

NATIONAL CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE FOUNDATION



**EXPERT PANEL REPORT**  
**ON INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION OF STEPANAVAN STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE**  
**AFTER PROFESSOR A. KALANTAR**

**Yerevan 2020**

## INTRODUCTION

The institutional accreditation of "Stepanavan State Agricultural College after professor A. Kalantar" non-profit organization (hereinafter: SSAC or the College) is carried out within the framework of the prerequisite set by the EU budget support financial agreement N 5. The accreditation process was organized and coordinated by the "National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance" foundation (ANQA).

While acting, ANQA was 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, as well as by the "Approval of RA Standards for Professional Education Accreditation" approved by the RA Government decree N 959-N as of 30 June 2011.

The expertise was carried out by the independent expert panel which was compiled in accordance with the requirements set by the ANQA regulation on "Formation of the Expert Panel". The composition of the expert panel included 1 international and 4 national experts.

The current report reflects on the expertise of the College's institutional capacities in accordance with state accreditation criteria and standards.

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## **SUMMARY OF THE EVALUATION**

### **STRENGTHS OF THE INSTITUTION**

1. Key role in the regional education system.
2. Attractiveness of the College for applicants in the region.
3. Assurance of stakeholders' participation in the processes of governance.
4. Compliance of majority of academic programs (APs) with the mission of the College.
5. Active activity of the Career Development and Consultancy Center.
6. Students' active participation in all activities organized in the College.
7. Devoted teaching and administrative staff.
8. Formulated system of internal and external accountability.
9. Cooperation with employers of the region.
10. Readiness of the staff to participate in quality assurance (QA) processes.

### **WEAKNESSES OF THE INSTITUTION**

1. Absence of strategic management.
2. Absence of PDCA cycle of quality management.
3. Absence of analyses of compatibility of teaching, learning and assessment methods with anticipated learning outcomes (LOs).
4. Scarcity of practical components in modular syllabi.
5. Practice of teaching up to 10 modules at average by the same teacher and absence of substitute teachers. Low level of teachers' participation in professional and methodical trainings.
6. Absence of steps taken towards development of research.
7. Insufficiency of resources necessary for efficient implementation of the College's APs.
8. Absence of diversification of financial flows.
9. Poor information about the activities of the College available in the official website.
10. Absence of coordinated approaches towards formation of an environment which would foster the expansion of the College's external relations and experience exchange.
11. Non-coordinated steps taken towards establishment of internal QA system.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Mission and Goals**

1. To clarify the strategic directions as a result of in-depth analyses and discussions with internal and external stakeholders, thus making the directions more realistic taking into account the available resources which will serve as a basis for the development of the future strategy.
2. To set clear time-schedule for the implementation of strategic goals, as well as measurable key performance indicators (KPIs) to evaluate the attainment of outcomes.
3. To form committee which will be responsible for monitoring the progress of the strategic plan (SP), for identifying the current problems hindering the efficient implementation of strategic goals as well as for pointing out the solutions to the identified problems.

## **Governance and Administration**

4. To organize trainings for administrative staff, aimed at investment of processes necessary for effective management as well as their continuous improvement.
5. To make interrelated short-term, mid-term and long-term planning,
6. To invest mechanisms of evaluating the efficiency of administrative units and their activities, as well as those of identifying and disseminating best practice.
7. To review the administration of policies and procedures set at all levels of the College's governance, by integrating the PDCA principle of quality management.
8. To regularly make quantitative and qualitative analyses of information obtained from external and internal environments by applying reliable methodology.
9. To establish risk management system.
10. To publish data on employment of the College's alumni by providing information on the quality of awarded qualifications to the society.

## **Academic Programs**

11. To carry out activities for ensuring compliance of all APs with the profile/direction of the College.
12. To operate clear formal mechanisms of coordinating the link between the College and employers with the aim to foster the implementation of APs in compliance with the labor market needs.
13. To discuss the appropriateness of investing new specialties with stakeholders, in particular, those relating to the fields of agrotourism, greenhouse, cereal and vegetable farming, gardening, apiculture (beekeeping), etc.
14. To make mapping of students' progress for each AP (in compliance with anticipated LO) and to continuously monitor students' progress by means of providing clearly set tasks which are defined in modular courses in advance.
15. From the perspective of compliance of anticipated outcomes, to invest mechanisms of evaluating the efficiency of selection of teaching, learning and assessment methods by regularly modernizing them.
16. To make analyses of efficiency of internships and based on them to take necessary steps towards their improvement.
17. To add practical components in modular syllabi and to create respective conditions for the organization and conduction of practical courses by using the resource bases of employers of the given field.
18. To inform students of the College about plagiarism and its consequences by means of holding special courses and other activities directed to the prevention of plagiarism. To raise the awareness on student-centered learning among students and teachers.
19. To invest policy on benchmarking of APs and respective methodology, to make benchmarking with foreign leading education institutions, to foster the modernization of APs and create opportunities of students' and teachers' mobility.
20. By means of active involvement of internal and external stakeholders to make monitoring of all APs on a regular basis, as well as evaluation of their efficiency and to propose respective suggestions for improvement to the authorized bodies.

## **Students**

21. To involve successful alumni of the College in groups compiled for the recruitment of applicants.
22. To regulate the organization of facultative courses and consultancy provision.
23. To develop mechanisms of involving part-time students involved in different APs in the Student Council (SC).
24. To improve the procedures and mechanisms of identifying and evaluating full-time and part-time students' academic needs by ensuring their regularity and by involving more stakeholders.
25. To frequently organize students' visits to other colleges of different regions of the Republic of Armenia (RA) with the aim of practice exchange.

