



**ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE
DECREE № 30**

30 November 2018

On Accreditation of Institutional Capacities of “Eurasia International University” Ltd

General Information on the Institution

Full name of the Institution: **Eurasia International University**

Acronym: **EIU**

Legal Form: **Ltd**

Official Address: **Azatutyun str 24-2, Yerevan, Armenia**

Decree and date of Previous Accreditation: **In 2015 the EIU was granted a conditional accreditation with a period of 2 years**

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 27 November 2018, 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 (hereinafter: EIU) with the presence of Chair of the Expert Panel, ANQA coordinator.

Having examined the self-analysis presented by EIU, EIU observations and recommendations on the draft of the Expert Panel Report, the Expert Panel report, follow-up plan as well as ANQA conclusion, the Committee stated the following:

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

Submission of Application	October 16, 2017
Submission of Self-assessment report	April 19, 2018
Site-visit	June 20-22, 2018

Submission of Expert panel report	October 2, 2018
Submission of the Follow-up plan	October 18, 2018

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

Back in 2015 Eurasia International University (hereinafter referred to as EIU) underwent an accreditation process which was carried out according to 10 criteria set by the RA Government on 30 June, 2011 N 959-Ն decree. As an outcome, a two-year conditional accreditation was granted to the University. Throughout the said procedure three out of ten criteria were “unsatisfactory” (those being: “Academic Programmes” (hereinafter referred to as APs), “Teaching and Support Staff”, “Research and Development”).

The EIU highlights three domains while outlining its mission: teaching, research and services to society, at the same time prioritizing the organization of effective teaching. With the current formulation of its vision, the EIU, per se, prioritizes its academic programmes, determines the characteristics of research opting for the applied research. Moreover, the EIU views its operations with wider public as a means to disseminate its values and knowledge. In compliance with its vision, the EIU strives to become a leading academic institution with a flexible management, which will educate professionals having a baggage of applied skills and being in line with labour market demands.

Based on recommendations driven from the previous accreditations procedure, the EIU has reformed its Strategic Plan (hereinafter referred to as SP). The SP has undergone an array of reforms; in particular the vision of the University has been altered and made precise, certain additions have been introduced to the mission, the follow-up plan has been re-elaborated, orientation indicators have been elaborated. Praiseworthy is the fact that the University cooperates with internal and external stakeholders with the aim of implementing its strategic goals. Moreover, internal stakeholders have rendered their indirect participation in the procedures of SP elaboration and/or revealing the needs via surveys, feedback and other mechanisms. The EIU has undertaken certain steps aimed at activating the participation of external stakeholders in the implementation of the SP and fostering the ties with the latter.

Currently the University carries out 4 undergraduate (Law, Management, Foreign Languages and Literature, Pharmacy) and 3 graduate APs (Management, Law, Foreign Languages and Literature) both part-time and full-time.

The EIU has a procedure on AP elaboration, monitoring and review. While elaborating the intended learning outcomes (hereinafter referred to as ILOs), the EIU has strived to ensure their alignment with the National Qualification Framework (hereinafter referred to as NQF), and has undertaken national and international benchmarking with similar APs. As far as the disciplines are concerned, the EIU has conducted certain changes content and methodology-wise; however, until now not all APs have undergone analyses from the perspective of alignment with strategic aims and revealing

the risks. The EIU underlines the importance of cooperation with employers and the adjustment of its academic services to the needs of the labour market.

Notwithstanding the fact, that based on recommendations drawn from the previous accreditation certain reforms of APs have been undertaken, there are still series of issues, which need to be paid heed to by the EIU; in particular, the number of professional disciplines in APs is scarce, the ILOs at undergraduate and graduate levels are almost identical, hours allocated to practice (in case of some disciplines) are scarce in the curricula, which hinders the formation of practical skills among the students, there is no precise policy on the selection and implication of teaching and assessment methods in line with ILOs of APs, the participation of employers in procedures of AP elaboration, review and continuous improvement, as well as university-employer bilateral cooperation is in its initial stage of formulation and needs institutionalization. Internal stakeholders render their participation in AP improvement via surveys conducted by the IQA Department; however, not always do the survey outcomes result in visible improvement of APs.

Cooperation mechanisms with internal and external stakeholders, employers and alumni need fostering. The implementation of viable mechanisms with external stakeholders in particular will considerably encourage the improvement of quality of academic services rendered by the University, thus granting more ample opportunities to stakeholders to jointly decide on the content of teaching and AP implementation (joint teaching, supervision of works, organization of internships and implementation of research operations).

