of academic-scientific operations of foreign and PhD students. In this respect, the expert panel is of the opinion that there is a discrepancy between the SP of the Institute and the statute of the said department as far as determined aims are concerned. The whole operations of the Department are as if aimed solely at the admission of students from Diaspora and the organisation of their academic process. Notwithstanding the fact, that the Department carries out its operations based on the decisions made by the Scientific Council and the Rectorate, they do not precisely correspond to the statute articles of the Department. The operations of the Department are summarised through annual reports, however, the latter are rather superficial, do not reveal the needs aimed at internationalization, planning and analyses of operations. Though the ASIPC has

signed a number of contracts on cooperation, contextually they are all alike and do not take into account the peculiarities of separate TLIs. There are no tangible achievements in this respect and no analyses of effectiveness.

The expert panel is of the opinion that the mere existence of the Department does not guarantee the effective and regulated procedure of internationalization unless there are certain academic and research programmes aimed at teacher and student mobility, there is a flow of foreign students and it is clear to what extent the operations of the Institute enhance the implementation of strategic aims.

**9.3.** With the aim of carrying out its academic operations (practical classes, pedagogical, professional and clinical internships) the Institute has signed an array of contracts and cooperates with local institutions and organisations (sport and secondary schools, sport companies and clubs, TV company, editorials, children's rehabilitation centre, Special Rescue Detachment of the RA Rescue Service).

It is worth mentioning that the Institute has signed a vast number of cooperation contracts with foreign TLIs. The said documents encompass the fields of academic, scientific and sport development; however, the expert panel ascertains that there are but a few cases of effective cooperation. Taking into account the considerations expressed hence far, the expert panel states that it is too early to speak about effective cooperation between the ASIPC and international institutions/organisations.

**9.4.** Notwithstanding the fact that there are language courses adjacent to the Department of International Relations (English, Russian) aimed at improving the level of foreign language acquisition of internal stakeholders (teachers, young researchers, students) and the fact that the SER reflects quite high indicators of those stakeholders who have language acquisition throughout 2011-2015, it is impossible to assess the effectiveness of language courses, since throughout the site-visit it was apparent that the level of foreign language acquisition was quite low which was witnessed by students, teachers, alumni and employees.

Though the expert panel had the chance of going through the outcomes of English training of the teachers, the tests were quite simple and hence can neither ensure nor promote international mobility, the implementation of academic and scientific-research international programmes, publications in foreign journals. The expert panel is of the opinion that the ASIPC does not yet ensure the necessary level of foreign language acquisition of its internal stakeholders, which is a serious hindrance from the perspective of the TLI internationalization.

## **CONSIDERATIONS**

It is worth mentioning that the ASIPC has determined a strategic aim of establishing an environment conducive to internationalization. For the realization of the said aim a corresponding department with its statute has been established. However, comparing the aims written in SP and those in the statute it became apparent that the latter only partially reflect the implementation of the aim determined by the SP. The operations of the Department are mainly limited by the admission of students and PhD applicants from the Diaspora and the organisation of academic-scientific operations which results in an incomplete and regulated policy of the strategy on internationalization. The expert panel finds it necessary to make the priorities of internationalization precise. Namely, to determine whether the Institute strives for international coverage, or, as is stated in its mission, is inclined to become an institution having regional importance and role.

The expert panel is of the opinion that the Department of International Relations only partially reveals the needs of the TLI as far as internationalization is concerned, the reports are superficial and do not thoroughly reflect the functions, it is not quite clear which articles determined by signed contracts and cooperation have been carried out and which ones not (or have been shifted to next year). What is more, the lack of effectiveness analyses of the TLI operations in the scope of internationalization as well as that of measurable indicators again do not provide sufficient grounds for the expert panel to conclude that the TLI has no systematic policy conducive to internationalization.

It is worth mentioning that the ASIPC undertakes certain steps aimed at internationalization: becoming a member of international associations, organisation of an international congress, carrying out certain functions within the scope of cooperation (Universities of Louvain, Turkmenistan, USA). However the expert panel ascertains, that unless there are international academic and research exchange programmes, incoming and outgoing mobility of teachers and students (only separate examples can be traced which are but on their own initiative), there is implementation of best practice as far as academic programmes are concerned as well as analyses determining international benchmarking, it will be impossible to state that the ASIPC has an environment conducive to experience exchange, development and internationalization. Moreover, it will be impossible to state that the unit responsible for ensuring internationalization guarantees regulated procedures.