## **Teaching and Support Staff**

26. With the aim to ensure efficiency of APs, to define clear requirements for professional qualities of teaching staff for each AP as well as criteria for evaluating their practical skills, taking into consideration the peculiarities of the given APs.
27. To regularly evaluate and revise the mechanisms of identifying teachers' needs.
28. Based on identified needs of teaching staff, to take activities in the direction of improvement of teaching staff in both methodical and professional terms, thus promoting the preparation of high quality graduates in compliance with current needs of the labor market.
29. To invest mechanisms of involving and promoting young specialists.
30. To make human resource planning, i.e. to carry out activities in the direction of establishing reserve of teaching staff in order to minimize the risks relating to the stability of organization of educational processes.
31. To expand the scope of cooperation with teachers who are employers in the given fields.
32. To regularly evaluate the efficiency of performance of administrative and support staff from the perspective of fulfillment of strategic goals.

## **Research and Development**

33. To define research ambitions of the College, highlighting the regional needs and giving importance to the possible commercialization of research outcomes and making them as a source of income.
34. To make studies and localization of best practice of development in local and international colleges in the field of research.
35. To organize trainings on research for teaching staff and students by ensuring clear methodology, to develop research competences year by year (e.g. defining problems of research, accumulation of reliable sources, proper use of different research sources, ability to synthesize data, data-based decision making, evaluation of one's own research activity and obtained results, comparison of one's own and others' similar research activities and obtained outcomes, reporting on research outcomes, feedback from other researchers, etc.).
36. To develop clear mechanisms of involving and promoting students and teachers to be involved in research by activating the collaboration among students and teachers both in the College and in other education institutions.
37. To make students' individual works, essays and practical tasks more current and research-based by ensuring that the topics of research derive from regional needs.
38. To apply to diverse grant projects in order to get funding for research.

### **Infrastructure and Resources**

39. To make analysis on availability of resources necessary for efficient implementation of each AP.
40. To make financial allocation in line with the SP goals of the College; to monitor and evaluate the efficacy of use of financial resources in accordance with strategic goals.
41. To establish cooperation with employers of the given fields with the aim to serve their resource bases for satisfaction of needs of the College's APs.
42. By means of different grant projects to improve building facilities, to replenish labs, to acquire advanced equipment and respective materials.
43. To replenish library fund with respective professional literature by ensuring membership to diverse library networks.
44. To diversify financial income (participate in grant projects, activate provision of short-term programs, carry out entrepreneurial activity, etc.) and to ensure their sustainability.
45. To establish electronic system of internal documentation circulation which will facilitate internal information exchange among structural units.
46. To create conditions for ensuring first aid to students and staff of the College.
47. To adjust infrastructure resources of the College to stakeholders with special needs by giving an opportunity to ensure involvement of suchlike students and staff members.

### **Social Responsibility**

48. To make accountability mechanisms more analytical, to define mechanisms for their discussion and to regularly evaluate the efficiency of the process and to improve them.
49. To complete the information available on the official website of the College by ensuring information about the College in foreign languages as well.
50. To consider the appropriateness of establishing a unit which will be responsible for activities of public relations (PR) and which, by using different means, will foster the preservation and reinforcement of the College's positive image, will raise public rating and visibility as well as will analyze the efficiency of PR activities.
51. To continue expanding the scope of paid services of different types and financial income by organizing additional short-term courses.

### **External Relations and Internationalization**

52. To define realistic strategic goals and objectives for external relations and internationalization.
53. To analyze the efficiency of activities directed to the development of the College's external relations; to consider the appropriateness of establishing a separate unit which will be responsible for external relations and internationalization.
54. To expand the scope of functioning cooperation with local and international organizations. To take advantage of the Board members' links to formulate the cooperation.
55. To improve the foreign language proficiency of internal stakeholders, taking into consideration professional directions.

### **Internal Quality Assurance System**

56. To develop internal QA policy and procedures.

57. To evaluate the level and efficiency of human, material and financial resources allocated by the College for the implementation of internal QA processes as well as to take steps towards improvement.
58. To invest criteria for selection of staff members responsible for internal QA issues, to regularly make needs assessment and evaluate their performance by expanding the opportunities of their professional development based on needs assessment results. To take steps to ensure quick substitution of new respective specialists in case current employees responsible for internal QA issues leave.
59. To ensure the application of PDCA cycle in all processes of the College.
60. To expand the scope of current involvement of stakeholders in QA processes and to evaluate the efficiency of their involvement.
61. To provide feedback to stakeholders regarding the results of surveys and accumulated information relating to them as well as to regulate the processes of data management.

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**Hakob Knajyan**

**24.01.2020**

## COMPOSITION OF THE EXPERT PANEL

The external evaluation of the College's self-evaluation and quality assurance processes was carried out by the following members of the expert panel:

1. **Hakob Knajyan** - Head of Division of Educational Reforms at Armenian National Agrarian University, RA, Chair of the expert panel
2. **Arpine Darbinyan** - Staff member responsible for Quality Assurance at Gegharkunik Regional State College, member of the expert panel
3. **Elen Harutyunyan** - Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Applied Mathematics and Physics at National Polytechnic University of Armenia and lecturer at Yerevan college of the same university, member of the expert panel
4. **Romain Hulpia** - Doctor of Psychological and Pedagogical Sciences, Quality Assurance expert of “VLHORA” and “VLHUR” Belgian organizations, Belgium, member of the expert panel
5. **Ofelya Arzumanyan** - 2<sup>nd</sup> BA student at Faculty of Radio Engineering and Communication Systems at National Polytechnic University of Armenia

The activities of the expert panel were coordinated by Lilit Pipoyan, Senior Specialist of Institutional and Program Accreditation Division and Anahit Terteryan, Assistant to ANQA Director.

