Appendix
Decision N 4_L of the Board of Trustees of the "National Center
for Professional Education Quality Assurance"
foundation, May 5, 2025

PROCEDURE
ON THE SUBMISSION OF COMPLAINTS CONCERNING THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS OF THE "NATIONAL CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE" FOUNDATION

1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The procedure for the submission, reviewing and decision-making on complaints from the stakeholders (hereinafter referred to as the "Procedure") of the "National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance" foundation (hereinafter referred to as the "ANQA") is hereby established.
2. This Procedure has been developed in compliance with the requirements of the Statute on State Accreditation of Tertiary Level Institutions and their Academic Programmes in the Republic of Armenia (hereinafter referred to as the "Accreditation Statute"), the Manual for the External Review of Tertiary Level Institutions of RA (hereinafter referred to as the "Manual"), the Code of Ethics and Conduct of "National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance" foundation (hereinafter referred to as the "Rules") and ANQA's other internal legal acts related to the accreditation processes.
3. This Procedure aims to support ANQA's stakeholders in exercising their right to submit a complaint, ensuring the uninterruptedness and continuous enhancement of external quality assurance processes.
4. Key terms used in this Procedure:

Complainant - the head of a higher or vocational education institution undergoing the accreditation process, or their authorised representative.

Complaint - the written disagreement submitted by the stakeholders regarding procedural or ethical violations that occurred as part of ANQA's accreditation process.

Electronic information database - an electronic database maintained by ANQA, containing complaints about accreditation processes, related documents and decisions made. The data is stored for at least three years. The procedure for the database updates and the appointment of responsible person are set by the director's decision.

Responsible Employee - a person appointed by the Director's order to receive and register the complaints, monitor their status and provide the complainant with the necessary final information on the complaint.

Complaint Recipient - ANQA, the entity to which the complaint is submitted.

2. PROCEDURE ON THE SUBMISSION, HANDLING, REVIEW AND DECISION-MAKING ON COMPLAINTS

2.1 SUBMISSION OF COMPLAINTS

5. Complaints may be submitted within 20 days from the date of occurrence of the fact that served as the basis for the complaint, with the exception of complaints about site visit, which shall be submitted within one working day.

6. Complaints may be submitted in person in paper form, (address: 16, 9/1 Kievyan St., Yerevan, Republic of Armenia), by mail or email (secretariat@anqa.am).

7. Complaints addressed to ANQA shall be registered in an electronic database maintained by ANQA's Secretariat. The Responsible Employee shall send the registered complaint to ANQA's Complaint Panel (hereinafter referred to as the "Complaint Panel") within one working day, while the complaint about site visit shall be forwarded immediately upon receipt.

8. ANQA's electronic database of complaints shall be maintained by the Responsible Employee.

9. Complaints may be submitted concerning all stages of the accreditation process, except for the the Accreditation Committee's decisions, which are regulated by the Procedure on the Formation and Operation of the Accreditation Committee of the "National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance" foundation.

2.2. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SUBMISSION OF COMPLAINTS

10. Complaints shall include at least the following information:

1) the full name, organisational-legal form and requisites of the Complainant, as well as the details of the education institution's authorised representative;

2) a clearly formulated written complaint, detailing the issue and the provision of the violated legal act;

3) any relevant evidence supporting the complaint, if available.

2.3. HANDLING, REVIEWING AND DECISION-MAKING ON COMPLAINTS

11. The complaint shall not be reviewed in case:

1) the grounds for the complaint are either absent or insufficient;

2) the complaint is submitted for the same case on the same grounds and subject matter;

3) the timeframe for submitting a complaint set by this Procedure has expired;

4) the Complainant has not followed the complaint requirements set forth in point 10 of this Procedure;

5) the written complaint is not signed by the head of the education institution or his/her authorised representative or the date of complaint submission is not indicated;

6) the fact outlined in the complaint falls beyond the scope of ANQA's activities;

7) the year, month and date of the complaint are missing,

8) the complaint is signed by an unauthorized person, or the letter of authorization is not attached to the complaint;

9) the name of the body to which the complaint is submitted is not indicated.

12. For the handling, reviewing, and decision-making on complaints, a Complaint Panel shall be formed by order of ANQA's Director. The Panel shall consist of a lawyer, the head of the Institutional and Programme Accreditation Division, the head of the Secretariat, and, upon necessity, one employee from each of ANQA's divisions (by agreement), while upholding the principle of excluding conflicts of interest.

The Complaint Panel shall be formed within one working day upon receipt of the complaint.

13. The Complaint Panel's members cannot participate in the review of a complaint against their actions and shall recuse themselves.

14. The Complaint Panel shall thoroughly examine the issues raised in the complaint and the evidence of violations or disagreements, hear the Complaint Recipient, the Complainant, and render an independent decision.

The hearings shall not be open to the public, and the parties shall be required to uphold confidentiality.

15. The Complaint Panel shall review the complaint within 10 days of its submission to ANQA. As a result of the review, a written response shall be prepared on the elimination of the violation that caused disagreement. The decision to leave the complaint without review shall be made within one working day and the Complainant shall be notified thereof.

16. The review process shall be deocumented and maintained by ANQA's Secretariat.

17. The Complaint Panel shall make a decision on the complaint by consensus. The decision shall be made in writing, be final and not subject to further complaint.

18. The response to the complaint shall be provided to the stakeholder within one working day from the decision date, either by mail, in person, or by the same means as the complaint is received.

3. FINAL PROVISIONS

19. Amendments and additions to this Procedure shall be made by ANQA's Board of Trustees upon the presentation of ANQA's director.

20. This Procedure shall enter into force upon its publication.