The fact that the ASIPC cooperates with local institutions and establishments with the aim of carrying out the academic process is quite positive, however, the expert panel is inclined to believe that the solution of issues voiced by the employers would enhance the effectiveness of said operations.

However, the same cannot be said about international contracts. The TLI has signed an array of agreements on international cooperation and yet the facts are but a few and do not provide sufficient ground for considerations on the thorough implementation of strategic goals and effective cooperation with international establishments.

Notwithstanding the fact, that generally speaking the TLI creates opportunities for internal stakeholders to improve their knowledge of foreign languages, the effectiveness of the said courses is not visible unless they have tangible influence on the solution of the problem. The expert panel views the low level of foreign language acquisition as worrisome, since it can be a hindrance from the perspective of communication with international establishments and mobility. Moreover, on a large scale the low level of foreign language acquisition hinders the expansion of international cooperation. This issue has been voiced either by internal (students, teachers) or external (alumni, employers) stakeholders. Hence, the expert panel is of the opinion that the TLI must undertake steps aimed at improving the level of foreign language acquisition.

**Taking into consideration the fact that** the ASIPC does not yet have a regulated policy enhancing the establishment of international relations, international academic and research programmes, teacher and student mobility, implementation of best practice on academic programme international benchmarking, visible effectiveness of cooperation with international establishments is but a few, the low level of English is a serious hindrance to the development of international operations, it can be concluded that the TLI does not yet enhance experience exchange and development through its international relations and does not foster the internationalization of the institution.

**JUDGMENT: The correspondence of the ASIPC institutional capacities to the requirements of criterion 9 is unsatisfactory.**

## ***X. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE***

**CRITERION: The TLI has an internal quality assurance system, which promotes establishment of a quality culture and continual improvement of all the processes of TLI.**

### **FINDINGS**

**10.1.** The system of Internal Quality Assurance was implemented in 2012. An array of documents has been elaborated by the Unit of Quality Assurance of Education System with the aim of regulating IQA procedures (IQA policy, IQA regulation procedures and the like). The latter are directed at implementing the mission and aims of the Institute as well as integrating the ASIPC in the EHEA.

The main aims of the QA policy include:

- improvement of the quality of academic services rendered,
- making the intended learning outcomes in line with stakeholders' demands,
- improvement of the holistic quality management.

In 2013 the organisational structure of quality assurance and control underwent certain changes. Within the framework of a grant project provided by the World Bank and Program Implementation Center, the Guide on Internal Quality Assurance has been elaborated and published.

The ASIPC views quality management as an infinitive process and focuses its attention not on a single direction of the policy, but rather at even and equal development of all directions. Myriad vital mechanisms and procedures on quality assurance have been elaborated recently. At present there are a couple of mechanisms aimed at assessing the quality of teaching, teaching staff as well as that of academic programmes. However, it can be stated, that the aforesaid mechanisms, including approaches described in the Guide on Quality Assurance are still in “plan” and partially in “do” cycles and have not been thoroughly implemented and assessed.

Surveys are viewed as core QA mechanisms and yet the latter do not bear systematic and regular nature and their effectiveness has not yet been assessed.

**10.2** The ASIPC allocates human, material and certain amount of financial resources for monitoring IQA procedures. The core organisational units, in charge of carrying out IQA procedures have offices which have been provided with necessary furniture and material-technical resources within the framework of a grant project “Quality Education and Correspondence”.

The Institute allocated certain financial means from its budget aimed at carrying out IQA procedures. 1% of the ASIPC budget is allocated to the QA Department out of which more than 50% is allocated to salaries. The QA Unit has 5 employees: head, inspector, operator, translator/interpreter, computer programmer. Faculty and Chair QA committees have been formed.

