

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



**EXPERT PANEL REPORT
INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION OF
FRENCH-ARMENIAN PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION CENTER FOUNDATION**

Yerevan – 2024

INTRODUCTION

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

The expert examination was carried out by the independent expert panel, which comprises four local experts and was formed in accordance with the requirements set by the National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation in regulation on "Formation of the Expert Panel."

The College funded the accreditation process.

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

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

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

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

When conducting the assessment, the expert panel considered that the center is a professional educational institution implementing academic programs of levels 4 and 5 of the NQF, which has adopted as its mission:

1. To create an exemplary structure of vocational education in Armenia, which will allow Armenian youth to receive high-quality vocational education in primary vocational/secondary vocational academic programs,
2. To enable students to establish themselves in their future lives and achieve success thanks to the acquired skills and abilities that will meet the demands of the labour market and continuous development,
3. Teaching French allows students to become familiar with foreign cultures and communicate with foreign partners, particularly through exchange programs.

The expert panel considered the organizational and legal form of the TLI as a professional educational institution, as well as the connections with the international partner SEPR and the existing features in the management field. The expert panel also considered that the TLI is going through the institutional accreditation process for the first time. At the same time, based on the research results, considering the institution's strengths, the expert panel emphasized special attention to the untapped potential of the centre, which contributes to the more effective development of the institution in the long and short term.

Even though the TLI is in the capital of RA, where the competition is high, it has managed to occupy its special place in the labor market within the framework of the relevant academic programs implemented at the 4th and 5th levels of the NQF. The Center has undertaken a rather ambitious mission and vision that is achievable within the facilities' capabilities, and the implementation process involves more than the planning envisioned. However, the expert panel sees more ambitious opportunities in terms of long-term sustainable development of the institution, particularly in the areas of internationalization and ensuring the "production" of the academic programs being implemented.

The center was able to introduce effective elements of strategic management. A strategic plan for implementing goals has been introduced. Although there are uncertainties in planning and monitoring processes that need to be improved, a certain operational process has already been implemented, which is positive and important. From this point of view, there are certain problems due to the lack of human resources. At the same time, the institution's financial stability, diversified inputs and ongoing work in this direction, and experience managing short-term and mid-term programs are notable. The importance of document-process communication in the institution and

improving processes in this direction also deserve attention.

Although the quality assurance system is still "newly implemented" in the center, important successes have already been achieved, as several mechanisms are already in place. The institution has precedents of processes that have passed the full PDCA cycle. However, the "introduction of the quality assurance system" led to more regulation, coordination of several processes, and implementation of much research, which were the basis of some changes. There is still work to conduct comprehensive research and analysis based on multifaceted data to provide a more objective picture of the various processes and facilitate risk management and "correct" decision-making.

At the same time, activities that involve a wide range of internal and external stakeholders in the institution's management, strategic, and quality assurance processes still need to be carried out.

As a result of the above, the expert panel concludes that although the center has developed and implemented a strategic plan for the first time and has just implemented the quality assurance system, there is still a need for improvement work. However, the planning of the processes is mainly derived from the rather optimal planning of the material and other resources of the institution, at the same time, the impact of the quality assurance processes on the management processes is noticeable. All this has led to the continuous development of the institution.

The TLI's APs are drawn up in accordance with the NQF and the National Educational Standards. Although there are no clear comprehensive analyses of the labor market, the studies carried out by the SEPR initiative on the labor market allow for development guarantees for introducing academic programs. Other studies initiated by SEPR also guarantee the continuity and development of already existing academic programs. The center emphasizes the use of interactive teaching and learning methods and the objectivity of the assessment process.

Work was also carried out to ensure students' practical abilities. Separate successful assignments aimed at developing analytical abilities were created, but the processes in these directions still need to be improved. It is worth noting that individual studies determine several processes for improving APs. Still, for the effectiveness of the process, it will be important to carry out comprehensive analyses based on multi-faceted data. At the same time, the expert panel considers the work of internationalization and "production" of academic programs as opportunities for long-term development.

