National Center For Professional
Education Quality Assurance
Foundation

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

ANQA-2021/52

DECREE N 52

19 June 2021

ON ACCREDITATION OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES OF
SHUSHI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

General Information about the Institution

Full name of the Institution:	"Shushi University of Technology" foundation
Official Address:	A. Hovhannisyan, Stepanakert, Republic of Artsakh
Previous Accreditation decision and date:	has not been made

Guided by the regulation on the "State Accreditation of RA Education Institutions and their Academic Programs" approved by the RA Government Decree N 978-N as of 30 June 2011; by the RA Government Decree N 959-N as of 30 June 2011 on the "Approval of RA Standards for Professional Education Accreditation"; by the procedure on the "Formation and Functioning of the Accreditation Committee of the 'National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance' Foundation (hereinafter referred to as ANQA)" as well as by the regulation on the "Formation of the Expert Panel of ANQA", the ANQA Accreditation Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Committee) discussed the issue of accreditation of institutional capacities of the "Shushi University of Technology" (hereinafter referred to as ShUT) in the session of the Accreditation Committee held on 15 January 2021.

Having examined ShUT's self-evaluation, remarks and suggestions on the draft report of the expert panel, the expert panel report, the HEI's action plan on the elimination of shortcomings mentioned in the expert panel report, having heard the conclusions on the expert panel evaluation of the Shushi University of Technology which were made by the three members selected by the Chairman of the Accreditation Committee and were formed as a result of the meetings with the expert panel members and the University's representatives; as well the comments and suggestions made by the Accreditation Committee members, the Committee stated the following:

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

Submission of application: 18 January 2019

Submission of revised self-evaluation: 15 July 2019
Site-visit by the expert panel: 11-14 November 2019
Submission of expert panel report: 24 August 2020
Submission of action plan on the 9 September 2020
elimination of shortcomings:

The expertise of Shushi University of Technologty was carried out by an independent expert panel formed in compliance with the requirements set by the regulation on the "Formation of the Expert Panel of the ANQA". 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 2011.

Among 10 criteria of the institutional accreditation, four of them – "**Research and Development,**" "**Infrastructure and Resources,**" "**External Relations and Internationalization**" and "**Internal Quality Assurance System**" were evaluated as unsatisfactory.

1. *There are trends and examples in promotion of credible award of qualifications but there are also certain risks in terms of quality assurance of credible qualifications.*

There is a statue on the approval of professional academic programmes. The academic programs offered by the University clearly define the goal and expected outcomes, which are in compliance with the mission of the University. The structure and content of the academic programmes were made based on the analysis of similar academic programmes of the leading Armenian universities.

There is an outcome-based approach, in the framework of which the methods of teaching, learning and assessment have been aligned with each other. However, that needs to be clarified. No analysis of the unified system of assessment of the ShUT students has been carried out. There are no criteria for the evaluation of graduation work, master's theses, which makes the transparency and objectivity of the evaluation and credible award of qualifications risky.

ShUT's strategic plan attaches importance to the development of a long-term programme for recruitment, evaluation, improvement of the teaching staff, as well as the creation of relevant conditions and incentive mechanisms. Though the processes of recruitment and the creation of appropriate working conditions have been relatively satisfactory, no processes have been carried out their evaluation, development of qualification enhancement programmes, as well as creation and implementation of incentive mechanisms. The HEI pursues a policy on rejuvenation of the teaching staff. Most of the lecturers are invited on an hourly basis from the Republic of Armenia. Employees with short-term employment contracts are prevailing. The University has a problem of ensuring the sustainability of the teaching staff, and currently this problem is more acute for objective reasons. Despite the assurances of the Artsakh government, the provision of material-technical means and resources is a key problem at the moment.

2. *There are trends for development and governance is directed towards quality improvement and credible award of qualifications. However, effective governance and quality assurance*

system are in the stage of development.

ShUT is guided by 2016-2021 strategic plan (SP). The current organizational structure of the University and governance system mainly ensure the implementation of the university's activity, strategic goals, and credible award of qualifications. With the first goal of the strategic plan, t ShUT attaches importance to the introduction of an internal quality assurance system. The quality assurance system is still at the stage of development. Although the internal quality assurance policy has been developed, the mechanisms for its implementation and procedures are very limited, the principles of internal quality assurance have not yet been translated into concrete processes as well.

3. *Internationalization and research activities do not sufficiently support the credible award of qualifications.*

The directions of research activities are not specified in the strategic plan of ShUT, the availability of human and material resources in the given field is not evaluated. There are no work plans in the research programmes. There is no data on the people responsible for the implementation of the programs, deadlines, resources and expected results. ShUT also has a serious work to do towards internationalization of research work. Some attempts are being made at the University towards formation of research and creative environment. There are planned research and invention initiatives. However, their implementation is difficult to assess in the absence of a laboratory base. ShUT closely cooperates with Armenian universities.

4. There are key shortcomings in terms of credible award of qualifications, but there are also trends for improvement.

5. ShUT's preliminary plan on elimination of shortcomings mentioned in the expert panel report mainly included all the consultations, some of which have already been implemented. However, in the current post-war situation it is difficult to predict the full implementation of the programme.

Taking into consideration the above mentioned, as a result of an open voting, the Accreditation Committee:

DECIDED

1. **To award institutional accreditation to "Shushi University of Technology" foundation for 2/two/ years.**
2. After the publication of the decision on accreditation award, to submit the reviewed action plan on the elimination of shortcomings mentioned in the expert panel report and respective time-schedule to ANQA within two months taking into account:
   a) the need to give urgent solutions to the problems existing in the fields of "**Research and Development**," "**Infrastructure and Resources**," "**External Relations and Internationalization**" and "**Internal Quality Assurance System**";

b) the requirement to ensure targeted goals and quantitative indicators for the evaluation of progress and effectiveness of the HEI's ongoing processes;

c) the necessity to clarify the amount of human and financial resources, the timeframe for the evaluation and implementation of the processes carried out by the HEI;

d) the international expert's peer-review results regarding the University's ambitions to be integrated into the European Higher Education Area.

3. To pay special attention to:

a) the monitoring, efficiency evaluation and improvement of academic programs and carried out processes;

b) the reinforcement of the link between learning and research;

c) the enhancement of result-based management system;

d) principles of the formation of the teaching staff and issues on sustainability;

e) the identification of research priorities and formation of strategy;

f) the establishment of an internal QA sustainable system and the creation of culture of continuous improvement.

4. In accordance with the requirements set by the Clause 12 of the regulation on the "State Accreditation of RA Education Institutions and their Academic Programs", every 6 /six/ months to submit a written report to the ANQA on the results of carried out activities by ensuring the evaluation of improvement of the University's activity, innovations and achievements.

5. To assign the ANQA to carry out mandatory monitoring of efficiency of ShUT's activity in accordance with the KPIs.

Chairman of the Accreditation Committee: A. Saghyan

19 June 2021
Yerevan