

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



**EXPERT PANEL REPORT
INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION OF
"GYUMRI STATE SPORTS COLLEGE OF OLYMPIC RESERVE" SNOG**

Yerevan – 2025

INTRODUCTION

The institutional accreditation of the Gyumri State Sports College of Olympic Reserve (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 is made up of four local experts and was formed by the requirements set by the National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation in regulation on “Formation of the Expert Panel.”

The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Armenia 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 cooperation between the institution and employers 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.

Context of the Evaluation of the College's Activities

Gyumri State Sports College of Olympic Reserve was founded in Gyumri, Shirak region, and has been implementing general education and secondary vocational educational programs for about 38 years. Through its activities, the college fosters the development of sports education in the region, being one of the sports educational institutions of the Republic of Armenia. In 2024, the College implemented its first strategic development program, aiming to improve management systems and ensure sustainable progress in improving the quality of education. The College is in the first stage of institutional accreditation.

Development Directions and Educational Programs of the College

The college plays a significant role in Shirak Province's socio-economic and sports development. It offers a "Physical Culture and Sports" VET program and provides coaching qualifications.

Students: 93 students are involved in the current programs.

Lecturers: The college has 26 lecturers, 13 of whom are full-time employees, 8 part-time, and 5 external collaborators.

Graduates: Most graduates find employment in regional educational institutions and sports centres.

Sports Disciplines: The programs include weightlifting, Greco-Roman wrestling, judo, and boxing, meeting regional demands.

The college's strategic goal is to become a leading center for sports education in the region, combining educational and sports excellence.

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

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, carried out the expertise of the Gyumri State Sports College of Olympic Reserve institutional capacities. 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 evaluation, the expert panel considered that the college is a VET institution with an established mission. The panel acknowledged that the TLI, as a vocational educational institution, is significant for Shirak Province and Armenia and is undergoing institutional accreditation for the first time.

The college has developed a strategic plan that reflects its mission. The expert panel considers it positive that the institution has conducted long-term planning and focuses on defining goals and objectives. However, the planning process contains uncertainties regarding timelines, resources, and outcomes, which limit the entire achievement of the program’s objectives. The college needs in-depth analyses to ensure that strategic planning is clear, objective, and practical.

The college has collegial and sole management systems, but the board of directors is predominantly concerned with operational issues, leaving strategic decisions in the background. The faculty and students are involved in the management bodies but exhibit passivity. The lack of diversification of financial income and the absence of strategic financial planning hinder development opportunities. While the college exhibits a collaborative culture and dedicated work, short-term planning and operational efficiency evaluation still need improvement.

The Basic Principles of Quality Management (PDCA) are not implemented in all processes. Still, it is positive that the college's primary process, related to trainers' activities, is implemented according to this principle. The expert panel points out that the college still has work to do regarding establishing precise mechanisms for data collection, publications, and evaluation mechanisms concerning the quality of academic programs and the qualifications awarded. Transparency in management decisions also remains an area for improvement.\

The college has started to develop a quality assurance system and create some initial documents, but the process is still in its early stages. Data collection through surveys is an essential first step, but the analysis and its impact on operations remain limited. There is a significant need for a unified data management system and the development of a quality assurance culture. As a result of the above, the expert panel concludes that although the college

has developed and implemented its strategic plan and is trying to establish a quality assurance system, it still faces challenges. The college has a solid culture regarding coaching activities and collaborative administrative processes, but research-based management processes are still underdeveloped.

The expert panel highly appreciates the college's efforts to enhance the effectiveness of its academic program, specifically in increasing practical hours and improving the educational curriculum. The existence of planning documents for educational processes and specific reforms in organising internships are positively assessed. However, there is a need for improvement in the uniformity of documentation, processes, and monitoring mechanisms.

The expert panel positively evaluates the college's efforts to develop the potential of the faculty and staff, including support for novice lecturers, the development of a competitive selection process for faculty, and the exchange of training experiences. However, mechanisms for improving the professional qualification of the faculty and engaging young staff still require improvement, as do involvement in research activities and the development of a staff reserve.

The college has defined strategic objectives for resource development and effectively utilises its existing resource base to support educational and coaching processes. However, additional steps are needed to modernise resources, supplement professional literature, and engage alternative financial resources. Expanding cooperation with employers and introducing electronic systems will improve these processes' effectiveness. Considering the above, the expert panel concludes that the TLI ensures a reliable awarding of qualifications.

The college has established effective mechanisms for student selection, admission, and recruitment, contributing to the involvement of well-prepared students. The availability of counselling services and a career centre positively impacts a student's academic and athletic progress. However, the career centre's activities need to be expanded, the alumni database has been more informational, and student involvement in research activities has improved.