Throughout the site visit it became apparent that there are no precise requirements to the professional qualities of the QA unit employees throughout the recruitment process. The

allocation of work among the employees of the said unit is not precise either. No assessment of performance and no procedure aimed at revealing the needs of those responsible for the QA at faculty and chair levels have been conducted hence far. The operator, translator/interpreter and computer programmer cannot be considered as specialists of QA. What is more, one of the latter is doing combine-jobs. It's worth mentioning, that except for its core functions, aimed at QA the Unit undertakes other operations beyond the scope of its primary functions.

The IQA system of the ASIPC is still in the process of formation and it still lacks analyses of satisfaction level with current resources aimed at managing QA procedures.

**10.3** The ASIPC tries to ensure the participation of internal and external stakeholders in QA procedures through the constant involvement of its internal stakeholders (students, representatives of teaching and administrative staff) in different QA committees as well as by ensuring their participation in surveys aimed at assessing courses and satisfaction level with the academic environment. Throughout the meeting with external stakeholders, the latter mentioned that they participate in the process of organising the internships as well as in the works of the committees of State final exams and this is what the Institute views as participation in QA procedures. However, throughout the site visit it became apparent that neither internal nor external stakeholders are duly involved in the QA operations.

**10.4** The QA system of the ASIPC is still in its formation. With the aim of ensuring decent quality of its services rendered, the ASIPC carries out certain operations: formation of QA committee and determination of the concept, elaboration of IQA Guide and policy. However, it can be stated that the QA system is at present being regulated and is still in "plan" cycle, assessment tools and mechanisms are still being created and the PDCA cycle is not yet closed.

The ASIPC has not yet carried out an internal assessment of QA system. The lack of systematic procedures on QA system review is most probably accounted for by the fact that the IQA system is still in its formation.

**10.5** Through its SER the ASIPC is trying to ensure sufficient grounds for the external review of its operations. However, even in the scenario when we view the SER as an internal assessment of the QA aimed at carrying out external review at a national scale, it can be deduced that the said document at times does not provide sufficient grounds and in certain cases even appropriate, precise information and analyses which hinders the effective procedures of external review.

The requirements to data collection, based on which the IQA system would be able to analyse the effectiveness of operations carried out at the ASIPC, are not yet elaborated. The ASIPC foresees the elaboration of monitoring and audit functions of IQA system.

**10.6** The assurance of transparency of QA procedures both for internal and external stakeholders, as an element of the system as a whole, is still in planning.

The transparency is ensured through the public availability of certain documents and reports. The official site and the newspaper of the ASIPC are considered to be the core tools of providing information to internal and external stakeholders as well as ensuring the transparency of its operations. As far as internal stakeholders are concerned, the ASIPC views their involvement in administrative, scientific and faculty councils as means of ensuring transparency.

Notwithstanding the fact, that the ASIPC has posted certain information about the institute (annual reports, SP, academic programmes, regulations), it does not comprehensively reflect the whole volume of institute operations which is the token of the fact that transparency is not yet thorough and needs improvement. The report on QA procedures of academic programs and that of the institution are not yet publicly available.

**CONSIDERATION:** Notwithstanding the fact that the TLI has elaborated a guide on QA, there is a Policy on QA and procedures aimed at ameliorating the quality of academic operations and certain steps have been undertaken aimed at this, certain procedures have been elaborated only recently and the mechanisms aimed at assessing quality education are not yet made precise, whereas the elaboration of the latter would have allowed to assess the process of continuous improvement of all operations and that of the establishment of quality culture as well as to make certain consideration about the effectiveness of operations.

The Institute allocates human and material resources for the management of IQA procedures, however, it is not clear as to how sufficient the said resources are, how their responsibilities and functions are determined and delegated. This issue can be a serious hindrance from the perspective of QA procedures and further development.

Though the TLI has carried out certain operations aimed at data collection and elaboration of tools and mechanisms, the lack of analytical approach of the latter, often the inappropriate and incomplete presentation of information and in certain cases even the incomplete presentation of functions hinders the procedure of external review and well as the implementation of “act” cycle of the PDCA.

The recent launch of QA operations based on the PDCA, the fact that external stakeholders are not yet involved into the said procedures, the incompleteness of information management system as well as incomplete transparency can obstruct the continuous improvement of the TLI operations.