The translation was provided by Ani Shahinyan, Specialist of Center for Quality Assurance and Reforms of Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences.

Particia Georgieva, Vice-Rector on Quality Assurance and Accreditation at Bulgarian University of Agribusiness and Rural Development participated in the accreditation process as an observer.

The composition of the expert panel was agreed upon with the College and was appointed by the ANQA Director.

All the members of the expert panel, including the translator and the coordinators and the observer, signed agreements of confidentiality and independence.

## PROCESS OF THE EXPERTISE

### Application of State Accreditation

SSAC applied to ANQA for institutional accreditation by submitting the application form, the copies of the license and respective appendices.

The ANQA Secretariat examined the data presented in the application form, the attached documents and the ANQA electronic questionnaire completed by the College. ANQA made decision on submission of the application, afterwards compiled and approved the time-schedule of activities.

### Preparatory Phase

In accordance with the form required by ANQA, the College submitted the self-evaluation of institutional capacities and attached package of documents. ANQA organized the translation of self-evaluation by involving external specialist.

The ANQA coordinators examined the self-evaluation report (SER) and attached package with the aim to check their correspondence with the technical requirements set by ANQA. The College's SER

and attached package were submitted by ANQA after having positive opinion of the coordinators of the accreditation process.

In order to undergo preliminary evaluation, the SER was provided to the expert panel the composition of which had been agreed upon with the College in advance and approved by the order of ANQA Director.

In order to prepare the expert panel for the upcoming activities and to ensure the efficiency of processes, ANQA responsible staff members conducted trainings in the following topics:

1. accreditation process, peculiarities of expertise, rules of ethics and conduct of experts,
2. preliminary evaluation of institutional self-evaluation based on examples taken from practice,
3. expert panel site visit by role plays,
4. preparation of expert panel report.

Having reviewed the SER and the attached package of documents provided by the College, the expert panel made a preliminary evaluation. According to the set form, the lists of necessary documents for additional observation as well as questions and issues for further clarification by mentioning respective structural units and target groups were formed.

Within the scheduled time the expert panel summarized the results of the preliminary evaluation and the coordinators of the accreditation process together with the Chair of the expert panel formed a time-schedule of the site-visit<sup>1</sup>. In accordance with the ANQA manual on expertise, the time-schedule comprised the planned meetings with all the groups, close and open meetings, review of documents, visits to structural units of the College, etc.

### **Preliminary Visit**

Due to its geographical position, the preliminary visit to the College was made by phone call. During the phone conversation the time-schedule of the site-visit was finalized, the arrangement on the room for the expert panel and meeting hall was made, and the issues on respective furniture and technical equipment were clarified.

The organizational, technical and informational issues as well as those relating to the conduct of participants and norms of ethics regarding the site visit were discussed and mutually agreed decisions were made.

### **Expert Panel Site-Visit**

The day before the visit planned in accordance with the time-schedule (13.01.2020) all the members of the expert panel (including the international expert), one of the coordinators - Anahit Terteryan, and the translator had closed meeting in Stepanavan. During the meeting the expert panel came to an agreement on the evaluation framework and criteria which, according to ANQA procedures, include the following two levels: 1) meets/satisfies the requirements of the Criterion, 2) does not meet/does not satisfy the requirements of the Criterion. The issues for further clarification, strong and weak points of the College according to criteria, procedure of focus group meetings and ethics of conducting meetings were finalized and further steps were clarified.

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<sup>1</sup>APPENDIX 2. Time-schedule of expert panel site visit

The site visit was made on 14-16 January 2020. The site visit launched and finished by the meetings with the Head of the College. In order to clarify some issues, the expert panel selected the members of focus groups, i.e. representatives of teaching staff, students, alumni, employers, members of self-evaluation working group, from the lists which were provided by the College to the expert panel beforehand. During the site visit the expert panel reviewed documents<sup>2</sup>, observed resources<sup>3</sup> and had meetings with focus groups in different structural units of the College. The expert panel highly appreciates the open discussions with the participants of the meeting.

The information received from different meetings as well as the results of documentation review and observation of resources were summed up at the end of each day and in the final meeting which was organized upon completion of the site visit. The expert panel discussed the main results and came to an agreement on separate standards of accreditation and afterwards - on satisfaction of requirements set by the criteria. The final conclusions on satisfaction of criteria were made by all members of the expert panel by open discussion based on the principle of consensus.

### **Expert Panel Report**

After the site visit as a result of discussions the expert panel prepared the report on institutional accreditation, based on the College's self-evaluation, evaluation of attached documents and FINDINGS of the site visit. Each member of the expert panel had his/her own investment in preparation of the report and gave his/her feedback on the overall report.

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**Lilit Pipoyan**  
**Anahit Terteryan**

**24.01.2020**

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<sup>2</sup> APPENDIX 3. LIST OF REVIEWED DOCUMENTS

<sup>3</sup> APPENDIX 4. RESOURCES OBSERVED BY THE EXPERT PANEL

## EVALUATION ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

### CRITERION I. MISSION AND GOALS

**CRITERION:** The policies and procedures of the institution are in accordance with the institution's mission which is in line with ANQF.

