



CONCLUSION
on
Accreditation of Institutional Capacities of
"Marshal Khanperyants Military Aviation University of the RA Ministry Of Defence" State Institution

General Information about the Institution

Full name of the Institution: "Marshal Khanperyants Military Aviation University of RA Ministry Of Defence" State Institution
Official address: 89 Arshakunyats str., Yerevan, Armenia
Previous accreditation decree and date: Not available

LEGAL BASIS

Guided by the regulation on "State Accreditation of RA Institutions and Their Educational Programs" approved by the RA Government decree N 978-N as of 30 June 2011; by RA Government decree N 959-N as of 30 June 2011 on "Approval of RA Accreditation Standards for Professional Education" as well as by the Procedure on the Formation of expert panel of "National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance" (ANQA) foundation, ANQA discussed the ANQA's draft conclusion on the institutional capacities of "Marshal Khanperyants Military Aviation University Of RA Ministry Of Defence" State Institution (hereinafter: MAU or the University) on the basis of self-evaluation presented by MAU, expert panel report, MAU Action Plan on the elimination of shortcomings mentioned in the expert panel report as well as expert panel opinion on the MAU's Action Plan with the participation of the ANQA representatives, expert panel, and ANQA coordinator of the accreditation procedure.

As a result of the discussion the following was registered:

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

Submission of application	31 August 2017
Submission of self-evaluation report	21 February 2018
expert panel site-visit	4-7 June 2018
Submission of expert panel report	5 September 2018
Submission of action plan on elimination of shortcomings	8 October 2018

RESULTS OF PEER REVIEW

The expertise was carried out by an independent expert panel formed in compliance with the requirements set by the ANQA regulation on "Formation of expert panel"¹. The evaluation was carried out according to the 10 criteria of institutional accreditation approved by the RA Government decree N 959-N as of 30 June 2011².

BRIEF SUMMARY

While carrying out the expertise the expert panel took into consideration that in accordance with its mission, MAU "is a military professional education institution implementing BA and additional educational programs within the system of RA Ministry of Defence (MoD) and based on the national educational experience and international tendencies of military education sphere, directs its activities towards preparation and training of specialists with qualifications in the professions of higher military aviation, communication and anti-aircraft defence, aimed at satisfaction of educational and military needs of the RA MoD". The main goal of MAU is to provide educational services, create and implement military-educational and scientific programs in order to satisfy the needs of the RA Armed Forces (AF).

MAU policy and activity are generally in line with the University's mission which is in compliance with the RA National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The development of the Strategic Plan was carried out in alignment with the RA AF Development Plan 2016-2020 in the aspects relating to the military education and MAU. It is positive that the stakeholders take part in process of strategic planning. The scope of MAU external stakeholders involves the RA AF General Staff, interested departments of the RA MoD, military units which recruit the MAU graduates, and the internal stakeholders are representatives of teaching, administrative and support staffs, as well as cadets. From the perspective of strategic planning it is necessary that MAU should pay attention to the advancement of education which will foster the clarification of the University's development directions and fulfillment of innovation-related studies.

The University constantly keeps in touch with its alumni, opinions about the alumni are always presented from military units based on which the academic programs are improved. However, it is important that the University should regularly discuss the opinions about the alumni received from military units with the heads of chairs and teaching staff representatives in order to make the changes made in the current academic programs purposeful.

MAU prepares BA specialists of higher military professional education with 4-year and 5-year academic programs, one-year courses on "Exploitation of Anti-aircraft Defence Equipment" and "Military Facilities of Radio Connection" as well as organizes courses for the enhancement of qualification of officers' staff. In the four faculties of the University 13 BA academic programs are implemented and the profession of "Exploitation and Application of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles" was first invested since 2017-2018 academic year.

In the development of MAU academic programs, formulation of expected learning outcomes together with state educational standards, MAU mission was served as a basis in parallel ensuring the compliance with the descriptors of the NQF 6th level as well.

An attempt has been made to also align the learning outcomes (LOs) of academic programs with the Dublin descriptors and ABET criteria. It is positive that MAU academic programs are regularly revised and improved based on the feedback of external stakeholders. Besides, the Chief Military Inspection (CMI) operating under immediate supervision of the RA President, conducts overall evaluation of the University's activities including academic programs, proficiency of main and changeable staff based on approved criteria every 5 years.

During the examination MAU is viewed both as military unit and as a military education institution. However, the involvement of cadets in the revision process of academic programs is poor which hinders full participation of cadets in the organization of their education. Besides, the subjects of the block in Engineering in the academic programs are few which can hinder the formulation of competences set by the programs.

