

**“NATIONAL CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE”
FOUNDATION**



**EXPERT PANEL REPORT
INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION OF
SEVAN MULTIFUNCTIONAL STATE COLLEGE**

Yerevan – 2024

INTRODUCTION

"Sevan Multifunctional State College" SNOC (hereinafter referred to as SMSC, TLI or college) is carried out based on the application submitted by TLI. The process of institutional accreditation is organized and coordinated by "National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance" Foundation (hereinafter ANQA), guided by regulation on "State Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Academic Programmes in RA" set by RA Government Decree N 978-Ն (dated June 30, 2011) and by Decree N 959-Ն on "Approval of RA Standards for Professional Education Accreditation" (dated June 30, 2011).

The expert examination was carried out by the independent expert panel formed in accordance with the requirements set by the "National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance" foundation in regulation on "Formation of the Expert Panel". The Panel is composed of 4 local experts.

The accreditation process was funded by the College.

The institutional accreditation is aimed not only at external evaluation of quality assurance but also at continuous improvement of the quality of management and academic programmes at the institution. Special emphasis was paid to the cooperation of the institution and employers and its impact on the content of education.

The hereby report comprises the results of the evaluation of the institutional capacities of the TLI by the State Accreditation Criteria and Standards.

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

The expertise of the Sevan Multifunctional State College institutional capacities was carried out by the independent expert panel formed in accordance with the requirements of “Regulation on the Formation of the Expert Panel”, «National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance» Foundation. The evaluation was conducted according to 10 institutional accreditation criteria set by the RA Government Decree N 959-Ն, dated June 30, 2011.

When conducting the evaluation, the expert panel considered that the college is undergoing institutional accreditation for the first time and is also in the initial stage of forming a culture of quality assurance.

The expert panel took into account that the mission of Sevan Multifunctional State College is to train qualified specialists with primary vocational (craft) and secondary vocational education to increase their competitiveness in the labor market, to adapt academic programs to the requirements of the socio-economic development of the country, in particular in the region, comparability of the content of education to international standards, and to ensure the transparency of the educational process, as well as accessibility and equality. 3 pre-professional and 7 secondary professional educational programs are implemented in the college, which corresponds to 3, 4 and 5 levels of NQF. In the labor market of the region, the college is a leader in at least two specializations: "Service organization in hotels and tourist complexes" and "Software of computing equipment and automated systems", and the graduates of the college are competitive. In addition to the mentioned secondary vocational academic programs, the pre-professional academic program "Installation, repair and maintenance of renewable energy, energy plants (experimental)" is relevant in the region, in connection with which the college has involved international partners and cooperates with one of the largest companies in the field, "Fert" NGO.

The observation of the college's management processes and the study of the documents make it obvious that the existing problems are caused by the incomplete implementation of the PDCA cycle of quality assurance and the imperfection of decision-making based on the collection of reliable data and their analysis. The PDCA cycle is mainly in the planning and implementation phases, except for some cases related to educational processes. It should be noted that strategic planning is nearing completion, and there are still planning processes that remain at the planning stage. The expert panel expresses concern that the strategic plan that is being completed has not been evaluated from the point of view of implementation. The college did not identify the indicators that would allow to understand how much and with what quality the planned processes were implemented, which would also help to plan and organize the next strategic cycle more effectively. In addition, the expert panel is convinced that the college should not be limited to state funding for its development, which at the moment solves only current, necessary needs: salaries, utility costs, etc. The College can use its potential and experience of cooperation to find alternative sources of funding and donors, thanks to whose investments it will be able to solve the most important and radical problems.

From the point of view of management efficiency, the expert panel also emphasizes the deepening of cooperation between primary and secondary professional educational levels and the

equal development of academic programs.

Even though the TLI is making efforts to implement the quality assurance system, the quality culture has not yet fully spread in the College. Data that could serve as a basis for decision-making is not collected. The college has work to do in diversifying and improving objective data collection tools.

To summarize, it can be noted that management processes are still not productive, the latter is not implemented based on performance indicators, and there are no sustainable data collection mechanisms and systems for planning and monitoring purposes. The college provides flexibility in academic programs and emphasizes regional features for effective implementation. All academic programs are prepared by the state educational standards, the outcomes are separated into modular programs, for the achievement of which capacity-building assignments are given.