#### FINDINGS

The mission of the College is defined in the Strategic Plan (SP) 2015-2020. The College finds the most important objective of its mission to prepare high quality professionals having vocational education in the field of agriculture of the region who will be competitive in the labor market. The mission adopted by SSAC is in compliance with the respective level of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

In order to fulfill the set mission, the College has defined the ways in the SP which will lead to the attainment of the mission. According to the set deadlines it is not visible what objectives for the fulfillment of the SP goals should be solved and to what extent they will lead to the fulfillment.

As a regional college, the SSAC has its unique role for the local community. It should be stated that the activity which the College carries out is mainly in compliance with its mission but it should also be mentioned that the SP goals are not always interlinked with the current situation of its financial resources.

The expert panel finds it positive that the College gives importance to the reflection of its internal and external stakeholders' needs in the SP goals. Acting in and serving specifically for the sphere of agriculture of the region, the College has a clearly set frame of stakeholders who are interested in the fulfillment of the SSAC's mission. However, the reflection of involvement of stakeholders, especially external ones, in the definition of the goals is poor because of the absence of respective mechanisms. Although SSAC gives importance to the satisfaction of its external and internal stakeholders' needs, targeted and coordinated activities directed to cooperation are missing. It should also be stated that the local market needs are evaluated spontaneously rather than in a coordinated way.

The expert panel positively evaluates the SSAC staff's motivation to fulfill the defined mission and goals. However, the absence of toolset which would evaluate the attainment of the mission and goals as well as that of the direct link among reports, separated SP spheres and directions do not allow to state the fulfillment of the set goals. It was also worrisome that although the SP is coming to the end in 2020, a number of goals are not fulfilled yet. There are not set key performance indicators (KPIs) for the evaluation of results of the implementation of the College's mission and goals which impedes the identification of achievements and omissions as well as the implementation of processes of further efficient planning.

The expert panel finds that it is necessary to set deadlines for the implementation of each SP goal, as well as outcomes and methodology for their measurement and accordingly to make financial planning.

**CONCLUSION.** The expert panel evaluates the compliance of SSAC institutional capacities with the requirements of the Criterion 1 as *satisfactory*.

## CRITERION II. GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

**CRITERION: The institution's system of governance, administrative structures and their activities are efficient and are aimed at the accomplishment of mission and goals of the institution preserving ethical norms of governance.**

### FINDINGS

The governance and decision making processes of the College are made in line with the RA legislation and the SSAC Charter according to which the founder of the College has the right to make the ultimate decision on solving any question relating to the activity and management of the College. With the aim to ensure local collegial management, the authorized body approves the composition of the Board which consists of 11 members, and the Board selects the Head who is in charge of managing ongoing activity of the College. The governance of SSAC is based on the collegial principle.

The decision making processes of the College are regulated according to respective documents. The decisions are made in compliance with ethical rules ("Labor Ethics and Code of Conduct", "Internal Disciplinary Rules", the Ethics Committee has been formed at the College). All the positions are filled in respective staff members, and job descriptions are developed for all positions. However, it should be stated that the College doesn't make analyses on satisfaction of available human, material and financial resources for the fulfillment of the ambitious goals it has set, and as the site visit showed, the College doesn't have necessary resources yet.

The governance system and current regulations of the College formally give teachers and students the opportunity to be involved in different governing bodies and to have direct or indirect participation in management processes of the College, however, no analysis on their involvement has been made. The site visit showed that both teachers and students involved in the Board of the College have active participation in the sessions of the Board. All the members of the teaching staff are involved in the Pedagogical Committee, besides, those members have also the opportunity to raise their concerns in chair sessions. It is positive that the relations between the staff members and students are unconstrained which gives students the opportunity to directly communicate with the management and to actively participate in chair sessions. The Student Council (SC) also has active participation in the governance of the College. However, the College doesn't make analyses to evaluate the satisfaction of teachers and students with their involvement in the processes of making decisions relating to them.

There are two levels of planning at the College - strategic long-term and short-term. As the analyses of documents showed, short-term plans are mostly not interlinked with the SP. The College hasn't set mechanisms of implementation and monitoring of short-term and long-term goals.

The decision making of the College is to some extent based on the results of surveys on identification of stakeholders' needs and discussions of focus groups. However, the lack of study of external factors influencing the activity of the College limits the extent of reliability of data and the opportunities to quickly and flexibly respond to labor market changes. It must be stated that the governance of the College is mainly made at the intuitive level; the data collection processes are not directly linked with the processes of planning and development and revision of strategic plans. The data collection processes dominantly have a situational character and are not coordinated by procedures developed in advance. It is a matter of concern that the PDCA cycle of quality management, as a culture and principle of management, does not serve as a basis for the implementation of policies and administration of procedures which puts at risk the efficiency of the governance system.

The College makes attempts to conduct surveys among its internal stakeholders in order to evaluate the efficiency of academic programs (APs) and other processes, to organize focus group discussions, however, the methodology of conducting those surveys and analyzing the data is not clear, the representativeness of participants is not always ensured, and the efficiency of mechanisms and toolset are not evaluated which makes the available information incomplete and unreliable.

The publicity of the SSAC's activity is ensured mainly by means of the official website of the College, social media and booklets which contain information about educational processes of the College, but the quantitative and qualitative data about APs and awarded qualifications are missing. The mechanisms evaluating the availability and objectiveness of publications are missing either.

