



ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

ANQA-2021/54

DECREE N 54

19 June 2021

ON ACCREDITATION OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES OF ARMENIAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS

General Information about the Institution

Full name of the Institution:	“Armenian State University of Economics” SNCO /ASUE/
Official Address:	128-130 Nalbandyan, Yerevan, Republic of Armen 77 Paruyr Sevak, Yerevan, Republic of Armenia
Previous Accreditation decision and date:	Institutional Accreditation 4 years (21.05.2015թ. - 21.05.2019)

Guided by the regulation on the “State Accreditation of RA Education Institutions and their Academic Programs” approved by the RA Government Decree N 978-N as of 30 June 2011; by the RA Government Decree N 959-N as of 30 June 2011 on the “Approval of RA Standards for Professional Education Accreditation”; by the procedure on the “Formation and Functioning of the Accreditation Committee of the ‘National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance’ Foundation (hereinafter referred to as ANQA)” as well as by the regulation on the “Formation of the Expert Panel of ANQA”, the ANQA Accreditation Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Committee) discussed the issue of accreditation of institutional capacities of the “Armenian State University of Economics” SNCO (hereinafter referred to as ASUE, the University) in the session of the Accreditation Committee held on 19 January 2021.

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

Submission of application:	14 June 2018
Submission of self-evaluation:	13 May 2019
Site-visit by the expert panel:	7-12 October 2019
Submission of expert panel report:	7 June 2021
Submission of action plan on the elimination of shortcomings:	11 June 2021

The expertise on the institutional capacities of the “Armenian State University of Economics” SNCO was carried out by an independent expert panel formed in compliance with the requirements

set by the regulation on the “Formation of the Expert Panel of the ANQA”. The evaluation was carried out according to the 10 criteria of institutional accreditation approved by the RA Government Decree N 959-N as of 30 June 2011.

Among 10 criteria of the institutional accreditation, 4 of them - “**Governance and Administration**”, “**Faculty and Staff**”, “**Research and Development**” and “**Internal Quality Assurance System**” were evaluated as unsatisfactory.

Studying the ASUE self-analysis, the expert report, the remarks and suggestions of the University on the preliminary version of the report, the action plan for eliminating the shortcomings mentioned in the report, the reference on the activities under performance provided by the University, additionally, hearing the conclusions (formed as a result of the meetings of the expert group members with the ASUE representatives) of the three members elected by the Head of the committee, as well as the observations and suggestions of the committee members, the committee underlined the following:

After undergoing the process of institutional accreditation in 2014, and taking into account the consultations received within the process, ASUE made an improvement action plan.

The University has made changes aimed at improving a number of areas, but some of the actions envisaged by the previous accreditation process follow-up plan, which relate in particular to the goals of the SP, the development of indicators to assess the effectiveness of ASUE activities, the use of mechanisms for selecting academic staff, etc. were not carried out.

1. ASUE mainly ensures reliable awarding of qualifications.

The academic programs have been radically reformed since the previous accreditation and their content ensures training of graduates who are armed with modern and practical skills, and correspond to the requirements of the NQF and those of the employers.

The development of the academic programs is based on the experience of a number of foreign universities. However, the University does not yet have a policy for monitoring, improving and evaluating the effectiveness of the academic programs, as well as a policy to align its teaching, learning and assessment methods with the set learning outcomes, though certain steps are now being taken to address the latter.

Material and technical equipment contributes to the training of staff.

However, there are problems with the composition of the academic staff, many issues are still in the planning stage, and the newly developed regulations are still being drafted and not yet implemented, and most of the actions envisaged by the follow-up program in this area after the previous accreditation have not been implemented.

2. The management and QA systems mainly support the improvement of reliability of qualifications awarding.

The frequent changes in ASUE management system of recent years have affected the strategic governance, the change in the management staff has led to the change in the priority directions of development, as a result of which the implementation of the follow-up program is incomplete.

The institution has a redefined mission, Strategic Plan for 2018-2022 that defines priority areas and is the revised version of the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan, clarifies the strategic goals of the institution and the priority areas emphasizing the practical, research and internationalization components of its activity. However, there are no clearly defined key performance indicators, while the existing KPIs operate only at the level of separate subdivisions of ASUE.

There is an unclear distribution of powers among ASUE management system, external stakeholders are not involved in the processes of improving the management system.

Data collection mechanisms are not yet effective, there are no med-term and risk assessment components for the planning system, the principle of quality assurance in management (PDCA) is not fully implemented.

The reports were not made based on the Strategic Plan, and only now an attempt is being made to review accountability.

The decentralization of the quality assurance system has led to certain problems, such as a reduction in the significance of the quality assurance center, which is currently under the attempt of transformation.

3. The internationalization and research/creative activity have development tendencies.

The research environment existing at the institution does not yet ensure the status of an applied research university. "Amberd" research center does not yet fully ensure the existence of a research environment at the institution.

There was no institutional research strategy with short-term and medium-term planning together with implementation schedule within the reporting period, though some activities have been done addressing this issue, in particular by some staff members of the Amberd Research Center and those of the chairs. Students were insufficiently engaged in them.

The university has developed cooperation with national and international partners for the recent years. This is evidenced by the increase in the number of students and lecturers in mobility programs, as well as the increased number of cooperation contracts. However, the influx of foreign students remains insufficient.

The steps of internationalization have provided some positive results, in particular as a result of benchmarking for the improvement of academic programs.

ASUE carries out irregular and incomplete inquiries, through which the issues related to internal stakeholders were partially brought forward, though the feedback with external stakeholders was insufficient during the reporting period.

4. There are shortcomings, which do not have a key impact in terms of awarding a credible qualification, there exist grounds for improvement.

5. The program presented by ASUE to eliminate the shortcomings mentioned in the expertise report is mainly realistic. Although not all consultations have been fully included in the follow-up plan, budget allocations are not clearly indicated for almost any goal, the implementation of the planned actions will lead to significant qualitative changes.

Taking into consideration the above mentioned, as a result of an open voting, the Accreditation Committee

DECIDED

1. **To award institutional accreditation** to the "Armenian State University of Economics" SNCO for **4 /four/ years**.

2. After the publication of the decision on accreditation award, to submit the reviewed action plan on the elimination of shortcomings mentioned in the expert panel report and respective time-schedule to ANQA within two months taking into account:

- the urgent need to give solutions primarily to the problems existing in the fields of "Governance and Administration", "Faculty and Staff", "Research and Development", and "Internal Quality Assurance System";

- the necessity to clarify the measurability of progress indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of the processes implemented by the University,
 - the necessity to clarify the amount of envisaged financial means and the deadlines set for the assessment and implementation of the processes carried out by the University.
3. To pay special attention to:
- the clear distribution of powers in the management system, the involvement of external stakeholders in the management system improvement processes,
 - the enhancement of outcome-based management system,
 - the implementation of analysis, reports based on clear quantitative and qualitative data,
 - the establishment of the principles for measuring the quality of research, the strengthening of the link between learning and research,
 - the identification of research priorities, the development of the strategy.
4. To organize internal audit of academic programs provided by the University ensuring the engagement of external experts.
5. In accordance with the requirements set by the Clause 12 of the regulation on the “State Accreditation of RA Education Institutions and their Academic Programs”, every 2 /two/ years to submit a written report to the ANQA on the results of carried out activities by ensuring the evaluation of improvement of the University’s activity, innovations and achievements.
6. To assign the ANQA to carry out mandatory monitoring of efficiency of the ASUE activity in accordance with the KPIs.

Chairman of the Accreditation Committee:

19 June 2021

Yerevan

A. Saghyan