“NATIONAL CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE”

FOUNDATION

EXPERT PANEL REPORT

INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION OF

YEREVAN STATE CHOREOGRAPHIC COLLEGE

Yerevan – 2026

INTRODUCTION

The institutional accreditation of Yerevan State Choreographic College (SNCO) (hereinafter referred TLI or College) is carried out based on the application submitted by the College. The process of institutional accreditation is organised 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, as stipulated in the regulation on "Formation of the Expert Panel". The Panel is composed of 4 local experts.

The accreditation process was funded by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Armenia.

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 placed on the cooperation between the institution and employers, as well as its impact on the content of education.

The report hereby presents the results of the evaluation of the TLI's institutional capacities against the State Accreditation Criteria and Standards.

Context of the Evaluation of the VET Institution's Activities

Background and History of the Institution

The history of "Yerevan State Choreographic College" SNCO dates back to 1924, when a choreographic studio was established at the initiative of Vahram Aristakesyan. The studio became Armenia's first state dance education institution, predating the establishment of the Opera and Ballet Theatre. In its early years, the curriculum included dances from various national traditions, plastic movement, theatre and costume history, while classical dance was a compulsory component that formed the foundation for the development of professional skills.

From 1926, the studio presented ballet performances in Armenia, and in 1927, Armenian folk dances were performed in Moscow. In 1937, the studio was reorganised into a choreographic school, and in the 1940s it was granted state institution status, after which it participated in international cultural events. In 1957, at the initiative of Azat Gharibyan, a Folk Dance Department was established, which contributed to the expansion of academic programs and the parallel development of classical and folk-dance traditions.

In 2003, the institution was reorganised into a state college, and in 2006, it was officially renamed "Yerevan State Choreographic College" SNCO. Today, it is the only state educational institution in the Republic of Armenia dedicated to preparing professional dancers across all major fields of choreography, meeting the nationwide demand for qualified specialists.

Development Directions and Academic Programs

The College operates four main departments:

- Classical Dance
- Folk Dance
- Dance Pedagogy
- Modern Dance

Over nearly a century of operation, the College has become a key centre for the preservation and development of national choreographic traditions. Its graduates join the ballet company of the National Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet and perform on internationally renowned stages, including the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, the Mariinsky Theatre in Saint Petersburg, and the Paris Grand Opera.

The College regularly participates in concert programs, competitions, and festivals, and collaborates with various cultural institutions to facilitate the exchange of professional experience and knowledge. Since 2019, the College has operated under the supervision of the RA Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports, functioning within the unified framework of state educational policy.

The College is staffed by highly qualified academic personnel who meet the requirements for professional education. Professional subjects are delivered by 38 lecturers, while general education subjects are taught by 27 lecturers. Overall, there are 59 full-time academic staff members, with an additional 25 part-time lecturers. The academic staff includes distinguished professionals in the field, such as People's Artists of the Republic of Armenia, Honoured Artists of the Republic of Armenia, and Honoured Teachers of the Republic of Armenia.

The College is equipped with renovated infrastructure, including dance studios fitted with mirrors, sound systems, and specialised flooring to ensure safe training conditions. The institution also has technical equipment, including sound and lighting systems, video recording equipment, and performance attire designated for student use.

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

The expertise of the Yerevan State Choreographic 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 in accordance with 10 institutional accreditation criteria outlined in the RA Government Decree N 959-Ն, dated June 30, 2011.

The College plays a significant role in choreography, serving as a platform for developing and disseminating professional educational practices. The academic programmes, methodological approaches, and professional expertise developed by the College advance sector-specific educational content and support the stability of the professional dance education system.

Through its long-standing institutional performance, the College has established a recognised and trusted position within the field of choreography. Its name is associated with high standards of professional training, stage culture, and discipline. For graduates, the College diploma provides an important professional foundation and enhances their competitiveness in the labor market. Internal and external stakeholders share the institution's mission and value framework, reflecting an established environment of cooperation and trust within the sector.