**CONCLUSION.** The expert panel evaluates the compliance of SSAC institutional capacities with the requirements of the Criterion 2 as *unsatisfactory*.

### CRITERION III. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

**CRITERION:** The programs are in concord with the Institution's mission, form part of institutional planning and promote mobility and internationalization.

#### FINDINGS

The College implements vocational education by APs for full-time study in the following six specialties: "Veterinary Medicine", "Milk and Dairy Product Technologies", "Exploitation and Renovation of Agricultural Machinery and Facilities", "Organization and Management of Transportation", "Accounting", and "Management", and for part-time study - the specialty of "Veterinary Medicine". The qualifications awarded for full-time study in the specialties of "Accounting" and "Management" which respectively lead to the preparation of accountants and managers, do not adhere to the agricultural direction, and the qualification awarded in the specialty of "Organization and Management of Transportation" partially adheres to the mentioned field. All the APs of the College have been developed on the basis of state vocational education standards approved by the RA Government and are in line with the RA NQF.

In spite of the fact that while integrating APs the College makes attempts to study the labor market needs of the region/marz, suchlike comprehensive analyses haven't been made in the College yet. Nevertheless, the site visit showed that the dialogue between the SSAC and employers is quite tight which gives opportunities to improve APs, to prepare graduates in line with labor market needs as well as to increase the number of applicants. Taking into consideration the peculiarities of the region, the format of the College-employer informal dialogue may practically be more efficient, however, the expert panel finds that it is necessary to start up setting clear formal mechanisms for coordinating the cooperation between the College and employers, to reinforce it and to ensure its sustainable continuation.

The research/study at the College is made by the modular system. The goals and learning outcomes (LOs) are described for all modules taught at the College in accordance with the state vocational education standards. The learning methods are defined for each outcome of the modules, and the methods are reflected in modular syllabi which are formed by each teacher. Based on modular syllabi, the teachers make thematic plans and afterwards - curricula.

It should be mentioned that the anticipated outcomes defined in modular syllabi mostly highlight theoretical knowledge rather than skills and competences. The employers also stated about the need to add practical components in courses.

The College has a "Policy on Selection and Modernization of Teaching and Learning Methods", however, teaching and learning methods are not always linked with the anticipated outcomes defined in the state education standards. The SSAC has a "Regulation on Assessment of Students' Knowledge" but as the site visit showed, many teachers are unaware of the regulation; while assessing students, every teacher is based on his/her own experience and on criteria which are not publicized anywhere. There are not clear criteria set for the evaluation of final attestation exams. In general, the meetings during the site visit showed that teachers have a problem in terms of selecting teaching, learning and assessment methods in compliance with outcomes which may hinder the acquisition of LOs.

As the site visit showed, many employees are unaware of the essence of student-centered learning.

The College hasn't invested clear mechanisms for evaluating the efficiency of selection of learning methods except for surveys and discussions among the class observers and teachers which (discussions) are organized mainly in informal meetings and which relate to the omissions registered as a result of class observations.

In the College the internships are organized based on signed contracts. The SSAC has internship programs, the internships are instructed by heads of internship who are attached for this goal, and in the end students submit reports. As the meetings during the site visit showed, in some cases the public sector provides limited opportunity for internships (mostly activities with equipment) which doesn't foster efficient organization of internships. In general, there aren't studies on efficiency of internships which may impede the formulation of students' necessary practical skills.

There are no mechanisms directed to the assurance of academic honesty. The College tries to struggle against plagiarism by providing assignments to students, such as individual works.

There is a procedure of grade appeal which increases the level of objectiveness of the assessment system.

The SSAC has made attempts to make comparative analysis with Gavar State Agricultural College after A. Tamamshev, in particular, with the modular syllabus on "Veterinary Medicine", however, the College hasn't registered any tangible outcome as a result of the mentioned analysis. In the site visit it turned out that students' participation in different events (international competition devoted to cheese making, conference on "Management and Marketing", etc.) has informally promoted the comparison of students' outcomes. However, the College doesn't have any policy and methodology of conduction of benchmarking, neither mechanisms fostering mobility. Although the SSAC APs are similar with suchlike APs of other RA colleges due to the fact that the APs are developed on the basis of the state standards which could promote internal mobility among colleges, there hasn't been registered any cases of internal and external mobility.

The College has developed a "Policy and Procedure on Evaluation of Quality of Professional Academic Programs" which, however, does not function. The evaluation of efficiency of APs is made in non-coordinated way, and it is mostly based on the reports provided by presidents of final examination committees, discussions organized at chairs as well as dialogues with employers. It must be stated that the steps taken towards elimination of omissions and shortcomings which have been identified as a result, in some cases have been sent to the authorized body - National Center for Vocational Education

and Training Development (NCVETD) as proposals. In addition, the curricula, modular syllabi and related documents which are necessary for their implementation are being monitored by the NCVETD in a certain regularity. However, the College doesn't function coordinated processes of monitoring its APs.

Although the meeting with the College's employers showed that in general they are satisfied with the APs implemented by the College, in the APs, particularly those for part-time study, there is a need to equip students with skills to apply their theoretical knowledge in the practical field.

**CONCLUSION.** The expert panel evaluates the compliance of SSAC institutional capacities with the requirements of the Criterion 3 as *satisfactory*.