The TLI has a Council on QA and QA Unit and certain operations are being carried out, however, it is not yet possible to talk about IQA system, moreover, to state that the quality culture is formed. It is still but an embryo lacking sufficient grounds for internal analysis and external review.

The TLI has not yet carried out internal assessment of QA system, which would otherwise help the Institute to understand and reveal the weaknesses and mechanisms and review them.

The information posted in the web-site of the Institute cannot yet be considered thorough, which diminishes the transparency of operations carried out by the TLI in front of internal and especially external stakeholders. This, in its turn, would hinder the process of attracting applicants.

**Taking into consideration the fact that** the steps aimed at formulating IQA system are not yet systematic, there are still no holistic approaches characteristic to quality culture of all units, the PDCA cycle is not sufficiently implemented in operations, there is no assessment of quality functions, monitoring and audit, the involvement of external stakeholders in QA procedures is loose, it can be concluded that the IQA system of the ASIPC does not yet foster the establishment of quality culture and the continuous improvement of all operations of the TLI.

**JUDGMENT: The correspondence of the ASIPC institutional capacities to the requirements of criterion 10 is unsatisfactory.**



## OVERALL ASSESSMENT

CRITERIA	CONCLUSION
I. Mission and Goals	Satisfactory
II. Governance and Administration	Unsatisfactory
III. Academic Programs	Satisfactory
IV. Students	Satisfactory
V. Teaching and Support Staffs	Satisfactory
VI. Research and Development	Satisfactory
VII. Infrastructure and Resources	Satisfactory
VIII. Social Responsibility	Satisfactory
IX. External Relations and Internationalization	Unsatisfactory
X. Internal Quality Assurance System	Unsatisfactory

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**Mkrtich Avagyan**  
Chair Expert Panel  
08.06.2016

## APPENDIXES

### APPENDIX 1. CVs OF EXPERT PANEL MEMBERS

**Mktrich Avagyan** – in 1977 graduated from the State Linguistic University after V. Brusov (specialist of English and French). In 2000 undertook a retraining in the State University of Illinois, Chicago (American Studies). Holds PhD in Philosophy, associate professor in linguistics. The topic of his PhD thesis was “Argumentation and Language”.

Since 1979 till 2010 was teaching at Yerevan State Linguistic University after V. Brusov. From 2010 till now is recruited by Armenian State University of Pedagogy after Kh. Abovyan. Since 1987 was a Head of Education Department of Yerevan State Linguistic University after V. Brusov, then Dean of the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Vice-Rector. From 2011-present has been employed by Armenian State University of Pedagogy after Kh. Abovyan as a Head of the Department of Education Reforms and Quality

He is an author of two university manuals and one book meant for schools. Has more than 30 articles on argumentation, American studies, British studies and education management.

Has been a member of ESML of the EC (2008-2010), association of linguistic universities of the CIS (2010), Education directorate of the EC, within the framework of UNESCO, TEMPUS projects has participated in approximately 30 international conferences devoted to modern reforms of education, the problems of quality improvement.

Has participated in the works undertaken within the framework of self-evaluation of ASUP.

**Johat Cloet:** Master of psychological sciences. Since 2013 is a member of evaluation teams in the Framework of the IEP (Institutional Evaluation Program) of the European University Association. Has been ministerial advisor at the Government of the Brussels Region. From 2008-2012 was General Director of Lessius University College as well as Vice- General Director of Thomas More University College. From 2014 till present is the Secretary General of EURASHE (European association of Institutions in Higher Education) and from 2015 till present a member of the General Assembly and the Board of the European Quality Agencies Register (EQAR).

**Gayane Marmaryan:** In 1995 she graduated from the Armenian National Agrarian (ANAU) University and was granted a diploma with honours. Throughout 1995-1998 she completed her PhD studies at the National Academy of Science of RA with specialization in “Biochemistry”. She is a doctor of biological sciences and an associate professor. Since 1998 till present she has been teaching in the Chair of Biology at the ANAU. From 1995 present she carries out scientific works in different regions of Armenia. She is an author of 49 scientific works: 37 scientific articles, 1 monograph (Germany), 9 methodical indications, 1 academic manual, 1 course book. The scope of her scientific research is directed at the examination of biochemical and chemical substance of food.