In academic programs, the methods of teaching and learning chosen by college lecturers are equally important, which are productive and interactive, helping students to form independent, research, and creative thinking. The given tasks are up to date, most of them are the direct demand of the market, and with this, the lecturers introduce the students to the advantages of their profession. It is also positive that the College uses elective and reserve hours effectively and as needed, allocating them to subjects that complement the skills required by the professional's job description.

The college is taught by suitably qualified specialists and masters, and the staff related to the introduction of the new profession has been supplemented with young personnel who are also specialists in the practical field and create a direct connection between the labor market and the academic programs of the College. The expert panel notes that the creative approach of the lecturers is outstanding in the considered professions, the latter are self-educators, strive for development, study the modern approaches of the profession, and invest their achievements in the educational process. Lecturers bring their practical work experience to the College and thereby contribute to the market orientation of academic programs.

During the site visit, it became clear that the two buildings of the college need major repair and resource saturation. The current resources of the college are not sufficient for the full provision of academic programs, however, because of some grant programs, the material and technical base is replenished, but the educational programs implemented at the college are in dire need of appropriate resource support. In particular, the kitchen space, environment, and equipment intended for the "Culinary" profession, which is in demand in the labor market, are not enough to train quality personnel. At the same time, it is necessary to note that in recent years the expenses of the College have exceeded the received incomes, and the TLI can overcome its problems at the expense of the savings of the previous years. To summarize, it can be noted that current academic programs and faculty mainly prepare graduates with modern practical skills. Only insufficient resources create certain obstacles to this process.

Observing the mechanisms used by the college to provide information to society, and public responsibility, the expert panel emphasizes the activity of the college on social platforms, the internal and external accountability mechanisms, and the active participation of college

students in community cultural events. The greater activity of such active steps will make the success of the college more visible, and more presentable.

The expert panel emphasizes the existence of active partnership relations in the college and highlights the positive impact of social partnerships on the development of the college. Having the experience of international cooperation and an example of its effectiveness, the college must continue the work of attracting new partners in this direction by implementing supporting processes. From the point of view of establishing partnership relations, it is necessary to pay equal attention to all the APs, which will contribute to their equal development.

Strengths of the Institution:

1. The role of the college in the city of Sevan as a secondary professional institution training specialists for the region.
2. Availability of in-demand professions in the labor market.
3. The experience of implementing a joint academic program with the employer.
4. The given tasks that form research, innovative, and analytical abilities.
5. Availability of competitive and qualified faculty.
6. The involvement of practical specialists in the teaching process.
7. Availability of lecturers engaged in research activities.
8. The College's experience of cooperation with international partners.

Weaknesses of the Institution:

1. Lack of cooperation between primary and secondary vocational academic programs.
2. The poor condition of the main buildings.
3. Lack of professional training of lecturers.
4. Lack of reliable data as a basis for decision-making.
5. Lack of performance evaluation of strategic goals.
6. The imperfection of mechanisms of active involvement of internal and external stakeholders in management processes.
7. The imperfection of the quality culture assurance system.

Main recommendations:

Mission and Purposes

- Introduce monitoring mechanisms for evaluating the implementation of the SP, evaluating the effectiveness of the implementation of the SP.
- In the next strategic plan, propose key indicators for the evaluation of the effectiveness of goals and problems, define a more precise schedule, and assess the necessary financial

resources for the full implementation of the plan.

Governance and Administration

- To increase the efficiency of the management processes, consider the possibility of optimizing the chairs, and having the institute of the responsible persons for the academic programs.
- To launch new alternative financing formulas, developing a clear strategy to attract investors.
- To have comprehensively collected and analyzed data as a basis for managerial decision-making, contributing to the full implementation of the PDCA cycle.
- To ensure the cooperation of primary and secondary professional circles and the adequacy of administrative services provided to them.

Academic programs

- To spread the good experience of developing an academic program together with employers at the institutional level in other APs, contributing to the increase of employability indicators of graduates.
- Introduce and apply a clear methodology and mechanisms for the implementation of benchmarking of academic programs, ensuring the continuous improvement of programs based on the good practices of other educational institutions.
- Introduce clear regulations and mechanisms for monitoring academic programs, ensuring systematic continuous improvement of programs.