## CRITERION IV. STUDENTS

**CRITERION: The Institution provides support services to students ensuring productive learning environment.**

### FINDINGS

The processes of recruitment of students are organized in accordance with the order N 234-N as of 5 April 2012 by the RA Minister of Education and Science. The admission for full-time study is made on the basis of applications submitted by applicants who have at least basic education, and in case of part-time study - at least secondary education. In the site visit it turned out that in recent years the College has revised the mechanisms of student recruitment based on carried out analyses due to which the number of applicants has been increased in recent times. With the aim to increase the number of applicants, the SSSAC applies different promotional means such as booklets, calendars, professional videos, TV advertisement. To reach the mentioned goal, some groups consisting of the employees of the College are formed who visit different education institutions of the region in order to introduce the advantages and opportunities provided by the College to senior schoolchildren. The College also analyses the reasons of dismissals and tries to take steps towards solution of revealed problems, in particular, provision of scholarship, increase of students' motivation by individual talks, etc. As the site visit showed, the main reasons of dismissal of students are the violation of internal disciplinary rules, termination of education after demobilization of conscripts of the military service and some social problems.

In order to identify students' needs and to make proposals, the College has put a box of suggestions, and students sometimes speak up about their problems orally by means of anonymous surveys and focus group discussions. The Career Development and Consultancy (CDC) Center also deals with the identification of students' academic needs. The CDC Center cooperates with the Student Council. The CDC Center conducts surveys on quality and efficiency of teaching among students. According to the regulation, the surveys are conducted after completion of term examinations - in February and in June. The Educational-Methodical Committee presents the results of surveys to respective chairs which organize discussion about the results at chairs within two weeks after receiving the data. Students can also participate in discussions, and their written opinions are discussed at chair sessions.

The procedures on organization of facultative courses and consultancy for students are not coordinated yet. There isn't any separate clearly set regulation on addressing to the administrative staff but the steps to be taken by students to address to the administrative staff are described in different regulations (Internal Disciplinary Rules, SC Charter, CDC Center's Charter, etc.). As it turned out in the site visit, in spite of the fact that there is no clear time-schedule for addressing to the administrative staff, the administration is open, and students can get support and guidance any time. Although the expert panel highly evaluates the open-door policy of supporting students which ensures positive relations between the College and its students, it should be noted that the absence of clearly set time-schedules in this direction does not always allow the administrative staff to ensure necessary environment for efficient fulfillment of their activities. The mentors of each group of students also provide necessary support and guidance to students.

According to its charter, the CDC Center implements short-term academic courses for students which gives them the opportunity to get some professional experience, e.g., "Some Types of Dairy Product" and "Types of Cheese", are among these short-term courses. The CDC Center organizes a number of courses on professional guidance, current needs of the labor market and skills necessary to find a job, besides, students have round-trip visits to different production units and have meetings with employers. The expert panel positively evaluates the fact that students actively participate in the mentioned events. The CDC Center also carries out activities in the direction of reinforcing the link between the graduates and the labor market. By tightly cooperating with the Employment Agency of the region, the students are informed about the labor market requirements and vacancies. As the site visit showed, the CDC Center actively cooperates with local employers, in particular, with the Armenian Office of the "World Vision" organization, which is also a trigger for increasing students' motivation. Due to the mentioned organization the students of the College have become the participants of the "Sky" club which organizes different activities (group activities, discussions, role plays, presentation and watching of videos) in which students ensure their active participation. The CDC Center has an information desk, Facebook page and it actively guides students in their employment issues. The Center has established alumni base which is recruited with new students year by year, besides, the Alumni Union has been established by means of which the College ensures links with its graduates.

The College doesn't carry out research, hence, students are not involved in this process. The site visit showed that students' essays and individual works are viewed as research which, in terms of research, are at very poor level.

The Student Council is in charge of protection of students' rights in the College. The expert panel noticed that the SC functions actively; the full-time students were informed about the activities organized by the SC, and the part-time students mostly do not participate in those events but they are aware of them. In the site visit it turned out that the main problems of students relate to the unfavorable condition of building facilities. Apart from the SC, students can also address to any structural unit of the College and to get respective support or solution to the given problem. The Board of the College also deals with students' rights and problems, and the questions relating to students' rights are presented to the Board.

The quality system is in the phase of formulation in the College, and the mechanisms evaluating educational, consultancy and other services provided to students as well as quality assurance are not

fully invested yet. Only some activities have been taken, in particular, in the last two years surveys about teachers have been conducted among students and also surveys about students - among employers.

**CONCLUSION.** The expert panel evaluates the compliance of SSAC institutional capacities with the requirements of the Criterion 4 as *satisfactory*.

## CRITERION V. TEACHING AND SUPPORT STAFF

**CRITERION: The Institution has a highly qualified teaching and support staff to achieve the set goals for academic programs and institution's mission.**

### FINDINGS

The admission, withdraw and dismissal of teaching and support staff are regulated by the RA Labor Code and the SSAC Charter. The College doesn't yet have clear policy and procedures on selection of teaching and support staff having necessary qualifications for the implementation of APs but as the site visit showed, the College plans to develop them in the near future. If new specialists are needed, the College disseminates announcements on respective vacancies via press, but as it turned out in the site visit, the College is not that much attractive to new specialists as far as the salaries are very low. The situation is saved due to motivated employers who express their wish to also teach at the College.

The probation period for teaching staff is three months, and for support staff - two months.

There are job descriptions at the College but there are no clearly defined requirements set for professional qualities of teaching staff. Teachers are selected based on their basic professional educational profile, and in case of employers - based on their job-related direction.

