



ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

DECREE N 17

November 3, 2015

On Awarding Institutional Accreditation To “EURASIA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY” LLC

General Information on the Institution

Full name of the Institution: **“Eurasia International University” LLC**
Acronym: **EIU**
Official address: **24/2 Azatutyan str., 0014, Yerevan**
Decree and date Previous Accreditation: **Certificate N 111, 25.08.2004**
without validity period

Guided by the regulation on “State Accreditation of RA Institutions and their Educational Programs” approved by the RA Government on 30 June, 2011 N 978-Ն decree; by RA Government decree N 959-Ն (30 June, 2011) on “Approval of RA Standards for Professional Education Accreditation”; by the Procedure on the Formation and Functioning of Accreditation Committee of “National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance” foundation (ANQA) as well as by ANQA Regulation on the Formation of the Expert Panel, in the open session held on 3 November, 2015, the Accreditation Committee of “National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance” foundation (hereinafter referred to as the Committee) discussed the issue of state institutional accreditation of Eurasia International University (EIU) with the presence of the Chair of the Expert Panel, ANQA coordinator of the accreditation procedure and EIU representatives.

Having examined the self-analysis presented by EIU, the expert panel report, EIU’s action plan for the elimination of shortcomings mentioned in the Expert Panel report as well as ANQA conclusion, the Committee stated the following:

The main phases of the accreditation process carried out following the below-given time-frame:

Submission of the Application **8 October, 2014**

Submission of the Self-assessment report **29 December, 2014**
Site-visit **11-14 May, 2015**
Submission of the Expert panel report **28 July, 2015**
Submission of the Follow-up plan **25 September, 2015**

The expertise was carried out by an Expert Panel formed in compliance with the requirements set forth by the ANQA regulation on the composition of expert panel. The assessment was carried out based in line with 10 criteria of institutional accreditation established by N959-Ն (30 June, 2011) decree on approving RA Standards for Professional Education Accreditation.

When carrying out the evaluation, it has been taken into account that EIU, according to its vision, strives to “Prepare individuals willing for changes who will become innovative, competitive and socially responsible professionals and exemplary citizens”. EIU outlines its mission in three levels:

- 1) **Teaching:** teach according to national standards of quality assurance (QA); implement higher and postgraduate education in Humanities, Social Sciences and IT sectors targeted at labor market demands and needs; create a collaborative environment for stakeholders of education sector fostering the transfer and dissemination of up-to-date knowledge, skills, and competences; develop learning skills among students by means of collaborative methods as well as willingness to adopt novelties and to continuously improve, fostering the assurance of their competitiveness in constantly changing environment.
- 2) **Research:** conduct research on modernization and internationalization of education content, as well as on constant development of the University; conduct applied research aimed at the socio-economic development and internationalization of RA.
- 3) **Services to society:** familiarize wide layers of the society with the results achieved in teaching and research, thus spreading positive experience and acquired knowledge.

EIU underwent accreditation in 2002 according to the State Accreditation Criteria and Regulation valid until 2011. EIU participated in the current accreditation process based on its own application.

EIU is licensed to carry out 4 BA and 4 MA programs in tertiary education, however currently it has 3 BA (Management, Jurisprudence and Foreign Languages) and 2 MA (Management and Jurisprudence) academic programs. The MA program of Jurisprudence is not accredited. The process of describing the courses in line with learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competences) has just initiated. Actually only one among the academic programs (BA program

of Jurisprudence) is elaborated decently due to an external grant program. The academic and course programs, as well as teaching and assessment methods are not clearly directed to the learning outcomes (LOs).

During recent years the student-teacher ratio was from 13 to 15 per teacher, however, now it is 11. Such tendency is worrisome, especially taking into account the fact that EIU has financial shortage as a result of which the University is not able to offer higher salaries in order to encourage the inflow of qualified professionals.

The average age of the teaching staff has increased recently and now it is 44,7 (e.g. in 2011 it was 36.3). The number of specialists having scientific degrees or academic titles is limited. Some members of the teaching staff teach a number of courses. In some cases some contractual specialists are invited who bring their elaborated courses which are not always in line with the demands of curricula of academic programs.

The infrastructure and resources of the University are currently sufficient to provide professional education. Though the University has the opportunity to expand, at present there are certain difficulties related to space; there are not enough conveniences in the sport hall, classes are organized in two shifts, besides, the classes of high school and university are organized simultaneously on the same floor. The main source of financial resources is the education fees of students which are mainly spent on salaries. The small number of students and hence the teacher-student low ratio urges to seek for alternative sources of funding. In this respect the administration of the University is worried about the problem of diversification of financial entries.

