



National Center For Professional
Education Quality Assurance
Foundation

**CRITERIA/STANDARDS AND GUIDELINE FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE OF
DOCTORAL EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA**

2018



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Introduction



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The current document is produced in the framework of the Erasmus+ “Promoting internationalization of research through establishment and operationalization of Cycle 3 Quality Assurance System in line with the European Integration” (C3QA) project.

The document is developed by the National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance, Foundation (ANQA). It gives a comprehensive description of quality assurance framework of doctoral education.

While developing the document, ANQA has assumed as a basis the following factors:

1. needs assessment and situational analysis of the Armenian doctoral education;
2. current trends in European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the European Research Area (ERA);
3. experience and results accumulated from the EU funded TEMPUS “VERITAS – Structural Development of the Third Cycle Based on Salzburg Principles” project;
4. recommendations and observations provided by the C3QA project partners (local, international).

ANQA would also like to express its deep gratitude to C3QA project partners for their helpful insights in document drafting and review processes.

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Doctoral Education in Armenia

The Armenian higher education institutions (HEIs) have been conducting postgraduate programs since Soviet times. After joining Bologna process in 2005, the RA Ministry of Education and Science in cooperation with the Armenian HEIs has launched a series of reforms in the field of higher education, including doctoral program. Currently the Armenian HEIs have already adopted the 3-tiered system. During the 2010/2011 academic year the qualification of the Researcher on the third-level was also introduced at the Armenian HEIs. The doctoral programs in Armenia are typically 3 years full-time, 4 years for part-time and 5 years for research applicants. For all the cases, the overall student workload is 180 ECTS credits.

Doctoral education in Armenia has traditionally been part of the postgraduate education system and consisted of two successive scientific (research) degrees: Candidate of Sciences and Doctor of Sciences. The Candidate of Sciences qualification is typically a three-year full-time programme consisting of coursework and a publicly defended thesis. The Doctor of Sciences qualification has two tracks: doctoral coursework or independent peer-reviewed research followed in either case by a public dissertation defence. Both doctoral qualifications have by tradition been considered as paths to academic careers.

Through the course of decades, the main purpose of research education has been the creation of new knowledge; moreover, it gave bigger importance to the results of scholarship rather than formation of scholars with specific knowledge, capacities, and skills, including teaching skills for higher education. In modern post-industrial societies, knowledge becomes outdated very quickly, making the training of versatile, innovative doctoral candidates a high priority. In the modern economy, their future career and employment opportunities are not limited to scholarly endeavors or teaching activities in traditional academic environment. They should also be equipped to work in the knowledge-based economy, including manufacturing, business, public and private entities, R&D centers and highly specialized services. The new generation of researchers should be competent not only in their professional area, but also have general broad preparedness, including communication, management and entrepreneurial skills. With its emphasis on narrow professional research, the traditional model of doctoral education did not foster the formation of such knowledge, skills, and capacities. Thus, it was necessary to introduce more structured, formal doctoral programs alongside and in contrast to the traditional, informal “mentor-student” model.

The doctoral program with the embedded general skills component was introduced on a nationwide basis during the 2010-2011 academic year. Currently, as it was mentioned above, most of the



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Armenian HEIs offer structured scientific-educational programs. The curriculum design is implemented according to internal document specific for each HEI, which regulates the structure and content of the doctoral programs at the given university.

The effectiveness and the quality of doctoral programs in Armenia are influenced by several factors. Scarce research funding is a major drawback. HEIs use it as a main reference point while deriving other sizeable problems such as the design and implementation of doctoral programs in accordance to the Salzburg principles as well as the development of the internal quality assurance system for doctoral education, which will increase the transparency, visibility, autonomy and accountability of doctoral education in Armenia. The technical level of the infrastructure and the databases available for research are also critical factors. Although the situation has been changing for the better recent years, many universities and research organizations offering doctoral programs are still having problems such as limited access to the electronic databases of scientific literature and information, lack of modern research laboratories and research equipment etc.

The providers of doctoral education in Armenia is currently striving to find the answers to the following issues:

- Is there possibility to predict rapid changes in the globalized world?
- Who are the stakeholders of doctoral education?
- Are we still relevant to our stakeholders?
- Are the outcomes of doctoral education recognized by the stakeholders?
- Is there strict separation between doctoral candidate in fundamental research and applied research?
- What master's degree education can do to make doctoral education more efficient?

