



National Center For Professional
Education Quality Assurance
Foundation

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

ANQA-2021/40

DECREE N 40

15 January 2021

ON ACCREDITATION OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES OF VANADZOR STATE UNIVERSITY AFTER HOVHANNES TUMANYAN

General Information about the Institution

Full name of the Institution: ‘ ‘Vanadzor State University after Hovhannes
Tumanyan ‘ ‘ Foundation

Official Address: 36, Tigran Mets street, Lori region,
Republic of Armenia, 2001

Previous Accreditation decision and date **4 years (10.10.2015-10.10.2019)**

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 Vanadzor State University after H. Tumanyan (hereinafter referred to as VSU or Institution or University) in the session of the Accreditation Committee held on 15 January 2021.

Having examined the VSU's self-evaluation, comments and suggestions on the draft report of

the expert panel, the expert panel report, the VSU's action plan on the elimination of shortcomings mentioned in the expert panel report, having heard the conclusions on the expert panel evaluation of the Institution which were made by the three members selected by the Chairman of the Accreditation Committee and were formed as a result of the meetings with the expert panel members and VSU's representatives; as well the comments and suggestions made by the Accreditation Committee members, the Committee stated the following:

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

Submission of application: 13 December 2018

Submission of revised

self-evaluation of the Academy: 28 October 2019

Site-visit by the expert panel: 9-12 December 2019

Submission of expert panel report: 5 March 2020

Submission of action plan

on the elimination of shortcomings: 11 May 2020

□The expertise of the VSU was carried out by an independent¹ expert panel formed in line with 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 decree.

While carrying out the expertise the expert panel took into consideration the fact that in line with its 2014-2018 Strategic Plan and its misión, the VSU strives to “ensure sustainable development, puts the policy of revealing the needs off its stakeholders in the foundation of its academic and research operations, to prepare competent professionals who would have fundamental and applicable knowledge and skills, where the student acts as a subject of academic process, accepting its responsibility towards the society, encourages the continuous development of the individual, creates favourable conditions for formulating a multi-faceted individual”.

Taking into consideration the recommendations of the previous accreditation, the VSU has made improvements in a number of areas. Among 10 criteria of the institutional accreditation, two of them – “**Government and Administration**” and “**Research and Development**” were evaluated as unsatisfactory.

- *The university mainly provides credible qualifications*

Having received the status of a University, VSU has expanded the scope of its Academic Programs. The new Academic programs that have been developed and implemented are generally in line with the needs of the regional labor market. At the same time, the university emphasizes pedagogical professions, as the university has always provided the region with those specialists. At present, it is planned to develop natural sciences and IT specialties in order to be in demand with the needs of the labor market. During the last five years, the educational programs of all specialties implemented at VSU have been reviewed as a result of an internal audit carried out by the Quality Assurance Center of the University. However, the conclusions drawn from this large-scale study are general and non-targeted in terms of solving identified problems or pointing out ways of solution.

In recent years, the university has made efforts to achieve visible success in improving and enriching the university's resources.

In order to achieve the goals of the Academic programs, VSU is provided with a teaching staff with the necessary professional qualities. There is a large number of graduates of the VSU (134 members), 77 of which have academic degrees. As a financial lever, the teaching staff receives a surcharge based on professional experience.

- ***Management system and quality assurance system mainly help to improve the credibility of awarding qualifications.***

VSU generally realizes its mission as a university, the main regional educational institution. Being the legal successor of the pedagogical institute, the university still has a emphasized pedagogical mission, providing about 70% of the pedagogical staff of the region.

VSU has experience in developing and implementing a strategic plan. The evaluation of the previous strategic plan was carried out according to the key evaluation indicators and efficiency indicators, as a result of which the medium-term planning for the next three years of the university was defined. The lack of a new strategic plan was due to the vacancy of rector during that period.

The university does not provide effective management, the administration and administration needs immediate reforms, the existing problems affect all other areas.

The newly appointed management of VSU realizes the need to reform the management system to solve the problems facing the university. A new strategic plan has already been developed, the organizational structure of the university is being reviewed, and it is being aligned with the strategic goals.

The management system is in the process of redevelopment, there are development tendencies, the management is aimed at improving the quality and credible awarding of qualifications.

- ***The internationalization and research/creative activity have development tendencies***

and they support the awarding of reliable qualifications.

VSU has not implemented a clear strategy expressing its interests and ambitions in the field of research. Only separate events were held, in particular conferences, implementation of research projects. The total number of international research publications reaches to 82 by VSU lecturers for 2015-2018. The research potential of the PD staff still retains its pedagogical orientation. Nevertheless, the university management is currently focusing on becoming a research center in the country, which will include not only pedagogical but also fundamental disciplines.

The process of internationalization in VSU is mainly carried out only within the framework of programs with sources of external funding, there is no clear policy or procedures developed to encourage the establishment of foreign relations.

4 . Existing deficiencies do not have a key impact on the credibility of the qualification, and grounds for improvement are created.

5 . The program presented by the university to eliminate the shortcomings mentioned in the expert report is mostly realistic and does not contain any risks. The reforms planned by the program, in all probability, will lead to qualitative changes.

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

DECIDED

- **To award institutional accreditation to the “Vanadzor State University after H. Tumanyan” Foundation for 4 /four/ years.**
- 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 "**Government and Administration**" and "**Research and Development**"
 - the need 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 financial means allocated to the ongoing processes taken by the University and for the assessment and the envisaged financial resources;
 - the international expert's peer-review results regarding the CMSA's ambitions to be integrated into the European Higher Education Area.
- To pay special attention to:

- clarification of the mission
 - Implementation of reports based on clear quantitative and qualitative data;
 - Carrying out systematic analysis of the external environment
 - Strengthening the link between learning and research,
 - Improving a productive management system
 - Identifying research priorities, developing an internationalization strategy
- Organize an internal audit of the academic programs of the specialty implemented at VSU with the involvement of external experts.
 - 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 6 /six/ months to submit a written report to the ANQA on the results of carried out activities by ensuring the evaluation of improvement of the Academy’s activity, innovations and achievements
 - To assign the ANQA to carry out mandatory monitoring of efficiency of the CVSU's activity in accordance with the KPIs.

Chairman of the Accreditation Committee:

A.Saghyan

15 January 2021

Yerevan