The governance system integrates collegial and centralised approaches, ensuring participatory decision-making and a clear allocation of responsibilities. Institutional planning processes are carried out systematically, and effective collaboration has been established among structural units. The College possesses the necessary human, material, technical, and financial resources, while the continuous growth of extrabudgetary funds contributes to strengthening financial sustainability. The involvement of students and academic staff in governance processes, the implementation of professional ethics standards, and the steps taken towards applying the PDCA cycle demonstrate the ongoing development of a management culture and a commitment to quality enhancement.

At the same time, the College's quality assurance system is not yet fully institutionalised and remains in a developmental stage. The role and scope of the QA Centre's responsibilities are not clearly defined, and sustainable mechanisms for conducting comprehensive studies and systematic data analysis are lacking. Stakeholder engagement in QA processes is also limited. These circumstances indicate the need to adopt a more systematic approach to clarify QA structures, strengthen data-driven management practices, and ensure the full institutionalisation of quality assurance processes.

Thus, the College is a leading and formative institution in the field of choreography in the Republic of Armenia, exerting educational, methodological, and value-based influence. However, for its continued development, the next phase should prioritise the full institutionalisation of the quality assurance system and the strengthening of analytical capacities within governance processes.

The College's academic programs are aligned with its adopted mission and the requirements of Level 5 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The programs are designed on a systematic, logically structured foundation, ensuring an integrated combination of knowledge, skills, and competencies. The intended learning outcomes encompass both theoretical and historical-cultural

foundations, as well as high-level performance and stage competencies.

The College's academic programs demonstrate a comprehensive structure, with clearly formulated professional objectives, defined intended learning outcomes, and established assessment mechanisms. The intended learning outcomes integrate theoretical, practical, and creative components, ensuring the balanced development of professional and transferable competences. The educational process prioritises performance-based learning, while final assessments include both theoretical and stage-based practical components, contributing to the development of students' creative, analytical, and independent performance abilities. The availability of master classes further enriches the learning environment by facilitating the transfer of professional expertise and supporting ongoing updates to professional practices.

The formation and development of academic staff are carried out in accordance with clearly defined procedures. The College is staffed by highly qualified lecturers who are recognised professionals in their fields and possess substantial professional experience. The ongoing involvement of graduates in teaching activities contributes to staff regeneration, generational continuity, and the overall sustainability of the academic workforce. Masterclasses and professional interactions further support the development of lecturers' professional competencies. At the same time, the College maintains an adequate administrative and support staff, ensuring the effective organisation and delivery of academic programs.

From the perspective of resource provision, the College has the necessary material, human, and financial capacity to fully implement its academic programs. Continuous efforts are being made to improve infrastructure, and partner institutions' resources are effectively utilised, contributing to a safe and professionally supportive learning environment. The financial management policy is oriented towards diversifying revenue sources and ensuring the efficient use of available funds. The introduction of mechanisms for evaluating resource utilisation indicates growing accountability and sustainability within institutional management.

At the same time, the analysis of available evidence indicates opportunities for further development, particularly in strengthening the systematic application of mechanisms for evaluating the efficiency of resource utilisation, expanding data-driven decision-making practices, and reinforcing the link between resource management and quality assurance processes. In this context, it is necessary to further enhance monitoring and evaluation tools to support the continuous improvement of both educational and resource-related policies.

Overall, the College demonstrates characteristics of an institution grounded in stable governance practices, strong professional capacity, and adequate resources, with clearly identified directions for internal development and systemic enhancement.

In general, the College has established a student-centred educational environment in which admissions processes, learning organisation, and career guidance are underpinned by systematic and continuous mechanisms. Students' professional development pathways are logical and purpose-driven, while high graduate employment rates indicate the practical effectiveness of academic programs and the strong link established with the professional field. The College not only ensures the transfer of

professional knowledge but also creates realistic professional prospects by providing individualised support to students.

In the field of creative and research activities, the institution demonstrates clear strategic orientations. Professional academic programs incorporate a research component related to the performing arts, which is reflected in both ongoing learning and final projects, thereby contributing to the development of analytical and creative thinking. The involvement of employers in creative projects, together with the continuous improvement of material and technical resources, supports students' active participation in professional initiatives. Methodological and instructional materials developed by academic staff further strengthen the content base of the educational process and contribute to the systematisation of professional knowledge.