The EIU has a policy and mechanism of teaching staff recruitment. The EIU employs 43 teachers who teach along 6 APs. At university level the EIU complies with the requirement of legislation as far as the number of teaching staff is concerned, yet, no analysis like this has been carried out at the level of APs. Notwithstanding the fact that based on recommendations of the previous accreditation process the EIU has tried to regulate teaching staff recruitment per criterion, the requirements and articles (qualification descriptors, articles of job descriptors) for teaching staff recruitment in APs and their portfolios are generic, and the only differentiation can be traced per category and position, and not per field or specialization. Teacher recruitment policy does not directly stem from the issues to be encountered while implementing acting APs; it does not ensure the effectiveness of their implementation. The majority of teachers are in charge of teaching many disciplines, at times 6-8 subjects, which results in overloading. Hence, their workload hinders their active involvement in research operations and continuous improvement of teaching process. The EIU has some mechanisms of encouraging young teachers, yet, it lacks a precise policy on staff rejuvenation, that of substituting teachers who have an overly heavy workload accumulated as an outcome of temporary disability. This can hinder the stability of teaching staff and academic process. Moreover, since teacher salaries are formulated from tuition fees, in the scenario when the number of students decreases, the EIU will face the danger of losing its best teachers. Along with the academic workload, the some part of the teaching staff combines administrative or scientific-academic functions as well. Moreover, teachers with different specializations are involved within three chairs: Law, Foreign Languages and Management. This can hinder the process of concentrating professional content in the chairs. Consequently, internal structural changes that will encourage the implementation of generic functions and will not result in content unification (e.g. having separate institutes responsible for APs instead of chairs) might have a positive impact on raising the effectiveness of University operations. It would be especially favourable for the EIU to review the current system of teacher evaluation and rating, and to link the latter with training

needs, at the same time determining “need-targeted training-ILO-assessment of the outcome” cause-effect chain.

The EIU has exercised considerable endeavour to ensure the teaching process is carried out in decent auditoria; the EIU has two auditoria saturated with computers and projectors, a library, the sport hall are still in the process of renovation and refurbishing. The EIU has allocated resources to renovate one new floor to ensure enough number of auditoria and laboratories for the newly-implemented “pharmacy” AP. The current academic-methodical base allows for carrying out classes both in large and small groups in line with the needs and objectives. The University has a moot court. In generic terms the EIU has sufficient material-technical base for the implementation of AP aims. At the same time, there is a necessity to saturate library fund with up-to-date literature, give extended access to scientific depositories, as well as to ensure access to national and international statistical and document data with the aim of supporting the empiric research of students.

One of the major aims of the EIU is to increase the number of students. Hence, the EIU, in collaboration with Yerevan municipality, is undertaking a myriad of events (short-term courses targeting the formation of transferrable skills, meetings and etc.) for high-school pupils, which are aimed at attracting applicants and information dissemination about the EIU. With the aim of recruiting applicants, the EIU also disseminates information via social media, publishes booklets, publishes information the directory of Armenian HEIs, prepares advertisements and etc. The EIU, being one part of a bigger unit; “Eurasia International University” Ltd also makes use of the opportunity to recruit applicants from its college organizing and conducting exams for student recruitment to part-time mode of study. The entrance of students to the EIU is mainly carried out via part-time mode of study, after which they are transferred to a full-time mode of study. This format is worrisome given the fact that students are transferred to full-time studies without taking necessary centralized entrance exams. With the aim of a more stable positioning of the EIU in the market of higher education services, it will be extremely favourable to precisely determine and differentiate the modes of study in APs, to elaborate separate APs for each mode and at the same time, as prescribed by the law, be anchored at the workload per task, and individual assignment.

Positive is the fact that the EIU has a policy and procedures to reveal academic needs of students. From quantitative analyses of undertaken surveys it becomes evident that students have an extremely high level of satisfaction from academic and other support services rendered by the EIU. This extremely high level of satisfaction is accounted for by the fact that students do not approach the issue with necessary level of critical thinking, do not have edges of comparison, and do not see possible prospects of improvement. It is vitally important for the EIU to undertake everything possible to encourage critical thinking, since in this scenario the students will act as more reliable allies of the EIU along the path leading to reforms. Other than this, the current extremely high level of satisfaction among the students deprives the EIU from the opportunity to undertake precise operations and carry out targeted planning based on survey outcomes.

Praiseworthy is the fact that while interacting with students, the EIU undertakes student consultations and organizes meetings aimed at solving possible issues students face. The said meetings are both regular, and ad hoc, or with a prior agreement. However, evident is the fact that being a small HEI, the EIU underlines the importance of having direct contacts with students and this, by all means, is valued a lot by the latter. In this context, the existence of two separate infrastructures in charge of

tackling students' issues results in an unnecessary formality, hence, it will be more beneficial for the EIU to exclude repetitions of functions for the benefit of a more content communication with the students.