**Sona Sargsyan:** in 2004 graduated from Yerevan State Medical University after Mkhitar Heratsi (YSMU) and was awarded the degree of clinical studies in ENT. She is a PhD in medical Sciences and an associate professor. Since 2014 has been teaching in the Chair of ENT Diseases of the YSMU. Since 2012 she has been working in “Armenia” medical centre. She has participated in an array of trainings, exchange programmes, scientific conferences both in the RA and abroad. She is an author of academic manuals and course books.

**Davit Petrosyan:** is a 3rd year student at French University of Armenia (Faculty of Management). Has participated in the “ESPAK” project of EU TEMPUS, in the training of student-experts organised by the ANQA.

## APPENDIX 2. SCHEDULE

21.03.2016.-24.03.2016.

	<b>21.03.2016</b>	<i>Start</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1.	Meeting with rector	09:30	10:00	30 minutes
2.	Meeting with vice-rectors	10:10	11:10	60 minutes
3.	Meeting with self-assessment implementation team	11:20	12:20	60 minutes
4.	Meeting with faculty deans	12:30	13:10	40 minutes
5.	Break and closed panel meeting	13:20	14:20	60 minutes
6.	Meeting with the alumni (8-10 people)	14:30	15:30	60 minutes
7.	Meeting with employers (8-10 people)	15:40	16:40	60 minutes
8.	Closed panel meeting	16:50	18:10	80 minutes

	<b>22.03.2016</b>	<i>Start</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1.	Meeting with chair heads	09:30	10:30	60 minutes
2.	Meeting with teachers (including the ones in charge of AP represented in self-assessment)	10:40	11:40	60 minutes
3.	Document review	11:50	12:50	60 minutes
4.	Break and closed panel meeting	13:00	14:00	60 minutes
5.	Resources review (Deans' offices, documentation)	14:10	15:40	90 minutes
6.	Resources review (Chairs, documentation)	15:50	17:10	90 minutes
7.	Closed panel meeting	17:10	18:10	60 minutes

	<b>23.03.2016</b>	<i>Start</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1.	Meeting with Student Council and Student Scientific Council representatives	09:30	10:30	60 minutes
2.	Meeting with BA student representatives (both full and part-time /10-12 people/)	10:40	11:40	60 minutes
3.	Meeting with MA student representatives (both full and part-time /10-12 people/)	11:50	12:50	60 minutes
4.	Break and closed panel meeting	13:00	14:00	60 minutes
5.	Resources review (auditoriums, sport halls, laboratories, cabinets, library, sport club, ambulatory)	14:10	15:40	90 minutes
6.	Meetings in different subdivisions (Career Centre, Foreign Relations Department, Accountancy, HR)	15:50	17:30	100 minutes

	Department, Scientific and Research Centre)			
7.	Closed panel meeting	17:40	18:40	60 minutes

	<b>24.03.2016</b>	<i>Start</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1	Meeting with representatives of Quality Assurance Centre	09:30	10:30	60 minutes
2	Document review	10:40	11:40	60 minutes
3	Meeting with people chosen by the expert panel	11:50	12:50	60 minutes
4	Break and closed panel meeting	13:00	14:00	60 minutes
5	Open meeting/ consultation session with expert panel	14:10	14:40	30 minutes
6	Closed panel meeting	14:50	16:50	120 minutes
7	Meeting with rector	17:00	17:30	30 minutes

