



ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

ANQA-2021/49

DECREE N 49

June 2, 2021

**ON ACCREDITATION OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES OF SHIRAK REGIONAL STATE
COLLEGE**

Full name of the Institution: Shirak Regional State College SNPO
Official Address: 4 Manushyan, Gyumri, Shirak, RA
Previous Accreditation decision and date: not available

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 Shirak Regional State College (hereinafter referred to as College) in the session of the Accreditation Committee held on June 2, 2021.

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

Submission of application	July 14, 2020
Submission of the self-evaluation	October 23, 2020
Site-visit by the expert panel:	December 1-4, 2020
Submission of expert panel report	February 1, 2021
Submission of follow-up plan	February 12, 2021

The expertise of the College 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**”, “**Research and Development**”, “**External Relations and Internationalization**”, “**Internal Quality Assurance System**” were evaluated as unsatisfactory.

Having examined the Collage’s institutional capacities, remarks and suggestions on the draft report of the expert panel, the expert panel report, the follow-up plan, having heard the conclusions on the expert panel evaluation of the College 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 the educational institution’s representatives; as well the comments and suggestions made by the Accreditation Committee members, the Committee stated the following:

1. There are problems in terms of credible award of qualifications, but trends for the progress and examples are in place.

Though there are obvious issues, the TLI to some extent ensures the credible award of qualifications. The educational process of the College is carried out in accordance with the academic standards and as it has not developed academic programmes for itself (except for the professions Tourism and Advertising), the College professions are in line with the professions of other Colleges in the country. Meanwhile, the development of the academic programmes would contribute to the formation of a collective profile of the graduate and the implementation of outcome-based teaching. There is a need to clarify the outcomes. No benchmarking was performed with similar programmes abroad.

The teaching staff of the College use a variety of interactive teaching methods that have been enriched through online teaching. Some of them are quite modern and contribute to the creation of a student-centered environment.

However, there are no clear mechanisms for evaluating the effectiveness of the choice of the academic programmes and teaching methods.

However, it is positive that during the final attestation, students can take an exam or submit a thesis, which are often supervised by employers.

The College’s teaching staff is recruited with professionals that have practical experience. Employers also teach in the College. They have practical experience in the relevant professional field. There are many young lecturers.

A procedure for the evaluation of the professional qualities of teachers and their work has been developed, but it does not work yet.

Despite the fact that the renewal of the College’s resources does not take place on a regular basis, there is a sufficient educational environment for the implementation of professions. At the same time, it should be noted that in the context of the reduction of funds allocated to the College from

the budget, the lack of material-technical base necessary for the implementation of the College's professions is filled with grant programmes. Employers, especially in dual education, are willing to share their resources.

The College's governing bodies making efforts for the improvement of the resource base, teaching and learning systems.

2. Governance and quality assurance systems are at the stage of formation, but there are trends for development and the governance is directed towards quality improvement and credible award of qualifications.

The mission is defined differently in different documents. There is no document that will substantiate the need for change.

In previous strategic plans, there were no indicators to evaluate the implementation of the goals and key performance indicators of their effectiveness. The College has never evaluated the performance of the strategic plan, which made the implementation of the goals and mission risky. But with its strategic plan 2021-2023, the College set outcomes, indicators for their verification; developed an action plan that can contribute to the effective strategic management and regular evaluation of goals achievement.

Short-term and mid-term plans are not generally interconnected with the College's strategic plan. The lack of an internal monitoring directed to the performance and evaluation system does not allow the evaluation of the effectiveness of long-term and medium-term plans. The accountability mechanism also does not serve that purpose.

Most of the shortcomings of the College's governance are due to the fact that the College's quality assurance system is still at the stage of formation. There is no system to evaluate the effectiveness of management mechanisms. There are no clear procedures, necessary mechanisms and tools that will enable the implementation of the QA system and development of a quality culture.

The internal and external stakeholders of the College are not aware of the quality assurance processes. A systematic approach to data collection, analysis and dissemination has not yet been introduced. The PDCA cycle is not fully operated yet.

The College makes efforts towards the improvement of the governance system. All governing bodies have their own regulations, a quality assurance policy has been developed. The College has intensified its cooperation with employers.

3. Internationalization and research/creative activities do not provide sufficient support for credible award of qualifications.

The goals and objectives set by the College in the strategic plan were very ambitious and unattainable. With the strategic development plan 2021-2023, the College lowered its research

benchmark, focusing on the development of students' research skills. The College's elements of the interdependence of the educational process and research activities are weak. This can also be noticed in some theses and course papers, sometimes in assignments of separate subjects.

The College has no clear mechanisms, procedures, or policies to facilitate internationalization and external relations. There is no responsible for the internationalization. The implemented programmes work through personal connections, which is risky as in the future the programmes can be interrupted due to a person and hinder stability.

The College has links with local self-government bodies, schools in the region, and mass media, but as a regional college and a center for excellence, it does not cooperate with other colleges of the region.

4. The shortcomings mentioned in the expert report are crucial in terms of credible award of qualifications, meanwhile grounds for improvement have been laid.

5. The experts' recommendations provided in the follow-up plan was either misunderstood or for some reason underwent a substantive change. As a result, most of the expected results outlined in the plan do not meet the expected improvements of the expert panel. The mid-term results are formulated in the form of actions and not all of them can contribute to the expected result.

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

DECIDED

1. **To award institutional accreditation to Shirak Regional State College SNPO for 2 /two/ years.**
2. After the publication of the decision on accreditation award, to submit the revised follow-up plan based on the expert panel report and respective schedule to ANQA within two months taking into account:
 - a) the need to give urgent solution to the problems existing in the field of **“Governance and Administration”**, **“Research and Development”**, **“External Relations and Internationalization”**, **“Internal Quality Assurance System”**.
 - b) the necessity to improve and revise the evaluation of key performance indicators for the evaluation of the strategic plan's goals and objectives;
 - c) the implementation of short-term, mid-term planning and analytical accountability in accordance with the strategic plan.
3. To pay special attention to:
 - a) the implementation of clear mechanisms for the professional progress and support of the teaching staff;
 - b) data collection, analysis of results and their application in the decision-making process;
 - c) the implementation of PDCA cycle of quality assurance in all the processes of the College;

- d) the development of external relations, formation and implementation of joint strategies with employers;
 - e) the creation and implementation of mechanisms for sustainable development of the internal quality assurance system;
 - f) the compliance of the academic programmes with the needs of the region and labor market,
 - g) the organization of teaching aimed at the development of students' analytical, creative and critical skills.
4. 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 College’s activity, innovations and achievements.
5. To assign the ANQA to carry out mandatory monitoring of efficiency of Shirak Regional State Collage’s activity in accordance with the KPIs.

Chairman of the Accreditation Committee:

A. Saghyan

June 2, 2021

Yerevan