Students

- To activate the coverage and dissemination of information on initial professional educational programs, making them more attractive to the public.
- To redefine the activities of the Student Council, emphasizing and emphasizing the autonomy and protection of the interests of students.

Faculty and staff

- To introduce requirements aimed at the professional abilities of the lecturer according to academic programs in the position descriptions.
- To develop mechanisms for encouraging the faculty, based on the systematic assessment of lecturers.
- To carry out planned professional trainings, if necessary, also applying the possibilities of

employers.

Research and Development

- To continue carrying out tasks that form students' research and analytical abilities in academic programs, if necessary, involving employers in them, receiving feedback from the latter on the qualitative aspect of the work.
- To develop mechanisms for encouraging the research works of the faculty, promoting the dissemination of the best practices.
- Fully apply the laboratory base of preliminary professional educational programs in research works.

Infrastructure and Resources

- To search and find alternative income attraction mechanisms, also considering the implementation of international grant programs.
- To assess and improve the resource base, prioritizing the effective implementation of academic programs, or finding new employer partners using the latter's work environment.
- To consider the support of the board of management as part of the College's resource improvement strategy.
- To improve the library stock of the College with modern professional literature, also considering the acquisition of electronic resources.

Societal Responsibility

- To develop and implement a unified reporting format according to the goals and objectives of the SP.
- To develop and implement the official website of the College, providing well-stocked sections and relevant content.
- To diversify the range of events that convey knowledge and values to society, contributing to the increase of the college's reputation and trust in society.

External Relations and Internationalization

- To search and find employers with whom the College will be able to implement joint academic programs, ensuring the matching of education and labor market needs.
- To take steps to find international partners and participate in international programs, contributing to the development of the abilities of faculty and students, and improving the resource base.

- To conduct courses to increase the level of English language proficiency of the teaching, administrative and student staff.

Internal Quality Assurance System

- To review the quality assurance policy, deriving it from the needs of the College's internal and external stakeholders.
- To review the functions of the QA responsible, deriving them from the problems facing the quality assurance system.
- To derive the planning of QA processes from the problems faced by the QA system and the priorities of the TLI, defining clear actions, deadlines, responsible persons and expected outcomes.
- To ensure the continuous development of the professional capabilities of the QA responsible, contributing to the effective implementation of QA processes.
- To diversify and improve data collection mechanisms, providing reliable sources of information collection and analysis.
- To include a wider range of internal and external stakeholders in quality assurance processes, increasing their awareness of the system.

Christine Hakobyan, Chair of Expert Panel

23.02.2024

DESCRIPTION OF EXTERNAL REVIEW

COMPOSITION OF EXPERT PANEL

External evaluation of the institutional capacities of Sevan Multifunctional State College was carried out by the following expert panel.

1. **Christine Hakobyan**- Deputy Director for Academic Affairs of Kotayk Regional State College, head of the expert panel,
2. **Elen Harutyunyan**, Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Applied Mathematics and Physics of the National Polytechnic University of Armenia, member of the expert panel.
3. **Oleg Gevorgyan**, deputy director for scientific, scientific and technological cooperation and external relations of the Institute of Information and Communication Technologies and Electronics of the National Polytechnic University of Armenia, member of the expert panel.
4. **Albert Tadevosyan**, 2nd year student of the Finance Department of Yerevan State University of Economics, student member of the expert group.

The composition of the expert panel was agreed upon with the Institution.

The works of the expert panel were coordinated by Anahit Terteryan, a specialist at the Department of Institutional and Programme Accreditation of the ANQA.

All the members of the expert panel and the coordinator have signed independence and confidentiality agreements.

PROCESS OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW

The SMSC applied for state institutional accreditation by submitting to ANQA (13.01.2023) filled the application form, presented copies of the license, and respective appendices. The ANQA Secretariat checked the data presented in the application form and the appendices in the application package.

After deciding on accepting the application an agreement was signed (27.01.2023) between ANQA and SMSC. The timetable of activities was prepared and approved.