### APPENDIX 3. LIST OF OBSERVED DOCUMENTS

N	Document	Cr.
1.	Documents providing evidence of analyses of works carried out among internal and external environment, stakeholders while elaborating the SP.	1.
2.	Annual report of the TLI /those of the rector and infrastructures throughout a year/.	1.
3.	Minutes of Governing Board, Scientific Council, Rectorate as well as the ones of the temporary committee on SP.	1.
4.	2010-2013 organigram of the ASIPS.	2.
5.	Examples of job descriptions.	2.
6.	Samples of the official newspapers published at the ASIPC which hold information about the degrees awarded.	2.
7.	Procedures and grounds of teacher and other stakeholder selection to be involved in the Governing Board and Scientific Council /ensuring transparency/.	2.
8.	State academic standards	3.
9.	Document on the analysis of the benchmarking.	3.
10.	Norms of academic process organisation.	3.
11.	Procedures on regulating the academic process.	3.
12.	The plan of Methodical Council and the minutes	3.
13.	Corresponding analyses of the objectivity of pilot survey aimed at understanding the effectiveness of assessment system and the holistic portrait.	3.
14.	The procedures and grounds ensuring the transparency of admission in part-time studies.	4.
15.	The regulation on admission to MA.	4.
16.	As far as intra-university admission system is concerned, the criteria of exam evaluation.	4.
17.	Samples of consultant operational plans, attainment and the registry of attendance.	4.
18.	Samples of student contracts.	4.
19.	HEI-employee cooperation contracts and a data-base (Career Centre).	4.
20.	Policy/procedure ensuring student participation in research-scientific operations which are a priority for the University.	4.
21.	Samples of joint student-teachers articles.	4.
22.	Student Scientific Union staff and operational plan.	4.
23.	The established regulation and time-table of student application to administration.	4.
24.	Policy on support staff selection.	5.

25.	Chair samples of workload calculation.	5.
26.	Samples of teacher, assistant, associate professor, professor workloads.	5.
27.	Basic education, scientific degree of teachers, the disciplines taught and their experience in the field per chair.	5.
28.	Samples of rating of the quality of operations of the teaching staff.	5.
29.	Manual of materials of research-scientific conferences.	5.
30.	MA theses and graduation papers, their topics /throughout the last 5 years/, samples of works /marked as positive and negative/, reviews, opinions of external stakeholders.	6.
31.	Regulation on writing MA theses.	6.
32.	Manual on international scientific conferences.	6.
33.	Ratified list of articles /grounds/ published in reviewed and cited journals of the CIS and other foreign countries.	6.
34.	Academic-methodical Manuals.	6.
35.	Information of library visits	7.
36.	Institutional budget allocation per strategic directions.	7.
37.	Ratified list of documents to be kept in the faculties.	7.
38.	Ratified list of documents to be kept in the chairs.	7.
39.	Statute on dispensary.	7.
40.	Policy and procedures on modernization of teaching and academic resources.	7.
41.	Examples, analyses and outcomes of feedback promoting the establishment of ties with the society.	8.
42.	Analyses of social impact of consultation and additional academic services rendered to the society.	8.
43.	KPIs and reports of Foreign Relations Department.	9.
44.	A document indicating the overall number of students and teachers participating in exchange programmes.	9.
45.	The involvement of foreign students into preparatory courses throughout the last 5 years.	9.
46.	Categorization (per foreign language acquisition) of students and teachers who dominate a foreign language	9.
47.	A list of HEIs (with corresponding contracts) with which the ASIPC has diplomas and a procedure of academic programme recognition and joint teaching.	9.
48.	Sample of a diploma supplement (two languages)	9.
49.	Reports and suggestions on the operations of the QA Centre presented to the administration (throughout one year).	10.
50.	Minutes of Scientific Council meetings (with the indication of assessment of quality policy implementation)	10.