External Quality Assurance System in Armenia



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Following its ratification of Bergen (Bergen Communiqué) by the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia (RA) in 2005 steps have been undertaken to actively implement the Bologna action lines to integrate into European Higher Education Area. RA HEIs adopted internal quality assurance mechanisms based on ESG to ensure the successful implementation of their processes. Nevertheless, the delivery of doctoral programs in line with the Salzburg Principles has been left unattended.

“The statute on state accreditation of institutions and their academic programs in the Republic of Armenia” approved by the RA Government on 30 June 2011 N 978-Ն decree, decision of RA Government on “Standards of Accreditation of Professional Education of the RA” decree N 959-Ն (30 June 2011) are the main documents governing the quality assurance of tertiary level institutions (TLIs) but these documents mainly refer to the first and the second cycles of education.

In Armenia, the external quality assurance is carried out through accreditation. The accreditation process is being performed by the ANQA.

ANQA strives to promote public trust, social cohesion, equity, responsibility and competitiveness through periodic enhancement of the quality of educational services. ANQA carries out its mission by:

- being receptive to the needs of national stakeholders through its mandatory institutional and voluntary programme accreditation;
- aligning its QA criteria and standards with international standards and guidelines;
- ensuring international recognition, thereby assisting to strengthen the position of Armenian professional education in EHEA;
- attaching importance to close cooperation with stakeholders in the process of developing the quality assurance system.

In the RA, the external quality assurance is in line with the institution’s internal quality assurance processes, and it maintains the institution’s autonomy. In addition, the external quality assurance is based on the information revealed by the internal quality assurance system. The Armenian external quality assurance entails two types of accreditation: • institutional, • program. Institutional accreditation is the state recognition of academic and QA procedures of the TLI. Institutional accreditation is a regular mandatory process both for state and non-state institutions operating in the territory of the RA. Institutional accreditation allows to evaluate the effectiveness of TLI operations, as well as to find out whether the TLI is in compliance with its mission, whether it follows the policy of continuous improvement and enhances the development of implemented academic programs. Institutional accreditation is a prerequisite for program accreditation. Program accreditation is the recognition of academic programs and the correspondence of quality with state accreditation standards



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and program accreditation criteria. Program accreditation is targeted at separate academic programs. This procedure allows to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of academic programs as well as to monitor whether it thoroughly ensures the acquisition of intended learning outcomes. The program accreditation is currently carried out on the initiative of the TLI, based on voluntary basis, except for medical academic programs, the accreditation of which is compulsory. However, with the adoption of the new Law on Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education the program accreditation for all the 3 cycles will also become mandatory. As an outcome of accreditation process, the TLI or its separate academic program are positioned as accredited with a certain validity date.

State Accreditation Criteria and Standards serve as a foundation and framework to guide institutions in self-evaluation as a basis for assessing institutional and program performance and to identify needed areas of improvement. The criteria, standards and performance indicators promulgated by the RA Government are reviewed and modified periodically to ensure they are up-to date, valid, relevant and consistent with the emerging trends and recent developments in the field of quality assurance and accreditation. As an external quality assurance provider in HE, ANQA's core activities are based on external QA principles and correspond to the standards of ESG (Part 2).

However, QA activities have not yet been applied to the 3rd cycle education as till now quality assurance of doctoral education has not been concerned by the RA Government.

Within the frames of EU TEMPUS "VERITAS" grant project ANQA has developed QA criteria and standards for doctoral education which have undergone a pilot during the external visits at the Armenian 11 biggest HEIs. In general, the "VERITAS" partner institutions (local and international) have assessed criteria and standards for doctoral education as enhancement-led, applicable and relevant to the stakeholders needs.

After being piloted in the framework of C3QA project, the quality assurance criteria and standards for doctoral education will be revised upon request. The results will be presented to the RA Ministry of Education and Science after the adoption of the new Law on Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education where the quality assurance of doctoral education is foreseen.

Quality Assessment Criteria and Standards for Doctoral Education



Quality assessment criteria and standards for doctoral education are developed based on Salzburg principles, Salzburg II recommendations, Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), decision of RA Government on “Standards of Accreditation of Professional Education of the RA” as well as on the needs of the relevant stakeholders and the feedback provided by them (bottom up approach).