After the previous accreditation procedure the EIU has reviewed its research operations targeting at applied research. With this aim the EIU has determined a number of encouraging mechanisms; e.g. internal grants, the establishment of their own "Banber" journal. Researchers are encouraged to cooperate with their international colleagues, there is an intra-university grant-system, the number of publications has increased, the EIU undertakes certain steps to foster research element in educational process. However, all newly-created mechanisms need improvement both content- and procedural-wise to ensure, for instance, the effectiveness of internal grants and precision of responsibilities of those involved, high quality of publications in EIU "Banber" and recognition.

The EIU has tried to determine research directions; however, those are preconditioned with the current potential of the chairs, and are often not directed towards applied research. The EIU teaching staff has not yet undertaken applied research. Currently undertaken research is mainly targeted at examination of secondary sources and does not create new knowledge. In this respect it is vitally important for the EIU to pay meticulous heed to respecting the principles of academic integrity. It would be extremely beneficial for the EIU to determine the directions of applied research from the perspective of its own vision, by opting for directions which on the one hand correspond to its profile, and on the other hand are quite required in the RA, to cooperate with the labour market, hosting organizations within the scope of student internships, to make its research visible first in Armenia, and then on an international arena. Currently, the quality of research outcomes produced by the EIU does not allow for considering the opportunities of their internationalization, especially their publication in journals with high impact factor. International operations are quite limited at the EIU, and are not directed at the import of modern international knowledge. Determination of real goals and targets is essential for the EIU. Teaching through research projects is not widely spread. A more integral interconnection of research and teaching will be more beneficial for the EIU not only via teaching through research projects, but also from the prospective of action research of the teaching staff and ensuring improvement of teaching quality.

The name of the University is the token of its ambition in the sphere of international relations and cooperation. The University has also elaborated a separate strategy on Internationalization, determining quite complicated targets. The University is exercising endeavour towards being represented in different international arenas. In particular, the University underlines the importance of cooperation within the format of being a member in a myriad of consortia, the format of conferences of different foreign TLIs or operations aimed at highlighting their own experience. By means of planning foreign language teaching for their internal stakeholders, the University is also underlining the importance of international exchange programmes for its teaching staff and students. In this context internal stakeholders specifically highlighted their satisfaction with the just and transparent process of applying to different exchange programmes. The University has undertaken steps to attract foreign students to its newly-opened "Pharmacy" AP. However, currently the international ambitions of the university do not correspond to its capacities, since the number of real APs in a foreign language and the number of teachers who are ready to teach in a foreign language is quite scarce. AP international benchmarking has been undertaken with foreign universities the capacities of which are not in line with those of the EIU. This limits the opportunities of real mobility and content-wise cooperation since capacities of foreign universities that have been chosen for benchmarking are not comparable with those of the EIU. From the

perspective of international relations and cooperation, it is very important for the University to carry out its AP benchmarking with comparable foreign Universities, since this can be a starting point for further gradual development. Strengthening the ties with consortium members can be beneficial from the perspective of creating exchange possibilities with the teaching staff and students, and not from the viewpoint of determining its operational ambitions.

The governing model of the University has a number of specificities, which have their further impact on all functions of University governance. The University is a part of “Eurasia International University” Ltd, and the current governing model of the University is typical of private universities which are operating with a business model, having a Council of Founders and a Governing Board. Based on recommendations received from the previous accreditation process the University has undertaken steps to re-elaborate its Charter, legal documentation of its infrastructure operations, and its SP. A number of structural changes have been introduced to ensure implementation of strategic aims. University operations are undertaken in a number of infrastructures which are hierarchically represented, and in a number of bodies which are accountable to the Governing Board. The University does not have faculties and is represented by chairs: a number of chairs represented in the organigram do not function. Some structural units have double functions, at times one and the same people carry out a number of functions. University resource planning, the effectiveness and targeted nature of University governing operations per strategic aims will increase, if the University carries out its resource planning separately from other units of the Ltd and does that in line with the University strategic goals. The implementation of precise and interconnected short-, mid- and long-term planning mechanism will have a beneficial impact on the operations of the University. In this scenario mid-term planning will serve the purpose of précising long-term goals.

Internal stakeholder participation in decision-making bodies is ensured by their representation in collegial bodies; however, the participation of external stakeholders in such kind of decision-making is loose and indirect. Participation of internal stakeholders in evaluations directed at improvement of governing operations is quite big, whereas participation of external stakeholders and environmental scanning are quite limited. The scarcity of this type of information, as well as a small number of qualitative conclusions reached as an outcome of data analyses assembled from surveys do not create favourable conditions for qualitative improvement of operations of University governance. In this respect, it will be extremely favourable for the University a more extensive participation of external stakeholders in the process of evaluating operations of University governance, targeted implementation of evaluation outcomes for the sake of improving the said operations.