Transparency of institutional processes is ensured through the dissemination of information, particularly via social media platforms, enabling stakeholders to remain informed about ongoing activities, events, and creative performances. At the same time, the institution has established mechanisms for transferring cultural values to society, primarily through cultural engagement and public presence.

An important step for institutional development is the formalisation of an internationalisation policy. The College currently lacks a clearly defined framework for developing external relations and for strategically implementing international cooperation. Collaboration with international and local educational and cultural institutions remains limited in scope, and the institution is not actively engaged in international educational and mobility programs. In addition, a structured system for developing foreign-language competencies has not yet been introduced. These factors constrain the College's international visibility and opportunities for professional exchange. More systematic planning is therefore required in international cooperation, social partnership, and student initiatives to ensure comprehensive process improvement and enhanced professional competitiveness.

Overall, the College presents itself as a student-centred, creative, and accountable educational institution with strong links to the professional field and demonstrated professional effectiveness. However, in the areas of international integration and external cooperation, systematic and institutional development is required to enhance the institution's competitiveness and visibility.

Strengths of the Institution:

The College plays a significant role in the labor market within the field of choreography.

- The continuous replenishment of major cultural ensembles and schools in the fields of arts and choreography in the Republic of Armenia with College graduates.
- The involvement of graduates in the academic staff contributes to workforce sustainability and the continuity of educational programs.
- The presence within the academic staff of distinguished professionals in the field of

choreography, including Honoured Artists and Honoured Teachers of the Republic of Armenia, with substantial practical experience.

- The application of an individualized professional approach to each student, supporting continuous personal and professional development.
- The active involvement of employers in developing performance skills, including the provision of direct feedback from employers during staging and rehearsal processes.
- The inclusion of practical and performance-based components within modules to support the development of performance competencies.
- The diversity of repertoire and the comprehensive provision of resources supporting staging and performance processes.
- Financial stability and a diversified budget structure, with a steady annual increase in extrabudgetary revenues.
- Participation in state-funded grant programs.
- Continuous improvement of resources, provision of essential professional facilities and equipment, and effective joint utilisation of partner resources.
- A high level of graduate professional employment.
- Institutional initiatives aimed at the dissemination of cultural values across the entire territory of the Republic of Armenia.

Weaknesses of the Institution:

- Insufficient analysis of the factors necessary for data-driven decision-making, as well as the absence of defined performance indicators and a systematic framework for periodic accountability.
- Limited engagement of internal and external stakeholders in the processes of academic program enhancement and institutional quality assurance.
- Constraints affecting the effective implementation, monitoring, and accountability of the strategic development plan.
- Incomplete and insufficiently systematised mechanisms for the organisation and assessment of student internships.
- The lack of continuity and systematic organisation of professional development activities, including the absence of clear planning and targeted orientation.

- The absence of effective and sustainable mechanisms for internationalisation, along with insufficient institutionalisation of cooperation processes.
- The incomplete implementation of quality assurance processes and the partial application of the PDCA cycle.

Main recommendations:

Data-Driven Management

- Review the implementation action plan for the Strategic Development Plan by defining a clear timeline, measurable indicators, and responsible structural units.
- Establish and implement systematic, documented stakeholder engagement mechanisms (e.g., surveys, round-table discussions, advisory groups) to identify stakeholder needs, ensure their participation in developing strategic and educational documents, and introduce feedback mechanisms that ensure effectiveness, transparency, and accountability.
- Develop and implement a unified documentation and planning system for all structural units, incorporating planning, interim reporting, and evaluation.
- Complete and standardise the Academic Program (AP) packages in accordance with the regulations and requirements established by the authorised body.
- Incorporate an analytical component into institutional reports by evaluating the outcomes of previous plans, identifying achievements and areas for improvement, and setting objectives and actions for the subsequent period.
- Establish and implement a separate reporting format for the Director's annual report, distinct from the Strategic Development Plan implementation report.
- Strengthen interdepartmental cooperation and promote active student participation in planning and implementing performances and new projects.
- Ensure that the allocation of extrabudgetary funds becomes more predictable and long-term oriented, including provisions to finance new productions, improve resources, and support student initiatives.
- Regulate the evaluation processes for the Strategic Development Plan and integrate them into a continuous monitoring and improvement framework, including mechanisms for systematic data collection, analysis, and improvement.
- Introduce and further develop the Quality Assurance (QA) system by clearly defining the