The formal procedures of regular evaluation of teaching staff are considered to be class observations, reciprocal class observations and anonymous surveys conducted among students. The class observations are carried out in accordance with the planned time-schedule which gives teachers the opportunity to get consultancy from experienced teachers and to make practice exchange. Surveys on delivery of courses, class management, teacher's professional knowledge, objective assessment, etc. are conducted among students, but this mechanism is new, and the College hasn't yet made analyses to evaluate the results/consequences of surveys which doesn't give an opportunity to judge about their efficiency. In order to improve the quality of teaching, reciprocal class observations among teachers are also made, aimed at exchange of teaching methods and professional expertise. The non-formal mechanisms evaluating the teaching staff can be considered to be the feedback received from heads/instructors of internships and employers, as well as the results of surveys on satisfaction with students' preparedness.

Although the SSAC gives importance to the enhancement of professional qualities of the teaching staff, in recent years the teachers have participated only in trainings organized by state authorities or organizations which didn't derive from teachers' needs identified by the College, neither they supported the elimination of shortcomings revealed as a result of teacher evaluation which impedes continuous development of teachers and efficient fulfillment of goals defined in the APs. The College reasons the low level of participation in professional and methodical trainings by the scarce of financial resources. The College tries to fill in this gap by cooperation with field-related employers, thus trying to get benefit from employers' leading practice.

The major part of the teaching staff are full-time teachers - 34 teachers, and 14 teachers are part-time/double-jobbing. In the site visit it turned out that there are teachers who teach on average up to 10 modules in parallel, and there are courses for which there are no substituting teachers. It must be mentioned that the practice of teaching several modules by one teacher and the absence of substituting teachers lead to the risks in organization of class; the absence of the given teacher or his/her unexpected leave will lead to the failure of the class, and the absence of staff reserve will make the quick organization of substitution by a new teacher even harder. Besides, teaching of several modules in parallel impacts the quality of teaching. No analyses on teachers' load have been made. The average age of teachers is high but in the last five years the College has recruited young specialists (up to 35-year-old seven freshman teachers), aimed at ensuring flexible change of generation of teachers. However, it should be stated that the College doesn't have any policy on involvement and promotion of young specialists. From the perspective of ensuring sustainability of teaching staff for separate APs, there are some vulnerable points conditioned by the low number of students in some specialties (the formation of small group of students leads to the decrease of full-time teachers' load) which in its turn fosters the flow of specialists. The flow of specialists is also conditioned by the increase of level of emigration or, for example, by the fact that teachers from nearby towns and villages have problems to reach the College in terms of transportation means.

It is positive that the SSAC makes attempts to involve teachers who are employers having experience in the field of production and who are well aware of current requirements of the labor market which fosters the formation of students' practical skills.

There is a functioning policy and procedure on teacher promotion. The freshman teachers are mainly provided with support and guidance by the heads of chairs, Vice-rector on Educational Affairs and experienced specialists.

The mechanisms fostering and promoting teachers' mobility as well as those directed to the conduction of research are missing.

The rights and obligations of the administrative and support staff are defined in internal disciplinary rules, labor contracts and job descriptions. The site visit showed that the administrative and support staff with great devotion try to attain the strategic goals but the College hasn't yet made any analysis on the necessity of administrative and support staff, neither evaluation of efficiency of the current staff's performance from the perspective of reaching strategic goals which can hinder the efficient fulfillment of the strategic goals of the College.

**CONCLUSION.** The expert panel evaluates the compliance of SSAC institutional capacities with the requirements of the Criterion 5 as *satisfactory*.

## CRITERION VI. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

**CRITERION:** The Institution ensures the implementation of research activity and the link of the research with teaching and learning.

### FINDINGS

As the self-evaluation of the College, site visit and review of documents have shown, the College hasn't set goals in the field of research and it doesn't carry out any activity in this direction. The College

doesn't have any policy on conduction and development of research, neither respective mechanisms and procedures are existent.

In the site visit it turned out that teachers don't make any research within the scope of the modules they teach which can lead to current specialists' stagnation and failure to ensure up-to-dateness of their professional and pedagogical competences.

It should be stated that respective financial and laboratory resources which are necessary for conduction of research are missing in the College.

The students' individual works, essays and practical activities are viewed as a mechanism which interlinks research and educational process but as the studies have shown, the component of research in them is very poorly expressed.

It should be stated that in 2018-2019 academic year the College participated in the conference on the topic of "Management and Marketing" in Vanadzor city and was awarded with certificate of honor; the participation in suchlike activities can be an incentive for further development of research activity.

**CONCLUSION.** The expert panel evaluates the compliance of SSAC institutional capacities with the requirements of the Criterion 6 as *unsatisfactory*.

## CRITERION VII. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RECOURSES

**CRITERION:** The Institution has necessary resources to create learning environment and to effectively support the implementation of its stated mission and goals.

### FINDINGS

The College carries out its working activity and mission in two main buildings one of which is one-storey, the other one - two-storey. Because of scarce of laboratory fund the wooden building located nearby is also used for the organization of activities of the "Sky" club and the CDC Center. There are only two professional labs in the College. It was clear to the expert panel that the major part of classrooms needs to be renovated and technically equipped. The professional classrooms are furnished with outdated didactic materials and equipment. There are no necessary conditions and materials for making experiments. The lab for milk and dairy product which is equipped with modern equipment and facilities is not fully being functioned due to technical reasons (some parts of the boiler and instructions for some equipment are missing).