The implementation of the principle of general quality assurance is visible via multi-level planning of operations. IQA mechanisms are implemented, diverse surveys and evaluations are undertaken. A number of concepts and regulatory frames are in the process of being elaborated. However, content-wise, regular and targeted implementation of developed mechanisms for the sake of continuous improvement of the University is a must. Currently, the link between diverse data gained via QA mechanisms, their evaluation and further improvement is loose. The University should concentrate on its IQA mechanism implementation, continuous improvement of said mechanisms, and make sure the IQA serves the process of outlining the EIU path directed at its mission and vision.

Notwithstanding the fact that the University has succeeded to implement IQA mechanisms, to elaborate grounding documents and procedures, quality culture has not yet become part of University value-system. This is proven by the outcomes of a number of survey-evaluations, conducted by the QA

Centre, the lack of transition of quantitative data to qualitative conclusions, and the gaps in their implementation while planning follow-up and other operations. The University understands that the thorough implementation of quality culture depends on involvement of all its players, and high level involvement in QA operations. Hence, all further steps of the University must be directed towards active and content involvement of all stakeholders in QA operations.

The QA Centre of the University has sufficient capacity to effectively use implemented mechanisms. Except for that, it is visible that in-between previous and current evaluation processes, the University has undertaken the maximum as far as elaboration and implementation of lacking QA documents are concerned, however, the University has not had an opportunity to fully call those documents to life. The QA Centre does not foresee any reforms or improvements. The panel is of the opinion that it is necessary to ensure continuous provision of IQA system, as a guarantee of all operations of the University and modernization and effectiveness of IQA system.

Taking into consideration the fact that:

- a) Eurasia International university, implementing the recommendations provided by the Expert Panel, has managed to implement the following within the period of conditional accreditation:
 1. to solve the issues related to the criterion “Academic Programmes” which faced an urgent need for improvement and were risky for the graduates,
 2. to create relevant academic environment for students ensuring necessary infrastructures and human resources, which is currently sufficient for rendering professional education,
 3. based on the outcomes of previous accreditation has reviewed its mission and reformed its strategic programme, making its priority operations precise,
 4. to activate the sphere of research and its implementation in education via publications of its own journal, organisation and promotion of scientific conferences,
 5. to elaborate and partially implement a separate strategy on internationalization, to present at international arena and different consortia,
 6. to formulate an intra-university QA system, which will have experienced and motivated staff. This is in its development.
- b) certain shortcomings have been revealed in institutional capacities:
 1. Shortcomings in the criterion “Governance and Administration” related to a non-precise division of functions and resource allocation which is not in line with strategic goals of the university decrease the effectiveness of management system.
 2. Shortcomings in the criterion “Teaching and Support Staff”, preconditioned with staff recruitment, periodic evaluation and promotion, incompleteness of mechanisms of rejuvenation and organization of professional training, can impact the formulation of necessary staff and its stability.
 3. Shortcomings in the criterion “Research and Development” can have impact on complete implementation of MA APs, and preparation of graduates with critical and analytical capacities.

- c) The drawbacks highlighted in the Expert Panel Report do not impact the effectiveness of organization of academic operations and trustworthiness of qualifications awarded to graduates.
- d) The analysis of strengths, opportunities and current issues of the University illustrates, that the Action Plan of the University is realistic.
- e) The University can manage its core risks by means of implemented system of IQA.

As a result of voting the Committee:

DECIDED

1. To award institutional accreditation to Eurasia International University for 4 /four/ years.
2. After the publication of the decision on accreditation award, to submit the action plan for the elimination of shortcomings mentioned in the Expert Panel report and respective time schedule to ANQA within two months taking into account:
 - a. the necessity of prioritizing the solution of the issues in the fields of “Governance and Administration”, “Teaching and Support Staff”, “Research and Development”.
 - b. the need of having KPIs to evaluate the effectiveness of University operations,
 - c. evaluation outcomes and recommendations of the international expert from the prospective of University ambitions to be integrated to EHEA.
3. To pay special attention to fostering the link between learning and research, improvement of the system of governance, modernization of necessary material-technical base, training of the teaching staff, teacher and student mobility, IQA.
4. According to the requirements of clause 12 of the Regulation on “State Accreditation of RA Education Institutions providing professional academic programs and their Professions” every 2 /two/ years to submit a written report to ANQA on the results of the carried out activities.
5. To assign ANQA to undertake mandatory monitoring of the effectiveness of University operations in line with KPIs.

CHAIR OF ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

S. Avetisyan

27 November 2018
Yerevan