functions and responsibilities of staff and structural units, and by ensuring the operation of well-defined planning, standard-setting, evaluation, and monitoring mechanisms.

- Develop and institutionalise a culture of continuous improvement grounded in systematic data collection, targeted studies, and analytical evaluation, ensuring evidence-based development and sustainable quality enhancement.
- Establish regular participatory platforms for internal and external stakeholders (e.g., consultations, working focus groups, surveys, and similar formats) to ensure their systematic and meaningful involvement in QA processes and decision-making.
- Introduce and fully operationalise the QA PDCA cycle, ensuring the systematic and continuous implementation of the planning, execution, evaluation, and improvement phases.

Credible Awarding of Qualifications

- Develop and approve a benchmarking policy by identifying a set of comparable institutions, conducting periodic comparative analyses of programs, and incorporating the results into the academic program review process.
- Develop and approve a unified format for internship assessment, ensure systematic feedback from employers, establish mandatory requirements for internship logs and reports, and integrate internship outcomes into the final assessment system.
- Establish regulations for the periodic review of academic programs at least once every 3–5 years, incorporating feedback from field specialists, employers, and graduates.
- Develop internship procedures as clearly defined and separate processes, specifying formats, duration, and responsible units.
- Develop and implement clear mechanisms for assessing internships by involving both internal and external stakeholders, ensuring effective monitoring and subsequent analysis of internship outcomes.
- Develop and implement mechanisms for evaluating academic staff, emphasising peer observation and class review practices, and regulate the documentation and analysis of these processes.
- Organise professional training sessions and masterclasses for teaching staff by establishing new collaborative links with sectoral educational institutions and employers, and by engaging

private-sector representatives.

- Ensure continuity in planning for resource enhancement and infrastructure renovation by defining priority directions and considering the specific features of academic programs.
- Introduce digital solutions to support document management and the implementation of survey processes.
- Expand the College's participation in grant programs and partnership initiatives to attract additional funding sources for infrastructure development and resource diversification.
- Ensure the periodic collection of student feedback, conduct data-driven analysis of the results, and utilise findings to improve educational processes and strengthen student participation in decision-making.
- Develop and implement unified, documented, and data-driven mechanisms for key student-centred processes (including needs assessment, counselling, internship organisation, student participation, and graduate employment monitoring) to ensure their effectiveness, measurability, and continuous improvement.
- Strengthen the regular and effective dissemination of information on the College's activities, programs, and developments across diverse communication platforms.
- Further develop the graduate database by incorporating information on graduates' professional development and career paths.
- Enhance the Student Council's proactivity, clarify its role and operational framework within institutional governance, and ensure its effective engagement in educational and social initiatives.
- Expand the study of international best practices and integrate innovative methods into teaching and learning, ensuring the application of contemporary educational practices and the development of students' creative competences.
- Systematise and utilise the outcomes of final projects as tools for selecting performances, conducting evaluations, and improving performance-related competences.
- Strengthen the analytical and data-driven aspects of accountability by incorporating performance analysis and improvement recommendations into institutional reports.
- Launch an official institutional website and strengthen the unified public-communication system through its effective use.

- Establish a coordination function or designate responsible personnel for internationalisation and external cooperation, including the allocation of responsibilities, planning activities, and implementing monitoring mechanisms.
- Define expected educational and professional outcomes, performance criteria, and evaluation mechanisms for partnerships, ensuring the analysis of their impact on the improvement of academic programs.
- Expand cooperation with international and local educational and cultural institutions, as well as private dance studios, to increase opportunities for internships, exchanges of experience, and professional integration.
- Initiate participation in international educational and mobility programs (e.g., Erasmus+ and comparable platforms) by building institutional capacity for project preparation and management.
- Introduce a structured system for teaching and assessing foreign-language competencies (particularly English and French for professional purposes), linking these efforts to institutional internationalisation objectives.