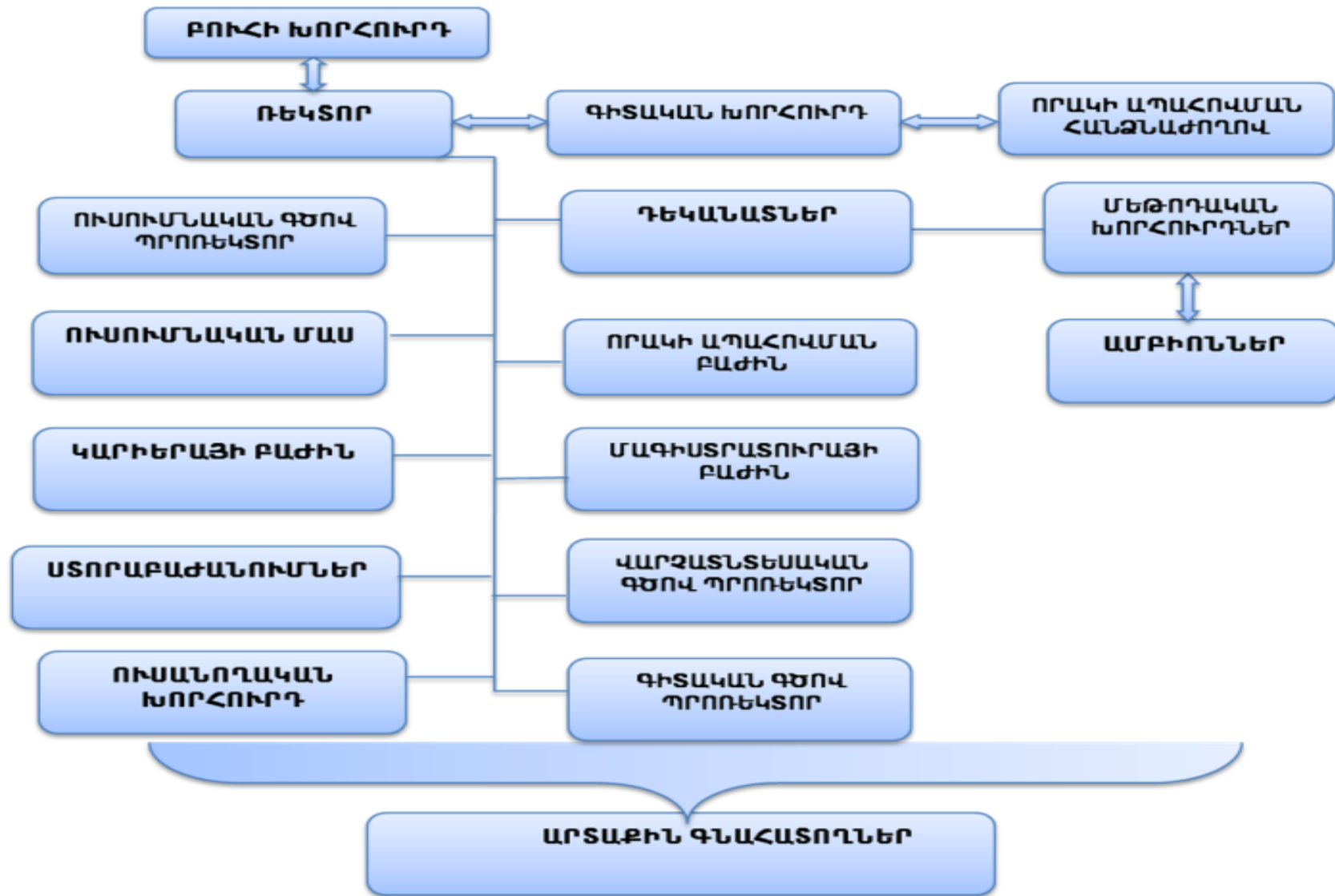
<b>51.</b>	Analyses of training assessment by the participants (carried out by the QA Centre)	<b>10.</b>
<b>52.</b>	Reports and suggestions on the operations of the QA Centre presented to the administration (throughout one year).	<b>10.</b>

## **APPENDIX 4. OBSERVED RESOURCES**

- 1.** Auditoriums
- 2.** Deans' offices
- 3.** Chairs
- 4.** Infrastructures (Career Centre, Department of International Relations, Accountancy, HR Department, General Department, Department of Internships, Education Department)
- 5.** Laboratories
- 6.** Cabinets
- 7.** Sport Halls
- 8.** Computer Labs
- 9.** Aid Station
- 10.** Library



APPENDIX 5. ORGANIGRAM



## **APPENDIX 6. LIST OF ACRONYMS**

1. ANAU – Armenian National Agrarian University
2. ANQA – National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance
3. ASIPC – Armenian State Institute of Physical Culture
4. CC – Career Centre
5. EHEA – European Higher Education Area
6. RA – Republic of Armenia
7. QA – Quality Assurance
8. IQA – Internal Quality Assurance
9. NAF – National Qualification Framework
10. AP – Academic Programmes
11. SP – Strategic Plan