Quality assessment criteria and standards for doctoral education are combination of institutional and program quality assurance approaches. Having elements of both institutional and program QA, the criteria and standards will give an opportunity to look at the doctoral education of a given HEI in a systemized and holistic way while being in compliance with the 2nd Salzburg Principle. Application of criteria and standards will promote:

1. identification of risky areas;
2. continuous increase of accountability, transparency and autonomy;
3. implementation of steps aiming at improvement.

The procedures on acceptance of application for external assessment, self-evaluation, implementation of external assessment and decision making are regulated by “The statute on state accreditation of institutions and their academic programs in the Republic of Armenia” approved by the RA Government on 30 June 2011 N 978-Ն decree (<http://www.anqa.am/en/accreditation/accreditation-process-and-documents/statute-on-state-accreditation-of-institutions-and-their-academic-programs-in-the-republic-of-armenia/>)

<i>Criterion/standards</i>	<i>The evidences that will need to be considered to evaluate the criterion/standard</i>
<p>1. Institutional strategies</p> <p><i>The Higher Education Institution’s (hereinafter HEI) research strategy is in concord with its mission and goals.</i></p>	
<p>1.1 HEI has a research strategy that is adopted at the institutional level of the HEI, represents the institution’s mission and its goals for research.</p>	<p>1. Research strategy</p> <p>2. Code of ethics and internal disclosure procedures</p>
<p>1.2 Research strategy reflects the needs of the internal and external stakeholders and includes ethical concepts.</p>	<p>3. Action plan (long-term, mid-term, short-term planning) and supporting budget</p>

<p>1.3 HEI has formal mechanisms and procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of research strategy and to further improve it.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Policy and procedures for the assessment of the achieved goals and respective analysis 5. The list of scientific publications, patents relevant for strategic area 6. Relevant reports on the review process of the research strategy 7. Other Policy of development and adoption of research strategy. 8. Alignment of research strategy with mission and goals of the institution 9. Mechanisms and tools for revealing the needs of internal and external stakeholders 10. Evidences of the stakeholders' involvement 11. Other
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2. Doctoral program

The doctoral program's ambitions are in concord with the institution's research strategy, forms part of institutional planning and resource allocation, is designed to meet new challenges and needs of global labour market.

<p>2.1 Doctoral program is thoroughly formulated, according to the intended outcomes, is flexible, meets the needs of doctoral candidates and is in line with the institution's research strategy.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Outcome based doctoral program (aligned with the HEI's ambitions in research and labour market needs) 2. Clearly defined concept of the programme and graduate profile 3. Doctoral training programs based on original research and teaching of transferable skills (curriculum, individual research plan) 4. Doctoral training leading to doctoral candidates' autonomy 5. Doctoral candidate handbook (published) 6. Other
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<p>2.2 Doctoral program is contextually coherent with other relevant doctoral programs.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Doctoral program benchmarking policy, procedures and performance evidences 2. Other
<p>2.3 Doctoral program is functioning in the context of a strong research environment ensuring critical mass of researchers and relevant resources promoting interdisciplinary approach.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relevant documents ensuring doctoral program resource allocation 2. Relevant evidences (agreements, contracts, etc.) ensuring research environment and critical mass 3. Other
<p>2.4 Doctoral program provides training in core discipline areas and transferable skills and ensures an active involvement of doctoral candidates in research activities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flexible curriculum (translation of the objectives of the program in the curriculum, presence of interdisciplinary elements in the curriculum) 2. Individual research plans (which takes into account the skills to be achieved) 3. Mechanisms for the involvement of doctoral candidates to research oriented activities 4. Evidences on encouragement of local and international cooperation 5. Other
<p>2.5 Doctoral program has set criteria on the assessment of the quality of research results against achieved outcomes and mechanisms for the evaluation of the research results' social impact.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Published criteria for the assessment of the research quality against the intended outcomes 2. Grids to evaluate the extent of doctoral candidates' autonomy and other intended outcomes 3. Mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of the criteria for the assessment of the research quality and to further improve them 4. Mechanisms to measure social impact 5. Other