EIU is concerned about students' education, student-centered environment and the opinions of students referring to the education provided. The number of applicants has dramatically decreased conditioned by the organization of unified entrance exams. The inflow of students is ensured by the alumni of the Basic College and by transition from part-time to full-time modes of studies. The entrance exams (for part-time and MA studies) at EIU are carried out in the form of interviews. The University manages to reveal the students' education needs through surveys, however, further activities towards meeting those needs are not regulated and targeted. There are certain problems in the procedure of providing additional consultation and assistance to the students. Overall, the students are contented with the University environment, their education and they value the aspiration of the University to provide practical education.

EIU research goals are ambitious albeit not precise. The research is generally not regulated and is circumstantial; there are no topics in the Chairs that would be directly linked to the implementation of academic programs. Though certain steps are undertaken at the University, the participation of students in research is yet limited, which is conditioned by the limited number of research activities carried out in the University. The aspirations towards internationalization of research are noticeable, yet the results are not tangible. Sufficient financial resources are not allocated and the research does not ensure any kind of financial flows.

EIU administration underlines the importance of international cooperation. EIU wants to position itself as an institution which has a high level of internationalization. The visits and trainings organized throughout the recent years within the framework of International consortiums, contracts of cooperation as well as grant projects have contributed to the development of education environment, academic programs and teaching methods. Teaching in foreign languages is quite limited and the level of knowledge of foreign language is still the major issue impeding the process of internationalization.

The current management system is typical to HEIs and is acceptable. It overall corresponds to the EIU strategic goals and objectives. However, separate subdivisions face the problem of not having sufficient human resources. Certain problems are also present on administrative levels related to the division of functions. The transparency and accountability of management are ensured by the availability of documents, internal system of communication and via website. The involvement in different councils, the surveys, regular meetings, the opportunity to apply to different subdivisions and administrative bodies allows to state that both the teachers and students have an opportunity to express their opinions on administrative procedures. The University highlights the examination of internal environment and factors influencing its activities; it has the necessary toolkit for that and has started carrying out evaluations. From the perspective of the principle of holistic quality management invested in 2014, the phases of planning and implementation are dominant in the management system as compared to the phases of evaluation and improvement.

EIU management and staff underline the importance of quality of education provided, though currently it is more conditioned by the accreditation demands. The system of internal quality assurance is in the phase of development. The QA Centre has necessary material and technical resources acquired within the framework of a grant project “Education Quality and Compliance” and yet there is a lack of human resources both in the Centre and in other subdivisions. The QA policy and procedures are presented in the Quality Assurance Guide of

EIU. On the basis of elaborated documents the University can implement regulated procedures of quality assurance.

The University is advised to follow the below mentioned recommendations within the framework of its strategy. The recommendations are meant to assist the University in coping with the issues and problems revealed by the expert panel during the accreditation procedures and foster the further development of the University's activities.

Mission and Goals

- 1) To define a vision which will reflect the main directions of development of the University and will be orientational for the reforms carried out in the University.
- 2) To re-elaborate EIU Qualifications Framework, to review and clarify the mission of the University, to amend the action plan. To give a substantiated definition of targeted values of orientation indicators. To amend the strategic indicators and mechanisms evaluating the effectiveness of accomplishment of strategic goals.
- 3) To ensure involvement of wider range of stakeholders (besides the staff involved in the Governing Board, other potential employers, alumni, NGOs and else) in the processes of elaboration, discussion and approval of Strategic Plan. To clarify and revise the scheme of strategic planning and review, to describe it more precisely involving mechanisms of responsibility and accountability.
- 4) To ensure the close link of the Centre of Career Development and Relation with Employers, the Centre of Quality Assurance, the Department of Public Relations and Advertising, as well as all the Chairs with external stakeholders contributing to their needs assessment and their participation in the process of formation of strategic goals.

Governance and Administration

- 5) To clarify the functions of the Board of Founders and Governing Board by broadening the scope of authorities of the latter ensuring the special autonomy of educational scientific institutions.
- 6) To link the EIU budget with strategic goals in order to prevent the failure of implementation of strategic plan.
- 7) To carry out research and analysis on the effectiveness of management system and the necessity of corresponding reforms.
- 8) To regulate the procedure of applying to different governing bodies and subdivisions (reception hours, reply deadlines and else)
- 9) To clarify mechanisms aimed at assessing and improving the effectiveness of the procedures of internal stakeholders' involvement.