Self-evaluation

Considering that the educational institution is going through institutional accreditation for the first time and is in the initial stage of the formation of the culture of quality assurance in college, ANQA has conducted 4-day online workshops with the TLI. The workshops aimed to prepare

colleges for the organizational stages of the accreditation process. During the workshops, the interpretations of the institutional accreditation criteria and standards, the electronic questionnaire to be filled in for applying for institutional accreditation, and the features of self-evaluation and SWOT analysis were presented. The educational institution carried out a SWOT analysis, which was discussed with the employees of the ANQA, to provide some guidance to the institution. An interim meeting was also organized on March 1, 2023, to provide ongoing support to the school and answer questions.

The VET institution submitted the self-evaluation of institutional capacity and the package of accompanying documents, according to the format defined by the ANQA. The coordinator studied the report in terms of technical compliance with the requirements of the ANQA. The self-evaluation presented by the TLI was in accordance with the defined unified format, was published on August 23, 2023, and was accepted by the ANQA. The self-evaluation was carried out by working groups consisting of 14 people from the institution, including lecturers, and representatives of administrative and management staff.

Preparatory phase

After the submission of the self-evaluation report and the attached documents by the TLI, the ANQA coordinator observed the package to reveal its correspondence to the requirements of the ANQA.

The self-evaluation and the attached documents were provided to the expert panel for the preliminary evaluation. The composition of the expert panel was agreed upon with the College and was confirmed by the order of the ANQA Director.

To prepare the expert panel members and ensure the effectiveness of the activities, training on the following topics was conducted:

- The main functions of the members of the expert panel,
- The ethics and techniques of holding meetings and doing inquiries,
- Defining the specifics of the VET sector and interpretation of accreditation criteria according to the VET sector
- Preliminary assessment as a stage of preparation of the expert report, the main requirements for the report.

Having reviewed the self-evaluation report and documents of the school, the expert panel conducted the preliminary evaluation. According to the format, the lists of questions and objectives

for different departments and target groups, as well as additional documents have been prepared.

Within the scheduled time, the expert panel summarized the results of the preliminary evaluation, and the Chair of the expert panel, together with the process coordinator, set the schedule of the site visit. According to the ANQA manual, the intended close and open meetings with all the target groups, documents observation were included in the schedule, professional meetings etc.

Preparatory visit

On October 11, 2023, an online meeting was held with the management staff of the TLI. The ANQA coordinator, the head of the institutional program accreditation department and the head of the expert panel were present at the meeting. During the meeting, the schedule of the site visit was introduced and agreed upon with the college as well as discussed and mutually agreed decisions were made regarding the technical, organizational, and information issues of the site visit, the behaviour, and ethical norms of the meeting participants.

Site visit

The expert panel site visit took place from October 16-19, 2023. The site visit started and ended with meetings with the director of the TLI. All the participants of the meetings were selected at random from a pre-provided list. All scheduled meetings were held. During the visit, the expert panel conducted a study of documents.

At the end of each working day, the expert panel closed meetings were held to discuss the results of the interim expert assessment, and at the end of the visit, the main results were summarized.

The conclusion on the criteria was reached by the expert panel because of discussions and analyses of all members, always applying the principle of consensus.

Expert panel report

The members of the expert panel and the ANQA coordinator prepared a preliminary version of the expert report. After approval by the members of the expert panel, the preliminary report was provided to the college (26.12.2023).

On 22.01.2024, the College sent its response to the report to ANQA. The ANQA provided observations of the College to experts. ANQA organized a meeting between the College and the expert panel to clarify the observations. Then, the expert panel prepared the final version of the report (20.02.2024).

Anahit Terteryan

Coordinator of the Expert Panel

23.02.2024

EVALUATION ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

CRITERION	CONCLUSION
<i>I. Mission and Purposes</i>	Satisfactory
<i>II. Governance and Administration</i>	Unsatisfactory
<i>III. Academic Programmes</i>	Satisfactory
<i>IV. Students</i>	Satisfactory
<i>V. Faculty and Staff</i>	Satisfactory
<i>VI. Research and Development</i>	Satisfactory
<i>VII. Infrastructure and Resources</i>	Unsatisfactory
<i>VIII. Societal Responsibility</i>	Satisfactory
<i>IX. External Relations and Internationalization</i>	Satisfactory
<i>X. Internal Quality Assurance System</i>	Unsatisfactory