<p>2.6 There are set mechanisms and procedures in place to ensure development, approval, monitoring and periodic review of doctoral program with an active involvement of internal and external stakeholders.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Doctoral program design and approval policies and procedures 2. Written policy for review/revision of the doctoral program based on the needs of stakeholders (internal and external stakeholders' needs assessment methods, effectiveness analyses and evidences) 3. Improvement plans 4. Other
<p>3. Admission Policy</p> <p><i>HEI's admission policy on doctoral program is transparent, is in line with doctoral program's ambitions.</i></p>	
<p>3.1 HEI has set mechanisms for promoting equitable recruitment, selection and admission procedures.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Published admission policy 2. Candidate recruitment policies and procedures (published) 3. Other
<p>3.2 Selection criteria of doctoral candidates are transparent, publicly available and are in line with with doctoral program's ambitions.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Selection criteria (e.g. doctoral candidates' past academic performance, ability for research etc.) 2. Procedures and evidences ensuring transparency and fair access to the institution 3. Mapping (selection criteria with the explicit outcomes) 4. Other
<p>3.3 HEI periodically analyses the effectiveness of applicants' assessment system</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mechanisms for analysing the effectiveness of applicants' assessment system, career development opportunities 2. Improvement mechanisms of admission policy 3. Other
<p>4. Supervisor</p>	

HEI provides highly qualified supervisors/well-structured supervisory team to achieve doctoral program's ambitions.

<p>4.1 Supervisors/supervisory team responsibilities, qualifications, workload, recognition criteria are comprehensively stated and described and are in line with doctoral program's ambitions.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tripartite written agreements (HEI-supervisors-candidate) 2. Clearly defined written obligation for main supervisor/supervisory team/research group 3. Workload (number of doctoral candidates per mentor) -dedicating appropriate time for supervision 4. Guidelines for dealing with supervisor-supervisee conflicts (conflict management) 5. Other
<p>4.2 HEI has supervisor/supervisory team appointment procedures.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clear selection criteria of supervisors/supervisory team 2. Appointment procedures (review of the procedure) 3. Other
<p>4.3 HEI has motivation mechanisms for supervisors to be involved in active researching and be part of relevant scientific network.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Policies and procedures for the motivation in general and the young ones in particular 2. Other
<p>4.4 There is well-established system for periodic evaluation of supervision that foster to review existing policies and procedures for supervision and to reveal the professional needs of supervisors.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assessment policies and procedures (tools and mechanisms) for supervisors/supervisory team 2. Number of thesis supervisors defended 3. Number of supervisors participating in current competitive research projects 4. Scientific contributions of a supervisor relevant to the program 5. Mobility opportunities for supervisors 6. Other
<p>4.5 HEI fosters the development and professional progress of supervisors.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mechanisms ensuring professional development of supervisors

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Appropriate budget allocation for professional development of supervisors 5. Foreign teaching staff between the teaching staff who supervise doctoral theses and those who give training activities 6. Other
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5. Research Environment

HEI promotes the quality research provisions by creating an environment conducive to research.

<p>5.1 There are necessary resources for the implementation of doctoral program in accordance with its content, which effectively support the implementation of program's ambitions and create an environment conducive to research.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Policies and procedures considering resource allocation for the doctoral education 2. Appropriate research infrastructures (the material resources available are appropriate to the number of doctoral candidates and the characteristics of the doctoral program) 3. Various sources of funding 4. Short, medium and long term resource planning 5. Other
<p>5.2 HEI monitors the scientific progress of the individual doctoral candidates by achieved scientific results and provides career development opportunities. Supervisors have primary responsibility in doctoral candidate's scientific progress.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitoring mechanisms of doctoral candidates (reports, attestations, minutes etc.) 2. Policies and procedures ensuring regular information flow for doctoral candidates 3. Policies and procedures promoting additional support, advice and academic orientation for doctoral candidates (the services available to doctoral candidates provide adequate support for the learning process and facilitate their entry into the labor market) 4. Career development opportunities (e.g. updating candidates on new career opportunities, personal and professional

