



National Center For Professional
Education Quality Assurance
Foundation

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

ANQA-2021/60

DECREE N 60

October 22, 2021

ON ACCREDITATION OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES OF

Artsakh State University SNCO

General Information about the Institution

Full name of the Institution: Artsakh State University SNCO
Official Address: 5 Mkhitar Goshi Str., Stepanakert, Republic of Artsakh

Previous Accreditation **Not available**

decision and date:

Guided by the Statute 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, the RA Government Decree N 959-N as of 30 June 2011 on Approval of Accreditation Criteria for the Tertiary Education of RA, the Procedure on the Formation and Operation of the Accreditation Committee of the National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation (hereinafter “ANQA”) as well as by ANQA’s Regulation on the Formation of the Expert Panel, ANQA’s Accreditation Committee (hereinafter the “Committee”) discussed the issue on accreditation of institutional capacities of Artsakh State University SNCO (hereinafter “ArSU, TLI”) in the session of the Accreditation Committee held on October 22, 2021.

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

Submission of application: October 16, 2019
Submission of the self-evaluation: December 30, 2019
Site visit by the expert panel: March 9-12, 2021
Submission of expert panel report: June 22, 2021

The external review of the ArSU's institutional capacities was carried out by an independent expert panel formed in compliance with the requirements set by ANQA's Regulation on the Formation of the Expert Panel. The evaluation was carried out according to the 10 criteria of institutional accreditation approved by the RA Government Decree N 959 as of 30 June 2011.

Among 10 criteria of the institutional accreditation, "**Research and Development**", "**External Relations and Internationalization**" were evaluated as unsatisfactory.

Having examined the ArSU's self-evaluation of institutional capacities, the expert panel report, remarks and suggestions on the preliminary version of the expert panel report, the follow-up plan; having heard the conclusions on the expert panel evaluation of the ArSU, which were made by the three members selected by the Chair of the Accreditation Committee and were formed as a result of the meetings with the expert panel members and the ArSU's representatives; as well the comments and suggestions made by the Accreditation Committee members, the Committee stated the following:

1. The ArSU generally ensures the credible award of qualifications.

The academic Programmes (APs) generally align with the ArSU's mission. The APs are drawn up on outcome-based principle. The mapping of the Aps's outcomes and NQF levels has been carried out. The basis for the Aps' development and enhancement was the comparative analysis, which was carried out both with RA and some foreign HEIs.

There is a policy for choosing teaching and learning methods. There are some mechanisms in place for the Aps' monitoring, but it is necessary to stimulate the monitoring and analysis processes.

The ArSU has academic staff with necessary professional qualities. Practical representatives and employers are also included. A certain policy for the selection of the academic staff has been established. An academic programme for the improvement of teachers' qualifications has been introduced on a credit basis. The academic staff is willingful to carry out various experiments, enhancements, changes.

For effective implementation of the APs, the ArSU has an appropriate resource base and learning environment, which is regularly replenished and enhanced.

The successful launch of the Aps's reforms, academic programmes with more practical orientation and policy aimed at the continuous enhancement of the teaching staff's capacities and the possibilities for the upgrading of the educational environment serve as the basis for the credible award of qualifications.

The ArSU generally provides the credible award of qualifications. There are shortcomings that can be corrected in case of the follow-up plan's implementation.

2. Governance and quality assurance systems generally support the enhancement of the credible award of qualifications.

The ArSU attaches importance to the strategic management at all levels.

In the ArSU's strategic plan (SP) for development, clear goals and ways to achieve them are defined with qualitative and quantitative indicators. However, the ArSU's annual reports, which present its successes and challenges, are not performed according to the established indicators.

A number of structural changes have been made after the SP's development. However, there are no evaluations of their effectiveness. It is important that the ArSU realizes and sees its weaknesses. Certain steps are already being taken by the management staff to increase the cooperation with external stakeholders and ensure students' engagement. The development of the quality assurance system and the formation of quality culture are highlighted.

Though there are problems in the governance system related to the involvement of external stakeholders, collegial and financial management, the ArSU has still a strong will to face and fulfill the mission it has declared.

Governance and quality assurance systems are in the stage of formation. However, there are development trends and the governance is aimed at quality enhancement and the credible award of qualifications.

3. Internationalization and research/creative activities have development trends.

The ArSU makes efforts for the development of scientific research area. Though research is officially considered to be the SP's priority, it is one of the least developed areas of the TLI's activity.

There are not any policies planned, as well as mid-term and short-term plannings of research activities in this direction. The link between the educational process and the research component is still insufficient.

There is a policy to encourage external relations. The ArSU continuously develops its external relations, increasing the scope of cooperation with the RA's HEIs, local organizations and schools.

Being a TLI of an unrecognized state, the ArSU's management staff realizes the importance of internationalization and takes steps to overcome academic isolation and enter the international arena. The ArSU first develops cooperation with institutions of other unrecognized states.

The ArSU has planned to expand its participation in international programmes through internationalization at home in cooperation with various HEIs, which will also contribute to the expansion of its research.

Internationalization and research/creative activities have development trends and support the credible award of qualifications.

4. There are shortcomings that do not have crucial impact in terms of the credible award of qualifications. Grounds are laid for enhancement.

5. Though not all recommendations have been fully included in the follow-up plan, the planned work, if implemented, will contribute to the increase in the credible award of qualifications.

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

DECIDED

- 1. To award institutional accreditation to Artsakh State University SNCO for 4 /four/ years.**

2. After the publication of the decision on accreditation award, to submit a revised follow-up plan based on the expert panel report and respective time schedule to ANQA within two months, taking into account the need to give urgent solution to the problems existing in the fields of **“Research and Development”**, **“External Relations and Internationalization”**.
3. To pay special attention to:
 - a) the review of the issues and steps related to the scientific research activities of the ArSU’s Strategic Plan 2019-2023, making them more realistic;
 - b) internationalization at home policy development and implementation, which implies the study of international practice in various fields (management, academic programmes, etc.) and localization;
 - c) the diversification of the mechanisms for data collection, processing and validation of the collected results;
 - d) the involvement of external stakeholders in the TLI’s strategic management;
 - e) collegial and financial management, preparation of a mid-term financial plan;
 - f) the expansion of the TLI’s autonomy;
 - g) decision-making and preparation of reports based on evaluations, clear quantitative and qualitative data;
 - h) the enhancement of the result-based management system, the involvement of external stakeholders in the enhancement-led processes;
 - i) the involvement of stakeholders in the academic programmes’ development and review as well as quality assurance processes;
 - j) the implementation of PDCA cycle in all the processes;
 - k) the identification of research priorities, strategy formation;
 - l) the strengthening of the link between learning and research.
4. To organize an internal audit of the ArSU’s Aps with the involvement of external experts.
5. In accordance with the requirements set by point 12 of the Statute on the State Accreditation of RA Education Institutions and their Academic Programs, every 2 /two/ years to submit a written report to the ANQA on the results of carried out activities by ensuring the evaluation of enhancement of the ArSU’s activity, innovations and achievements.

6. To assign the ANQA to carry out mandatory monitoring of effectiveness of the activities of the ArSU in accordance with the KPIs.

Chair of the Accreditation Committee:

A. Saghyan

October 22, 2021

Yerevan