In teaching the task-based approach is applied which fosters the development of cadets' analytical and managerial skills. It is necessary that MAU should promote the application of innovative methods in the learning process which will foster the development of cadets' research skills and will enhance the level of their responsibility.

It is positive that there are highly qualified teaching and support staffs for the attainment of goals set for the academic programs. The positioning at MAU is based on competition which is organized jointly by MAU and the RA MoD. The requirements set for professional qualities of teaching staff at MAU per academic program are generic there are no job descriptions for different categories of teaching staff. At the same time there is a risk of ensuring fluent generation change in some professions as far as there are few specialists of some narrow professional subjects.

¹ **Appendix 1** - Expert Panel Composition and ANQA Support Staff

² **Appendix 2** - Summary Evaluation

The workload of teaching staff is big which hinders the fulfillment of research activities by teachers. From the perspective of the staff recruitment the expert panel highlights the importance for MAU to constantly collaborate with civic universities in terms of basic subjects. It is also important to ensure the existence of two or more teachers for one subject which will foster the sustainability of staff, will decrease their workload and will activate collegial communication among teachers.

Trainings and activities directed to the enhancement of qualification of teaching staff are regularly organized at MAU for which short-term and long-term business trips are also ensured. Evaluations of teaching staff are organized at MAU by means of surveys conducted among the cadets, regular class observations, monitorings made by the Quality Assurance (QA) and Analysis Division as well as through analyses of dynamics of annual academic progress of cadets which promote continuous improvement of teaching quality.

In general, the resources of MAU ensure the implementation of academic programs. At the same time it is important for MAU and the RA MoD to find ways towards assurance with necessary resources for the development of the University. Professional classrooms, laboratories and training centers need to be re-equipped with necessary technical means which was stated by the participants of meetings with the expert panel.

The surveys conducted at MAU show that the cadets and teaching staff are not satisfied with library resources which is worrisome from the perspectives of implementation of academic programs and acquisition of LOs. Because of the lack of some equipment, laboratories and facilities at MAU some lessons are organized in military units or in civil universities. The cadets and teachers prefer to have classes in the University which will save time and will reduce transportation costs.

There are clear mechanisms of recruitment and admission of cadets at MAU. In the recent years there is a decrease of number of cadets in the faculty of Anti-aircraft Defense and Communication as compared with the Aviation Faculty.

The cadets are mainly satisfied with the learning environment and organization of education. The cadets have the opportunity to participate in research activities together with teachers and at the same time the cadets' more active involvement in scientific research activities will promote the development of their analytical skills.

There are mechanisms of evaluation of consultancy and educational services of cadets at MAU which fosters the improvement of quality of the provided services and takes into account cadets' needs.

There are MAU strategy and short-term plans reflecting the University's interests and ambitions in research sphere, however, the sequence of steps for the research topics is not defined and the professional directions of MAU are not reflected in them. The equalization of military ranks with scientific degree at MAU is not always justified and it endangers the efficiency of implementation of scientific-research activities at MAU.

The link between the University and scientific institutions in terms of research is weak, while it could be expressed by the implementation of joint scientific projects. The lack of articles published by the staff of the University is worrisome as far as it points out the low level of activeness of implementing research activities. The implemented research activities are not viewed as an educational component and it can have a negative impact on the formation of LOs. It is important that MAU should promote innovative research in which both teachers and cadets will be involved.

The functions of the University in the sphere of international relations and cooperation are very limited and in MAU this process is regulated by the RA MoD respective department. At the same time the opportunities for overcoming the obstacles in the international cooperation have not been studied by the University yet and this hinders further development of internationalization and external relations. Currently there are no planned activities, sufficient financial and human resources to ensure multidirectional development of external relations, enlargement of the scope of integration into the RA higher education system, as well as to foster cooperation with foreign military education institutions and studies of international practice. MAU should try to apply non-standard and innovative methods in the sphere of internationalization in order to promote the development of the sphere.

Although some activities are taken towards enhancement of foreign language proficiency at MAU, there is still a need to enhance the level of proficiency of the English language among both teachers and cadets (enhancement of proficiency of Russian among cadets should be highlighted) which will foster the study of foreign literature, development of external relations, and enhancement of involvement of teaching staff and cadets in the processes of internationalization. There is also a necessity to involve the study of regional languages (Georgian, Turkish, Azerbaijani, Persian) in academic programs.