The TLI introduced and improved a policy for faculty selection, which increased the process's efficiency. It is remarkable and important that the center has improvement processes based on the needs of the faculty, in which the activities implemented by SEPR have a significant role. Also, the institution uses faculty evaluation and advancement mechanisms, but linking these mechanisms with strategic goals will contribute to increasing the efficiency and continuous development of these processes and, at the same time, will contribute to the more effective implementation of strategic goals. The institution needs to replenish its human resources to achieve its strategic goals.

The TLI has the appropriate infrastructures for implementing the APs, which are constantly

replenished based on current observations and modern development trends. The center has paid special attention to creating a safe and secure environment for the stakeholders and uses insurance processes. The center conducts surveys among students, but the mechanisms that determine the use and availability of resources still need to be clarified and improved. With the above in mind, the expert panel finds that the TLI provides reliable awarding of qualifications.

The institution has a clear recruitment and admissions process and has been able to increase the number of applicants. The center emphasizes the educational needs of students and implements various processes in this direction, but there is still a lack of motivation for students from this point of view. Several events organized by the center aimed at students' interests and the implementation of services that contribute to their careers are appreciated. At the same time, the works aimed at strengthening the connection with the graduates are noticeable, but there is still work to be done in this direction. The expert panel also finds that the college has work to do to ensure students' involvement in research.

The expert panel finds that the center needs to carry out basic work in the research direction, such as adopting policies, defining research directions, defining goals, and implementing processes aimed at them. At the same time, the introduction of incentive mechanisms in this direction and the importance of the research component in the mechanisms of progress are important. At the same time, the experts appreciate the presence of educational works and manuals, which are authorized by the faculty in the educational process. They consider that the institution has a suitable potential for developing the research direction. In this regard, it is important to start the already implemented programs.

The TLI has an accountability mechanism for internal and external stakeholders and works to ensure transparency of processes. The center works towards transferring values and knowledge to society, implementing several short-term programs, and continuously expanding them. The expert group finds that the institution can assume public responsibility for presenting them in the appropriate professional circles. The institution emphasizes the establishment of external relations, including with international partners. In this direction, the ongoing works are noticeable, which has led to expanding the scope of cooperation, which in turn has noticeably led to the continuous replenishment of resources and the creation and provision of processes for mobility and exchange of experience for students and lecturers. However, the expert panel believes that cooperation with employers needs to be improved in terms of content. Based on the institution's facilities, the expert panel also considers the need to take necessary steps to develop students' and teachers' language skills.

Based on the above, the expert panel concludes that the processes carried out by the TLI ensure the continuous development of the institution. At the same time, it considers that there are wider development opportunities.

Strengths of the Institution:

1. A company that guarantees a unique mission and ambitious vision in a competitive environment.

2. The active elements of strategic management and the importance of monitoring mechanisms.
3. Constantly replenished material resources and stable and diversified financial income.
4. Experience in implementing short-term and mid-term programs.
5. Linking the document to the process and the existing positive prerequisites is important.
6. APs in line with international experience and modern requirements.
7. The availability of approaches to study and the implementation of international experience, as well as the academic mobility of lecturers and students.
8. Clear mechanisms for recruitment, selection, and admission of students.
9. Emphasis on student-centered environment and interactive methods of teaching and learning.
10. Availability of faculty selection policy and improvement and professional advancement mechanisms.
11. Potential to carry out research works.
12. Continuous replenishment and updating of resources arising from educational and other purposes.
13. Availability of accountability tools to internal and external stakeholders.
14. A wide range of external relations and cooperation.
15. Involvement in various international structures, programs, rich experience, and continuous development trends.
16. Availability of research on quality assurance processes and the importance of an objective image of the assessment processes.
17. Existence of processes that have completely passed the PDCA cycle.