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Armenuhi Mheryan, Chair of Expert Panel / 01.04.2026

DESCRIPTION OF EXTERNAL REVIEW

COMPOSITION OF EXPERT PANEL

The following expert panel conducted an external evaluation of Yerevan State Choreographic College's institutional capacities.

- **Armenuhi Mheryan** – Candidate of Economic Sciences, Associate Professor, Head of the Chair of Economics and Finance at the European University of Armenia, Chair of the Expert Panel.
- **Liana Hakobyan** – Associate Professor, Lecturer, Head of the Chair of Choreography at the Yerevan State Institute of Theatre and Cinematography, Member of the Expert Panel.
- **Harutyun Minasyan** – Lecturer at the Yerevan State Institute of Theatre and Cinematography and Yerevan Regional State College No. 1, Member of the Expert Panel.
- **Anush Harutyunyan** – Student at Yerevan State University, Student Member of the Expert Panel.

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

The work of the Expert Panel was coordinated by Lilit Ghazaryan, Specialist at the Secretariat Department of ANQA.

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

PROCESS OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW

The College applied for state institutional accreditation (06.12.2024) by submitting an ANQA application, including the application form, copies of the license, and the respective appendices.

The ANQA Secretariat checked the data presented in the application form and the appendices in the application package.

After deciding to accept the application(14.01.2025), ANQA and the College signed an agreement. The timetable of activities was prepared and approved.

Self-evaluation

Given that the educational institution is undergoing its first accreditation process and is in the initial stages of establishing a culture of quality assurance, ANQA has conducted online workshops with accredited VET institutions. The workshops aimed to prepare colleges for the organisational 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 conducted a SWOT analysis, which was discussed with ANQA employees. During the implementation of the self-evaluation, current discussions were organized by the ANQA to clarify the issues.

The revised self-evaluation of Yerevan State Choreographic College's institutional capacities was submitted on 30.05.2025. Representatives of the institution's administrative and educational staff, lecturers, and students participated in the self-evaluation process.

Preparatory phase

The Expert Panel, having reviewed the VET's self-evaluation report and the accompanying package of documents, conducted a preliminary evaluation in accordance with the prescribed format. As part of this process, the Panel prepared a list of additional documents requiring further examination and identified key issues and questions, indicating the respective structural units or target groups to be addressed. Subsequently, the Expert Panel consolidated the results of the preliminary assessment and developed a detailed plan and schedule for the site visit.

Preparatory visit

Before the site visit, a preparatory visit to the college was carried out on 10.12.2025. 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 site visit schedule was introduced and agreed upon with the college. Additionally, the meeting participants discussed and mutually agreed on decisions regarding the technical, organisational, and information aspects of the site visit, as well as the behaviour and ethical norms of the participants.

Site visit

The expert panel site visit took place from 15 to 17 December 2025. During the week preceding the visit, the expert panel members and the coordinator visited the college, observed its infrastructure and resources, conducted class observations, and observed exams. The experts and the coordinator then held a closed meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to identify the college's strengths and weaknesses against the standards, clarify the questions to be asked of the target groups, and discuss the

meeting procedures and next steps.

The site visit began and ended with meetings with the College's director. All participants in the meetings were randomly selected from a pre-provided list. All scheduled meetings were held. During the visit, the expert panel reviewed documents.

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

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

Expert panel report

The expert panel members and the ANQA coordinator prepared the preliminary version of the expert report, which, after the panel's approval on 17.03.2026, was provided to the College.

The College did not submit any objections or comments to the ANQA regarding the preliminary report. Taking this into account, the Expert Panel prepared the final version of the report, which was approved by the Panel on April 1, 2026.

Lilit Ghazaryan

Coordinator of the Expert Panel

01.04.2026

EVALUATION ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

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