The management system of the University has its peculiarities as the MAU structure which is typical to university system is combined with the requirements set for military units. The Head of MAU ex officio has the authority to make solitary decisions which are put into action by orders and are obligatory for all the staff members of the military unit. On the other hand, the decisions can be discussed in the collegial governing boards. As a military unit, the MAU's governance and administration are based on defined policy and procedures, and governing bodies act in accordance with set work-regulations which ensure the regularity of management system.

The current management system of MAU which is aimed at the fulfillment of MAU mission and goals, ensures regulated decision-making process. Respective departments of the RA MoD participate in decision-making process as external

stakeholders. At the same time, representatives of teaching staff and cadets have passive participation in decision-making procedures which can hinder the progress of the University and effectiveness of its activities.

MAU gets financial inflow from the RA MoD. The expert panel finds it positive that there is a formulated mechanism for the distribution of financial means. Some expenses are envisaged in the annual budget and they are directed to the fulfillment of MAU goals, however. However, the expenses are not written in details according to strategic goals and academic programs which would make the financial investments more targeted. MAU does not have other financial inflows from the educational process, grants and other sources. The diversity of financial inflows will foster the efficient solution of operative problems and formation of reserve fund.

The expert panel finds it positive that the efforts taken by MAU are directed to the investment of internal QA system, its continuous improvement and formation of quality culture. The great amount of work carried out in the last two years has formed a basis for the development of QA system which will further foster the regularity and continuous improvement of processes. It is positive that the University provides necessary human and material resources for the management of QA processes. At the same time, MAU top management regularly supports the implementation of QA activities, the staff members of the QA and Analysis Department participate in trainings organized by national and international organizations. All the mentioned promotes the development of the QA structure and professional development of the QA staff.

On the other hand, conditioned by the peculiarities of military education, there are some discrepancies with the QA requirements currently existing in the RA education sphere (transparency, availability of information, active involvement of stakeholders in processes, etc.).

Strong points of the University:

1. Clarity of strategic goals and objectives of the University and their compliance with the RA MoD needs.
2. Clear policy on MAU management and administration and bottom-up accountability system.
3. Consideration of external stakeholders' (as clients of academic programs) needs on academic programs.
4. 100% employability of alumni due to filtration of cadets during studies and MAU's efforts.
5. Clarity of military ethical rules and their maintenance by MAU.
6. Teaching staff with high qualifications who meet the requirements of military education.
7. Availability of respective material-technical base for the implementation of academic programs.
8. Efficient mechanisms of transferring knowledge and values to the society.
9. Investment of QA system and involvement of specialists, high motivation of QA staff for the formation and development of quality culture.

Weak points of the University:

1. Lack of autonomy of the University.
2. Lack of transparency of University's activities among the wider range of public.
3. Overloaded teaching staff and lack of main teachers of some major/professional courses.
4. Lack of involvement of cadets in scientific-research activities.
5. Absence of motivation of the officers to carry out scientific-research activities and hold scientific degree in parallel with teaching at MAU.
6. Scarce of laboratory equipment for some major courses.
7. Low level of international cooperation.
8. Lack of international mobility of cadets and teaching staff.
9. Low level of cadets' professional communication skills in foreign languages.

From the perspective of MAU's ambition to be integrated into the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), the international expert has submitted his observations. According to the conclusion, MAU's mission and set goals are defined in the Charter of the University and are fully compliant with the RA MoD. MAU academic programs are developed in accordance with the requirements set by the RA MoD and are directed to the fulfillment of the University's mission and goals. Internationalization is ensured within the scope of opportunities which are defined by the requirements of the RA MoD' provisions and military units. The University tightly cooperates with embassies of different countries. However, it is necessary to create opportunities at MAU to study languages of neighbor states (Azerbaijani, Georgian, Persian, Turkish).

MAU'S COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS ON DRAFT REPORT OF EXPERT PANEL

MAU sent its remarks and comments on the report to ANQA on 02.08.2018. The University submitted its remarks and comments in the Armenian language and they were provided to the local experts. In 29 August 2018 ANQA organized a meeting for the representatives of the University and the expert panel during which the expert panel gave its feedback. Taking into consideration the University's comments, the expert panel compiled the final version of the report which was approved by the panel on 03.09.2018.

MAU ACTION PLAN ON THE ELIMINATION OF SHORTCOMINGS MENTIONED IN THE EXPERT PANEL REPORT

MAU accepts that the recommendations provided by the expert panel are within the scope of the University's strategy, and it has submitted the action plan and time-schedule on the elimination of shortcomings.