- 10) To turn to multilevel approach of planning by elaborating programs of different duration.
- 11) In addition to regular holistic analysis, to elaborate and implement regulations on monitoring most important factors. To review the frequency of examination and analysis of factors affecting the University.
- 12) With the aim of further improvement of the quality management of administration, to elaborate and implement measurable indicators of evaluation, which will reflect the quality of administration.
- 13) To invest mechanisms of accountability in all levels.
- 14) To foresee the regular implementation of comparative analysis of EIU activities aimed at objective evaluation and improvement of their effectiveness.
- 15) To elaborate mechanisms of evaluating the level of awareness of the stakeholders. To make accessible the information on the content and quality of education programs.

Academic Programs

- 16) To clarify the learning outcomes of academic programs and to ensure the link between the courses and those learning outcomes.
- 17) To give detailed information about the assessment, teaching and learning methods and to substantiate their alignment.
- 18) To justify the weight of assessment components. To make the assessment system and criteria in concord with learning outcomes of the academic programs.
- 19) To elaborate a fundamental procedure of regular review of academic programs by benchmarking. To carry out the procedure of revealing the opinions of partner universities or joint research on the compliance of the content of academic programs.
- 20) To define the principles of GPA calculation.

Students

- 21) To analyze the composition of applicants and to direct the actions aimed at promotion of admission mostly towards potential applicants. To carry out qualitative research of the mechanisms of admission and recruitment with the aim to evaluate the effectiveness of the applied policy.
- 22) To review the procedures aimed at regulating the process of revealing the academic needs of the students by setting precise schedule, developing valid toolkit and determining the mechanisms affecting decision-making. To carry out analysis of the effectiveness of mechanisms revealing the needs of the students.
- 23) To define a regulation and schedule for students to apply to the administrative staff. To elaborate a precise regulation on accepting oral and written appeals from the students, the discussion of the latter and provision of the feedback. Also, to elaborate mechanisms for the

evaluation of these procedures, to carry out analysis with the aim to reveal the effectiveness of corresponding policy.

- 24) To elaborate a precise mechanism for involving the students in scientific-research activities. To elaborate mechanisms of encouraging students to be involved in scientific research activities. To establish a Student Scientific Union.
- 25) To reveal and analyze the reasons of low level of awareness and satisfaction of students and to elaborate a program of improvement in accordance with the acquired results.
- 26) To elaborate a mechanism of accountability of the activities of student advocacy which will make it possible to register the results of its activities.
- 27) To elaborate and implement alternative approaches aimed at evaluation of the quality of services to society which will either state or clarify the survey results.
- 28) To establish a unit which will unite the alumni with the aim to enhance the quality of provided education services and to foster students' career development.

Teaching and Support Staff

- 29) To review the current requirements defining precise professional qualities for the teaching staff in accordance with requirement of academic programs.
- 30) To develop mechanisms of evaluating the effectiveness of training among teaching staff with the aim to find out to what extent it promotes teaching and learning.
- 31) To develop mechanism ensuring evaluation, promotion and improvement of the activities of administrative and support staffs.
- 32) To elaborate professional criteria for attestation and improvement mechanisms for administrative and support staffs.
- 33) To examine the necessity of establishing a Trade Union.

Research and Development

- 34) To elaborate a separate strategy on the organization of scientific research activities at the University.
- 35) To activate the implementation of research programs of applied nature considering them not as an expenditure but a means of income. From this prospective of elaborating mechanisms aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of implementation of research programs at the same time evaluating the formation of research competences among learners.
- 36) To pay more attention to the development and implementation of joint research programs.
- 37) To review the distribution of responsibilities for the implementation of scientific research activities at the University considering the opportunity of formation of new cycles.

Infrastructure and Resources

- 38) To develop mechanisms for the examination of teaching staff's satisfaction with resources.
- 39) To carry out financial planning adjacent to the Strategic Plan according to strategic priorities and planned activities as well as foreseeing financial inflows.
- 40) To develop mechanisms aimed at determining the priorities of financial allocation.
- 41) To carry out analysis due to which it will be possible to justify the correspondence of the University's resource base with the requirements of the academic programs and the implementation of Strategic Plan.