In its strategic plan for 2024-2029, the college emphasizes developing students' analytical, creative, and critical skills, with plans to involve faculty and coaches in research activities. However, specific plans and processes in this area have yet to be implemented. Integrating research components into curricula and expanding practical experience could help develop a more systematic approach.

The college is introducing a system of accountability, but it still lacks a clear structure, and the director's reports are formal. The college uses various platforms to ensure the transparency of its activities but lacks an official website and effective mechanisms to assess its public relations. The cultural and sports events organised for the public are commendable, contributing to the development of sports and patriotic education. The college has initiated

establishing partnerships with other organizations, but these collaborations have not yet been legally formalized. There are plans for internationalization, particularly in foreign language teaching and development, to help expand the network of international partners. The modernization of the resource base is seen as an essential precondition for internationalisation, which is currently focused on the sports sector.

Based on the above, the expert panel concludes that the TLI is investing considerable efforts and implementing processes to develop the institution. However, there is still work to be done in this direction.

Strengths of the Institution:

- Reflection of state and societal demands in the college's mission.
- There is a precedent for the PDCA cycle at the level of coaches' activities.
- Availability of an educational process and environment to ensure practical abilities and skills.
- Application of work-based learning approaches in the practice process.
- There is a culture of support for beginner lecturers.
- Culture of experience exchange resulting from training programs.
- Effective use of available resources in educational and practical processes.
- Effective implementation of consulting services to support the educational process.
- Effective operation of the career centre aimed at students' future development.
- Effective implementation of events to cooperate with society and present sports achievements.
- Representation of athletes on international platforms and the potential for regional knowledge transfer.
- Effective cooperation in the field of sports with CIS countries.

Weaknesses of the Institution:

- Lack of precise planning of resources and outcomes to achieve the strategic plan's goals.
- Deficiencies in data collection and analysis mechanisms.
- Absence of financial planning and diversification of resources.
- Fragmentation and incompleteness of quality assurance tools.
- Lack of identification of faculty professional development needs and corresponding training programs.
- Insufficient components in curricula for developing students' analytical skills.
- Non-analytical nature of the accountability system.
- Lack of an official website and issues with transparency in social media activities.
- Lack of cooperation agreements with partner organizations.

- Deficiency of mechanisms for assessing the effectiveness of public relations.
- Low level of foreign language proficiency among faculty and students.

Recommendations:

Database management

- Consider the possibility of expanding the college's mission to include promoting a healthy lifestyle culture to strengthen its social role in the region, enhance public health, and expand opportunities for financial diversification.
- Implement clear and measurable KPIs that reflect the ongoing results of strategic actions.
- Establish a long-term financial planning system with resource forecasting and engagement strategies to enable more stable infrastructure development, program funding, and human resource support.
- Strengthen the strategic role of the management board by implementing mechanisms for strategic decision-making and performance evaluation while encouraging proactive participation of faculty and students in collegial bodies.
- Align the long-term strategic goals with short-term plans by defining clear actions, financial allocations, and measurable outcomes to ensure controlled and gradual implementation.
- Create a hierarchical accountability system at all levels, where data collection and analysis serve as the foundation for evaluating departmental efficiency, and reports include analytical components.
- Diversify financial resources by engaging in international programs, grants, and partnerships and developing a business plan or collaboration strategy to use semi-renovated buildings effectively.

Credible award of qualifications

- Introduce analytical assignments, team discussions, and research papers to ensure the development of students' analytical, written, and oral skills.
- Develop and implement a curriculum monitoring regulation that will allow for the collection and analysis of data on the strengths and weaknesses of academic programs.
- Introduce a comparative analysis methodology supported by data documentation and the exchange of best practices.
- Develop and implement a targeted training program for lecturers and coaches to ensure the continuous development of skills and knowledge in line with current professional requirements.

- Implement mechanisms for continuously assessing faculty needs and, based on the results, plan and conduct relevant training programs.
- Take steps to diversify and increase financial revenues to support the achievement of strategic goals, prioritize the enhancement and modernization of material and technical resources, and align them with international standards as much as possible.
- Expand the scope of collaboration with employers to ensure their involvement in educational processes, facilitate the application of relevant resources, study external experiences, and implement external evaluation processes.