Having examined the University's action plan of improvement of institutional capacities based on the recommendations provided in the final expert panel report, the expert panel comes to the following conclusion: taking into consideration the expert panel's recommendations and with the aim to eliminate the identified shortcomings, the University has undertaken the commitment to improve all the aspects of its activity, in particular:

- the major part of the expected defined outcomes complies with the improvements anticipated by the expert panel,
- the comparison of the envisaged mid-term outcomes allows to conclude that the expected result of major part of planned actions is available,
- there are defined staff members and teams responsible for the fulfillment of actions in the plan,
- there are respective resources for the acquisition of major part of outcomes,
- there is a realistic deadline set for the acquisition of major part of outcomes,
- there are measuring indicators of evaluating the actions but the impact indicators are lacking.

The study of the MAU action plan on the elimination of shortcomings mentioned in expert panel report has shown that MAU has mainly taken into consideration the expert panel's recommendations and pointed out shortcomings, and it has the readiness to emend them. The implementation of major part of the University's action plan does not contain risks. The actions and respective steps directed to the improvement are mainly presented in compliance with the expert panel's suggestions.

As a result of expertise the expert panel evaluated the institutional capacities of the University per accreditation criterion by using the “unsatisfactory” and “satisfactory” evaluation scale³. The evaluation is presented in the following table:

CRITERION	CONCLUSION
1. Mission and Goals	SATISFACTORY
2. Governance and Administration	SATISFACTORY
3. Academic programs	SATISFACTORY
4. Students	SATISFACTORY
5. Faculty and Staff	SATISFACTORY
6. Research and Development	UNSATISFACTORY
7. Infrastructure and Resources	SATISFACTORY
8. Social Responsibility	SATISFACTORY
9. External Relations and Internationalization	UNSATISFACTORY

³ The expert panel was guided by the following principles while carrying out the evaluation:

-**unsatisfactory** - if the University does not meet the requirements of the criterion and it is not allowed to continue the activities that way and urgent improvements are needed;

-**satisfactory** - if the University meets the requirements of the criterion yet there might be a need for improvement.

10. Internal Quality Assurance System	SATISFACTORY
--	---------------------

Based on the aforementioned, ANQA suggests the Accreditation Committee to draw MAU's attention to the implementation of the following activities while making a decision:

- 1) To give urgent solution to the problems existing in the spheres of **Research and Development** and **External Relations and Internationalization**.
- 2) According to the requirements of the Clause 12 of the Regulation on “State Accreditation of RA Education Institutions and their Educational Programs” or within the deadlines set by the Accreditation Committee, to regularly present a written report to ANQA on the results of the carried out activities.
- 3) To revise the action plan on the elimination of shortcomings mentioned in the expert panel report taking into account the expert panel's remarks on the action plan.

ANQA finds that the suggested reforms will foster the fulfillment of the Military Aviation University's ambitions mentioned in the self-evaluation report and will serve as a basis for the next evaluation.

Head of ANQA Institutional and
Program Accreditation Division

Chair of Expert Panel

ANQA Coordinator

EXPERT PANEL COMPOSITION

- **Hermine Grigoryan** – Vanadzor State University, Dean of Faculty of Physics & Mathematics, Candidate of Physical & Mathematical Sciences, Associate Professor
- **Alexandr Kryachko** – Head of Chair on Radio-technical and Optoelectronic Systems of Saint Petersburg State University of Aerospace Instrumentation, Doctor of Technical Sciences, Professor, accredited expert of the Russian Federation
- **Gegham Korayan** – Deputy Head of Institute of Information & Communication Technologies and Electronics on Educational Affairs of Armenian National Polytechnic University, Associate Professor at the Chair of Electronic Techniques, Candidate of Technical Sciences
- **Avetis Gevorgyan** – Head of Department of Quality Assurance of Vocational Education of PAARA, Candidate of Economical Sciences
- **Vigen Mkrtchyan** – 4th year student of Faculty of Radio Physics of Yerevan State University

The works of the expert panel were coordinated by Varduhi Gyulazyan – Senior Specialist at ANQA Department of Institutional and Program Accreditation.

The translation was provided by Arpine Hakhverdyan- alumni of Armenian-Russian University.

ANQA Support Staff

- **Varduhi Gyulazyan** - Senior Specialist at ANQA Department of Institutional and Program Accreditation and Coordinator of MAU institution accreditation process
- **Arpine Hakhverdyan** - Alumnus of Armenian-Russian University