Societal Responsibility

- 42) To clarify and regulate the mechanisms of accountability of junior administration and the staff.
- 43) To carry out needs assessment among other layers of society (not only students) with the aim of evaluating the effectiveness of mechanisms ensuring publicity.
- 44) To develop mechanisms of promoting feedback, especially those received from employers.
- 45) To develop methods for the evaluation of achievements and the effectiveness of mechanisms applied for formulating links with the society.

External Relations and Internationalization

- 46) To develop a concept or a policy on internationalization of EIU based on which concrete action plans of the subdivisions dealing with internationalization will be elaborated. The action plans will include short-term and long-term activities as well as methodology of monitoring and evaluation of the latter
- 47) To pay more attention to the cooperation with local institutions; firstly with potential employers and scientific educational institutions. To determine the policy of establishing links with local organizations.
- 48) To develop mechanisms aimed at ensuring and evaluating the purposefulness of external links and their connection with the academic process.

Internal Quality Assurance System

- 49) To implement an evaluation of effectiveness of determined QA policy and procedures. To carry out analysis of the effectiveness of QA system at the University.
- 50) To involve teaching staff and student representatives in QA processes. To cooperate with the Student Council and the alumni. To broaden the participation of employers in QA processes. To carry out needs assessment among external stakeholders and make analysis.
- 51) To carry out needs assessment among administrative and support staff and make analysis.
- 52) To carry out analysis of the effectiveness of mechanisms applied for dissemination of information about QA processes.

Observing the presented package of documents and considering the opinions of head of the Expert Panel and other representatives, the Accreditation Committee finds that the EIU mainly fulfils the primary objective – to create a corresponding academic environment to assure vocational education. The shortcomings brought forward in the fields of **“Teaching and Support Staff”** and **“Research and Development”** reflect the full implementation of academic programs and preparation of alumni with research skills in MA programs. This is a result of the fact that the strategic research goals and directions of the University are not clarified on the one hand, and because of financial problems few members of teaching staff carrying out research are involved in educational process and who can ensure students’ participation in suchlike activities. The University has the policy of ensuring specialists who can provide practical education and this is commendable, however, the practice of making invited teacher adapt with the curriculum can put the purposeful implementation of academic programs under danger. Among problems identified in the field of **“Academic Programs”** non-consistent implementation of developed academic programs by the teaching staff as well as non-consistent maintenance of criteria of students’ assessment and qualification award can also be mentioned.

The slow sharing of best practice (in processes relating to program design, application of student-centered approaches, etc.) obtained as a result of innovative changes being made at the University as well as the lack of staff’s awareness about those changes must be alarming for managers of internal QA system and administration of the University. Otherwise the problems identified in the aforementioned fields can be risky for the development of the University.

The elimination of shortcomings mentioned in the Expert Panel report and the implementation of the proposed recommendations will ensure the student-centered and research nature of provided education services as well as the comparability with international standards which is in line with the University’s ambitions.

Taking into account the recommendations, the University has developed a “Action plan on elimination of shortcomings mentioned in the Expert Panel report”. The implementation of the action plan mainly does not contain any risks and is directed to the further development of the University.

Taking into consideration that the University can eliminate the shortcomings mentioned in the Expert Panel report by using its internal QA mechanisms of its internal quality assurance as well as implement the recommendations in reasonable time period, as a result of voting the Committee:

DECIDED

1. To award Eurasia International University a **Conditional Institutional Accreditation with a 2 /two/ year period.**
2. Within two months after the publication of the Decree on Awarding Institutional Accreditation to submit an action plan on elimination of shortcomings mentioned in the Expert Panel report and corresponding time-schedule to ANQA taking into account:
 - a. the necessity of finding solutions primarily to the problems existing in the fields of **“Academic Programs”, “Teaching and Support Staff” and “Research and Development”;**
 - b. the results and recommendations of the peer-review according to international standards.
3. In order to improve the activities of the University in line with current demands it is necessary to pay special attention to the reinforcement of linkage and learning and research, the alignment of teaching methods and intended learning outcomes of academic programs, recruitment of teaching staff, mobility of students and teaching staff as well as internal quality assurance.
4. According to the requirements of clause 12.3 of the Regulation on “State Accreditation of RA Institutions and their Educational Programs” every 6 /six/ months to submit a written report to ANQA on the results of the carried out activities.

Chairman of the Accreditation Committee

November 10, 2015

Yerevan

V. Urutyán