Long-term development

- Develop and implement a clear policy and procedures for identifying the needs of students and graduates, including data collection, analysis, and application of results.
- Continuously review and update the graduate database by tracking their long-term career paths to ensure more comprehensive and accurate employment data.
- Activate and coordinate the activities of the Student Council, promoting broader student participation in its work.
- Implement clear short-term plans for achieving strategic research goals to ensure the fulfilment of objectives.
- Introduce research and analytical components (such as specific assignments, research papers, course projects, etc.) within professional modules, setting precise requirements.
- Implement mechanisms for encouragement and motivation to ensure the involvement of lecturers, coaches, and students in research activities.
- Establish a clear hierarchical accountability system and improve reporting by ensuring comprehensive data and analytical components.
- Analyze the college's capabilities and labor market needs to implement short-term programs.
- Develop and implement a structured policy for fostering international cooperation, along with mechanisms for encouragement and promotion.
- Introduce mechanisms to improve foreign language proficiency among lecturers, including coaches and athletes.
- Expand the scope of collaborations and establish institutional foundations to ensure their continuity.
- Take active steps to participate in international and national grant programs to support the implementation of the college's strategic goals.
- Strengthen the role of the quality assurance officer, clarify their responsibilities, and provide necessary resources, along with opportunities for professional development.
- Diversify data collection mechanisms to ensure the continuous improvement of all college processes.

- Ensure the involvement of students and external stakeholders (employers, graduates) in quality assurance processes to enhance the comprehensiveness and analytical depth of the obtained information.

Armenuhi Sargsyan, Chair of Expert Panel

07.02.2025

DESCRIPTION OF EXTERNAL REVIEW

COMPOSITION OF EXPERT PANEL

The following expert panel carried out an external evaluation of the institutional capacities of the Gyumri State Sports College of Olympic Reserve.

1. **Armenuhi Sargsyan** – Candidate of Physical and Mathematical Sciences, Lecturer at Shirak State University, head of the expert panel.
2. **Ellen Davtyan** – Deputy Director for Academic Affairs at Yerevan Olympic Reserve State Sports College, member of the expert panel.
3. **Arax Aghajanyan** – Quality Assurance Specialist at Stepanavan Professor A. Kalantaryan State Agricultural College, member of the expert panel.
4. **Inga Harutyunyan** – Student Expert at Ararat Regional State College.

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

Varduhi Gyulazyan, Head of ANQA's Institutional and Program Accreditation Department, coordinated the expert panel's work.

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 (01.02.2024), 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, ANQA and the College signed an agreement. The timetable of activities was prepared and approved.

Self-evaluation

Considering that the educational institution is going through institutional accreditation for the first time and is in the initial stage of the formation of the culture of quality assurance in college, ANQA conducted four-day online workshops in February. The workshops aimed to prepare colleges for the organizational stages of the accreditation process. During the workshops, the interpretations of the institutional accreditation criteria and standards, the

electronic questionnaire to be filled in for applying for institutional accreditation, and the features of self-evaluation and SWOT analysis were presented. The educational institution carried out a SWOT analysis, which was discussed with the employees of the ANQA. During the implementation of the self-evaluation, the ANQA organized discussions to clarify the issues.

The self-evaluation of the college's institutional capacity was presented on 23.09.2024. Representatives of the institution's administrative and educational staff, lecturers, and students were involved in the self-evaluation process.

Preparatory phase

After the submission of the self-evaluation report and the attached documents by the TLI, the ANQA coordinator observed the package to reveal its correspondence to the requirements of the ANQA. 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 was confirmed by the order of the ANQA Director. Within the scheduled time, the expert panel summarized the preliminary evaluation results, and the Chair of the expert panel, together with the process coordinator, set the site visit schedule.

Preparatory visit

Before the site visit, a preparatory visit to the college was carried out on 21.11.2024. 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, organizational, and information issues of the site visit, the behaviour, and ethical norms of the meeting participants.

Site visit

The expert panel site visit occurred from December 4-6. During the week preceding the site visit, the members of the expert panel and the coordinator visited the college, observed the infrastructure and resources of the college, conducted class observations, and observed exams. Then, the experts and the coordinator had a closed meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to identify 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 college director. All the meeting participants were randomly selected from a pre-provided list. All scheduled meetings were held. During the visit, the expert panel studied documents.

At the end of each working day, the expert panel held closed meetings to discuss the results of the interim expert assessment, and at the end of the visit, the main results were 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 29.01.2025.

The college did not submit observations regarding the preliminary report. The expert panel prepared the report's final version on 07.02.2025.

Varduhi Gyulazyan

Coordinator of the Expert Panel / 07.02.2025

EVALUATION ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

CRITERION	CONCLUSION
<i>I. Mission and Purposes</i>	Satisfactory
<i>II. Governance and Administration</i>	Unsatisfactory
<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>	Unsatisfactory