Weaknesses of the Institution:

1. Weak involvement of various internal and external stakeholders in the institution's managerial, strategic, and quality assurance processes.
2. Certain lack of human resources according to strategic goals.
3. Lack of assignments aimed at developing students' analytical, critical, research abilities and certain imperfection of practical abilities and skills.
4. Lack of motivation of students to highlight their own needs.
5. Lack of goals, clear policies, and incentive mechanisms in the research field.

6. Imperfection of the mechanisms for raising the resource needs of internal stakeholders, their applicability and availability.
7. Content-wise, there is a narrow scope of cooperation with employers.
8. Level of language proficiency not in line with international development opportunities.
9. Lack of comprehensive research and analysis based on multi-faceted data.

Main recommendations:

Mission and Purposes

- Implement effective mechanisms to raise the needs of a wide range of internal and external stakeholders, aimed at their reflection in forming the institution's goals, issues and new opportunities.
- Define key indicators/results for intermediate and efficient evaluation of strategic goals and improve monitoring mechanisms aimed at ensuring institutional guarantees for their implementation.

Governance and Administration

- Provide mechanisms for institutional involvement of lecturers and students in management processes to ensure full representation of stakeholders' views.
- Improve strategic management mechanisms by clarifying planning and evaluation processes and paying attention to the provision of human resources for implementing strategic goals.
- Introduce mechanisms for evaluating the effectiveness of various processes and documents based on multi-faceted analyses to ensure their continuous improvement and research-based management according to the main principle of management.

Academic programs

- Provide assignments aimed at developing students' analytical abilities and further improve the process of developing practical abilities and skills by applying existing resource opportunities and developing cooperation with employers.
- Observe the possibility of "production" according to the implemented academic programs and take steps in that direction, aiming at the most effective organization of practices and ensuring the institution's development through this.
- Observe the possibilities of internationalizing the implemented academic programs and take steps to increase the institution's visibility, internationalization, and creation of long-term and effective development guarantees.

Students

- Ensure the motivation of students aimed at raising the needs of students with the various existing mechanisms aimed at increasing the efficiency of meeting their needs.

Faculty and staff

- Provide appropriate faculty for educational purposes.
- Improve the mechanisms of evaluation and certification of faculty, connecting them with the goals and development trends of the TLI. Include factors related to them: language skills, conducting research, professional qualities, etc.

Research and Development

- Establish a clear research field policy based on the TLI's specificities, distinguishing certain research directions and ensuring the field's development.
- Introduce mechanisms of encouragement for the faculty and students to carry out research work in accordance with the research objectives by ensuring the study of international experience and introducing innovative ideas.
- Develop and diversify the analytical, critical, research skills-building assignments presented to students. Provide a motivating and stimulating environment to implement students' research works.

Infrastructure and Resources

- Develop and introduce mechanisms for raising the resource needs of internal stakeholders and increasing their applicability and availability, aiming to create continuous guarantees of process efficiency.

Societal Responsibility

- Take appropriate steps to present the best practices related to the TLI's robust processes in relevant professional circles.

External Relations and Internationalization

- Expand the scope of cooperation with employers, also in terms of content, aimed at increasing the efficiency of various institutional processes and the objectives of the RA.
- Considering the opportunities of the foundation to implement international academic programs to ensure an appropriate level of knowledge of foreign languages for internal stakeholders.

Internal Quality Assurance System

- Motivate internal and external stakeholders to participate in quality assurance processes to ensure the objectivity of research and strengthen the guarantees of continuous process improvement.
- Factors (focus on collecting multifaceted data and conducting complex analyses) and the

process of improving them based on assessments aimed at ensuring the reliability of research.

Chair of Expert Panel

10.01.2024

DESCRIPTION OF EXTERNAL REVIEW

COMPOSITION OF EXPERT PANEL

External evaluation of the institutional capacities of the "French-Armenian Professional Education Center" Foundation was carried out by the following expert panel.