	<p>development, exchanges with other universities (mobility programs), opportunities for doctoral candidates to combine teaching with research, encouraging international cooperation, main job opportunities etc.)</p> <p>5. Doctoral candidates feedback on the support provided</p> <p>6.Signed agreements with other research centres, institutes or HEIs</p> <p>6.Other</p>
<p>5.3 HEI ensures that all doctoral candidates receive useful and regular information and advice to promote research and to have opportunity to work in research teams and different research environments.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Result monitoring (archive of periodical monitoring results) 2. Respective analyses and reports 3. Signed agreements with other research centres, institutes or HEIs 4.Other
<p>5.4 HEI has sound financial distribution policy and capacity to sustain and ensure the integrity and continuity of doctoral programs at the institution.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mechanisms to find and control financial resources and to allocate them appropriately 2. The institutional planning, administration and monitoring policies with regards to the budget 3. Institutional policies that stipulate the terms and conditions for accepting gifts/donations from public, private and international organizations 4.Adequate funding for transferable skills training 5.Other
<p>5.5 HEI has mechanisms in place for the evaluation of the effectiveness, applicability and availability of resources.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Feedback mechanisms and respective analyses 2.Improvement plans 3.Other

6. Doctoral Candidates

Doctoral candidates are recognized as professionals with commensurate rights.

<p>6.1 HEI has formal mechanisms to regulate relations between candidate, supervisors and institution where the rights and responsibilities of doctoral candidates are clearly formulated.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Written agreement (between HEI-supervisors-candidate) stating possibilities for doctoral candidate career development 2. Other
<p>6.2 Doctoral candidates are engaged in governance at the university and participate in decision-making.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Policy and procedures for the involvement of doctoral candidates in the governance of the HEI 2. Mechanisms for the motivation of doctoral candidates to be involved in governance. 3. Other
<p>6.3 HEI has set mechanisms that ensure quality of the student services and doctoral candidates are involved in the quality assurance practices.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feedback mechanisms 2. Regulations stating doctoral candidates' role in the institution's quality assurance processes 3. Other

7. Internationalization

Internationalization is coherent with institution's research strategy and the individual needs of the doctoral candidates.

<p>7.1 HEI promotes fruitful and effective collaboration with local and international counterparts aiming to create critical mass and networking as well as to implement joint research and doctoral programs.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategic plan for internationalization (research part) 2. Policies, procedures and mechanisms promoting internationalization of research (local, international) 3. Agreements, memorandums etc. 4. Number of foreign teaching staff between the teaching staff who supervise doctoral theses and those who give training activities 5. Percentage of PhDs with international recognition
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	6. Other
7.2 The mobility of doctoral candidates is driven by the candidates' research projects.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mobility coherent with research strategy of the institution and the individual needs of doctoral candidates, relevant evidences 2. Number of foreign doctoral candidates 3. Other
7.3 HEI allocates sufficient financial resources for internationalization.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budget allocation for research's internationalization 2. Mechanisms to find and control financial resources and to allocate them 3. Relevant analyses 4. List of publications in the peer reviewed journals with impact factor (by teachers, supervisors and doctoral candidates) 5. Other
<p>8. PhD awarding</p> <p><i>HEI has clear mechanisms for monitoring and assessment of the research results (applicable to the institutions having Specialized Councils).</i></p>	
8.1 Specialized Council has PhD awarding criteria that are applied and periodically reviewed.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Published criteria for PhD awarding 2. Reports on the candidates' examination results 3. Review procedures and relevant analyses 4. Number of theses defended in the context of full-time studies 5. Number of theses defended in the context of part-time studies 6. Percentage of PhDs with international recognition 7. Employment rate 8. Rate of adaptation of work to studies 9. Other

<p>8.1 HEI has set criteria for the nomination of the members of Specialized Council/s.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Published criteria for the nomination of the members of Specialized Council/s. 2. Other
<p>8.2 HEI periodically implements quality assurance of Specialized Council/s' activities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Internal quality assurance procedure of Specialized Council/s' activities 2. Mechanisms ensuring the involvement of relevant stakeholders in the quality assurance processes of Specialized Council/s' activities 3. Respective analyses and reports 4. Improvement plans 5. Other
<p>8.3 Specialized Council/s periodically publishes reports on the development of the relevant fields.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Published reports, feedback on the reports 2. Other

9. Internal quality assurance

HEI has an internal quality assurance system, which promotes continual improvement of all the processes of doctoral education.

<p>9.1 There are well-established and publicly available policies and procedures for internal quality assurance of doctoral education.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Internal quality assurance policy and procedures for doctoral education 2. Other
<p>9.2 The internal and external stakeholders of doctoral education are involved in the quality assurance processes.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Internal quality assurance mechanisms for doctoral education reveal stakeholders needs (effectiveness analyses of the mechanisms, improvement plans) 2. Feedback mechanisms from relevant stakeholders (effectiveness analyses of the feedback mechanisms, improvement plans) 3. Other
<p>9.3 HEI collects reliable information on the implemented processes through feedback mechanisms, which is evaluated for the</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-assessment 2. Respective reports 3. Improvement plans



improvement of the goals and processes of doctoral education.	4. Other
9.4 The internal quality assurance system of doctoral education is periodically reviewed.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Policy and procedures to review internal quality assurance system 2. Tools and mechanisms ensuring periodical review of the internal quality assurance system 3. Respective analyses 4. Improvement plans 5. Other



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APPENDIX 1 SELF-EVALUATION TEMPLATE

I hereby endorse

Rector/Director _____

“ ” _____ 201_

DOCTORAL PROGRAM SELF-EVALUATION

(Name of the Institution)

(Name and code of the specialty)

(Address of the Institution)

YEREVAN 201_



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Composition of the self-assessment working group

Name, Surname	Position	Responsibility in the group
<i>Please insert rows, if necessary</i>		



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Note: each standard should be assessed separately (e.g. 1.1; 1.2; 1.3...)

1. Institutional strategies

The Higher Education Institution's (hereinafter HEI) research strategy is in concord with its mission and goals.

Please mention the research ambitions of the HEI and describe the formation of research strategy reflecting the ambitions of the HEI in research.

1.1 HEI has a research strategy that is adopted at the institutional level of the HEI, represents the institution's mission and its goals for research.

1.2 Research strategy reflects the needs of the internal and external stakeholders and includes ethical concepts.

1.3 HEI has formal mechanisms and procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of research strategy and to further improve it.

2. Doctoral program

The doctoral program's ambitions are in concord with the institution's research strategy, forms part of institutional planning and resource allocation, is designed to meet new challenges and needs of global labour market.

Please analyse how the doctoral program intended learning outcomes are achieved (stressing doctoral candidate progress).

2.1 Doctoral program is thoroughly formulated, according to the intended outcomes, is flexible, meets the needs of doctoral candidates and is in line with the institution's research strategy.

2.2 Doctoral program is contextually coherent with other relevant doctoral programs.

2.3 Doctoral program is functioning in the context of a strong research environment ensuring critical mass of researchers and relevant resources promoting interdisciplinary approach.

2.4 Doctoral program provides training in core discipline areas and transferable skills and ensures an active involvement of doctoral candidates in research activities.

2.5 Doctoral program has set criteria on the assessment of the quality of research results against achieved outcomes and mechanisms for the evaluation of the research results' social impact.

2.6 There are set mechanisms and procedures in place to ensure development, approval, monitoring and periodic review of doctoral program with an active involvement of internal and external stakeholders.

3. Admission Policy

HEI's admission policy on doctoral program is transparent, is in line with doctoral program's ambitions.

Please analyse whether the selection mechanisms of doctoral candidates are aligned with the doctoral program's ambitions.

3.1 HEI has set mechanisms for promoting equitable recruitment, selection and admission procedures.

3.2 Selection criteria of doctoral candidates are transparent, publicly available and are in line with the explicit outcomes of doctoral program.

3.3 HEI periodically analyses the effectiveness of applicants' assessment system.

4. Supervisor

HEI provides highly qualified supervisors/well-structured supervisory team to achieve doctoral program's ambitions.

Please analyse how the HEI assures sufficient supervision motivated for the implementation of doctoral program's ambition.

4.1 Supervisors/supervisory team responsibilities, qualifications, workload, recognition criteria are comprehensively stated and described and are in line with doctoral program's ambitions.

4.2 HEI has supervisor/ supervisory team appointment procedures.

4.3 HEI has motivation mechanisms for supervisors to be involved in active researching and be part of relevant scientific network.

4.4 There is well-established system for periodic evaluation of supervision that foster to review existing policies and procedures for supervision and to reveal the professional needs of supervisors.