1. **Armenuhi Sargsyan** - Candidate of physical and mathematical sciences, head of the expert panel.
2. **Olya Avetisyan** -Yerevan State College of Light Industry, Clothing Modelling and Designing lecturer, member of the expert panel.
3. **Eleonora Ghazaryan** - Associate Professor of Children's Stomatology and Orthodontics, Ph.D., member of the expert panel.
4. **Tamara Petrosyan** - 5th-year student at the Armenian Medical University, student-expert of the expert panel.

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

The works of the expert panel were coordinated by Lilit Ghazaryan, a specialist of the Secretariat Department of the ANQA.

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

PROCESS OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW

The College applied for state institutional accreditation by submitting to ANQA (09.02.2023), filling out the application form, and presenting copies of the license and respective appendices. The ANQA Secretariat checked the data presented in the application form and the appendices in the application package.

After deciding to accept the application (03.03.2023), ANQA and the College signed an agreement. The college's self-evaluation was carried out by the working group formed by the college director's order.

Self-evaluation

The self-evaluation of the college's institutional capacity was presented on 25.05.2023. The self-evaluation was carried out by the institution's employees (14). External stakeholders did not participate in the self-evaluation process. A college staff member analyzed each criterion,

considering the work orientation and criterion requirements. The self-evaluation was mainly descriptive and general, which did not allow the experts to get an idea of the real situation in the college during the preliminary evaluation.

Preparatory phase

After the TLI submitted the self-evaluation report and the attached documents, the ANQA coordinator observed the package to reveal its correspondence to the ANQA's requirements. The self-evaluation and the attached documents were provided to the expert panel for the preliminary evaluation. The composition of the expert panel was agreed upon with the College and confirmed by the order of the ANQA Director.

The expert panel conducted the preliminary evaluation after reviewing the self-evaluation report and college documents. According to the format, the lists of questions and objectives for different departments and target groups and additional documents have been prepared.

Within the scheduled time, the expert panel summarised the preliminary evaluation results, and the Chair of the expert panel and the process coordinator set the site visit schedule. According to the ANQA manual, the intended close and open meetings with all the target groups, document observations, professional meetings, etc., were included in the schedule. The expert panel members also had professional meetings with the AP responsible presented by the College, faculty, and students. Before the professional meetings, the experts studied the assignments given to the students. Before the professional meetings, the experts examined the assignments given to students within the modules to understand how well these assignments were aimed at achieving the performance standards set in the module.

Preparatory visit

Before the site visit, a preparatory visit to the college was carried out on October 9, 2023. The ANQA coordinator, the head of the institutional program accreditation department and the head of the expert panel were present at the meeting. During the meeting, the schedule of the site visit was introduced and agreed upon with the college and discussed and mutually agreed decisions were made regarding the technical, organisational, and information issues of the site visit, the behaviour, and ethical norms of the meeting participants.

Site visit

The expert panel site visit took place from October 16-19, 2023. One day before the scheduled visit (15.10.2023), all members of the expert panel and the coordinator had a closed

meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the college according to the standards, clarify the questions to be asked of the target groups, and discuss the procedures for the meetings and the next steps. The site visit started and ended with meetings with the director of the College. All the participants of the meetings were selected at random from a pre-provided list. All scheduled meetings were held. During the visit, the expert panel conducted a study of documents. At the end of each working day, the expert panel closed meetings were held to discuss the results of the interim expert assessment, and at the end of the visit, the main results were summarized.

The expert panel reached its conclusion on the criteria after discussing and analyzing all members' work, always applying the principle of consensus.

Expert panel report

The expert panel members and the ANQA coordinator prepared a preliminary version of the expert report. After the expert panel members approved it, the preliminary report was provided to the college on 19.12.2023.

The college did not submit any comments on the preliminary report. The expert panel prepared the final version of the report, which was approved by the group on 10.01.2024 and provided to the college.

Lilit Ghazaryan

Coordinator of the Expert Panel

10.01.2024

EVALUATION ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

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