4.5 HEI fosters the development and professional progress of supervisors.

5. Research Environment

HEI promotes the quality research provisions by creating an environment conducive to research.

Please analyse how the HEI ensures the proper implementation of the doctoral program.

5.1 There are necessary resources for the implementation of doctoral program in accordance with its content, which effectively support the implementation of program's ambitions and create an environment conducive to research.

5.2 HEI monitors the scientific progress of the individual doctoral candidates by achieved scientific results and provides career development opportunities. Supervisors have primary responsibility in doctoral candidate's scientific progress.

5.3 HEI ensures that all doctoral candidates receive useful and regular information and advice to promote research and to have opportunity to work in research teams and different research environments.

5.4 HEI has sound financial distribution policy and capacity to sustain and ensure the integrity and continuity of doctoral programs at the institution.

5.5 HEI has mechanisms in place for the evaluation of the effectiveness, applicability and availability of resources.

6. Doctoral Candidates

Doctoral candidates are recognized as professionals with commensurate rights.

Please analyse whether the doctoral candidates are part of implementation of the HEI's ambitions in research.

6.1 HEI has formal mechanisms to regulate relations between candidate, supervisors and institution where the rights and responsibilities of doctoral candidates are clearly formulated.

6.2 Doctoral candidates are engaged in governance at the university and participate in decision-making.

6.3 HEI has set mechanisms that ensure quality of the student services and doctoral candidates are involved in the quality assurance practices.

7. Internationalization

Internationalization is coherent with institution's research strategy and the individual needs of the doctoral candidates.

Please analyse how the HEI strives to be a part of local and international research networks by the implementation of the doctoral program.

7.1 HEI promotes fruitful and effective collaboration with local and international counterparts aiming to create critical mass and networking as well as to implement joint research and doctoral programs.

7.2 The mobility of doctoral candidates is driven by the candidates' research projects.

7.3 HEI allocates sufficient financial resources for internationalization.

8. PhD awarding

HEI has clear mechanisms for monitoring and assessment of the research results (applicable to the institutions having Specialized Councils).

Please analyse how the Specialized Councils acknowledge the formation of an autonomous researcher.

8.1 Specialized Council has PhD awarding criteria that are applied and periodically reviewed.

8.2 HEI has set criteria for the nomination of the members of Specialized Council/s.

8.3 HEI periodically implements quality assurance of Specialized Council/s' activities.

8.4 Specialized Council/s periodically publishes reports on the development of the relevant fields.

9. Internal quality assurance

HEI has an internal quality assurance system, which promotes continual improvement of all the processes of doctoral education.

Please analyse how the HEI promotes the formation of quality assurance culture for doctoral education.

9.1 There are well-established and publicly available policies and procedures for internal quality assurance of doctoral education.

9.2 The internal and external stakeholders of doctoral education are involved in the quality assurance processes.

9.3 HEI collects reliable information on the implemented processes through feedback mechanisms, which is evaluated for the improvement of the goals and processes of doctoral education.

9.4 The internal quality assurance system of doctoral education is periodically reviewed.

SWOT analysis of the doctoral program

	<p>External Opportunities (O)</p> <p>List 4-5 External Opportunities</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p>	<p>External Threats (T)</p> <p>List 4-5 External Threats</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p>
<p>Internal Strengths (S)</p> <p>List 4-5 Internal strengths</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p>	<p>S-O</p> <p>“Max-Max” Strategy</p> <p>Strategies that use strengths to maximise opportunities</p>	<p>S-T</p> <p>“Max-Min” Strategy</p> <p>Strategies that use strengths to minimise threats</p>
<p>Internal Weaknesses (W)</p> <p>List 4-5 Internal Weaknesses</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p>	<p>W-O</p> <p>“Min-Max” Strategy</p> <p>Strategies that minimise weaknesses by taking advantage of opportunities</p>	<p>W-T</p> <p>“Min-Min” Strategy</p> <p>Strategies that minimise weaknesses and avoid threats</p>



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ACRONYMS

ANQA- National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance, Foundation

EHEA-European Higher Education Area

ERA-European Research Area ()

ESG-Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area

EU-European Union

HE- higher education

HEI- higher education institution

QA-quality assurance

RA-Republic of Armenia

R&D-research and development

TLI-tertiary level institution



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