In the last four years the library has been replenished with secondary school textbooks and has been donated about thirty unit/name of professional literature the number of which, however, is still very limited. The novels available in the library are rather outdated, and a big number of books are subject to purchase.

As a non-profit organization, according to the amount and allocations set by the founder, the College gets state funding and financial resources from other sources not prohibited by the law (own financial means which are generated from tuition fees, grants, investment made by physical entities, entrepreneurial activity, etc.).

The site visit made by the expert panel showed that up to 92% of the College's budget is allocated to salaries and the rest of the financial flows are few, instable and are not sufficient to replenish the College with necessary means and facilities.

In spite of the fact that the College has a policy and procedure on generation and distribution of financial means, the practical application of such a procedure was not visible.

As the site visit showed, the resource base gives an opportunity to effectively fulfill the goals defined in the APs and in the SP.

Since 2013 the College manages its external documentation circulation through the Mulberry electronic management system. In 2017 the SSAC obtained the Armenian Accounting Program-6. The College hasn't invested electronic internal documentation circulation system yet and it receives and transmits the documents by its email. The official website of the College as well as its Facebook page promote dissemination of information though the information available on the official website needs to be completed and updated.

The archiving of documents relating to the activities of different structural units of the College is managed by the archivist.

The territory of the College is fenced, there are cameras, some part of the yard is renovated, and there is a rest area. There are two tumble-down emergency buildings. There is a fire protection system, and evacuation schemes are posted. The building facilities and infrastructures adapted to students with special needs are missing. There aren't sports hall, First Aid and canteen.

The College conducts surveys on application, availability and efficiency of resources provided to students, organizes discussions in the Student Council, chair sessions and focus groups, and the problems are also raised with the help of the box of suggestions. The site visit showed that some needs identified by stakeholders by means of these mechanisms have been satisfied at the expense of grant projects and means of the College. However, in the site visit different stakeholders mentioned that there is an urgent need to enrich and modernize current resource base of the College.

**CONCLUSION.** The expert panel evaluates the compliance of SSAC institutional capacities with the requirements of the Criterion 7 as *unsatisfactory*.

## CRITERION VIII. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**CRITERION:** The Institution is accountable to the government and society for the education it offers and the resources it uses as well as for the research it conducts.

### FINDINGS

The College has a clear regulation on internal and external accountability according to which some of the structural units, in respective formats formed in advance, submit reports to the Pedagogical Committee, some of them - to the Head, and some - to the RA Ministry of Education and Science. The reports are summed in the report presented by the Head of the College who presents it to the Board and authorized ministry. The review of documents showed that although different fields of the College's activity are reflected in reports, their content is not linked with the strategic goals, neither they reflect the problematic points which have been extracted from reports of previous years, and sometimes the reports are fictive which leads to shortcomings.

It should be stated that the accountability system is mostly vertical. No analyses on efficiency of functioning accountability mechanisms have been made.

In order to ensure transparency and public availability of the College's activity, different platforms such as local television, booklets, the College's official website, Facebook page, visits to regional schools, etc. are used. It must be mentioned that the content available on the website of the College urgently needs to be updated, completed and translated as far as the website can play a key role in terms of illumination of the SSAC's activity, involvement of applicants and formation of the College's positive reputation in local and international arenas. The website section for feedback with visitors is not functioning.

The internal (teachers, students, staff members, etc.) and external (employers, parents, representatives of state authorities, etc.) stakeholders are involved in different processes of the College and they also ensure public availability of the SSAC's different processes.

There isn't any staff member who is responsible for ensuring feedback with the society, but in this term the CDC Center has a big role as far as it actively collaborates with internal and external stakeholders.

The College transfers knowledge to the society by implementing facultative academic programs, i.e. short-term courses ("Cheesemakers", "Some Types of Dairy Product"), making visits to schools and organizing open-doors.

It should be stated that the College doesn't have mechanisms to evaluate the efficiency of public relations, neither it makes analyses to identify to what extent the stakeholders are satisfied with the mentioned processes, if they meet public requirements or what achievements and shortcomings have been revealed as a result. The public need for transfer of knowledge and values to the society hasn't been studied by the College either.

**CONCLUSION.** The expert panel evaluates the compliance of SSAC institutional capacities with the requirements of the Criterion 8 as *satisfactory*.

## CRITERION IX. EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONALIZATION

**CRITERION: The Institution promotes experience exchange and enhancement through its sound external relations practices, thus promoting internationalization of the Institution.**

### FINDINGS

The College hasn't defined any goal on external relations. The SSAC doesn't have any policy and procedures promoting the establishment of external relations, neither infrastructure which would coordinate respective activities. However, the College actively cooperates with some local and few international organizations with which the CDC Center establishes links. The frame of cooperation involves dialogues with employers (organization of students' internships among employers, visits by students, organization of discussions on current requirements of labor market) and with international organizations (e.g. Armenian office of the "World Vision" organization) within the scope of which professional resources (milk lab, computers) have been provided to the College, as well as "Sky" club has been established. Besides, the College participates in events which are implemented in the framework of the EU budget support financial agreement on "Qualification Enhancement for Better Jobs". In October

2019 the College signed a contract on organization and conduction of internship with "Agrar LTD Diestelow" which, however, hasn't been put into practice (proficiency of German is one of the key preconditions). In general, there aren't mechanisms evaluating the efficiency of collaborations. It should be noted that all the issues relating to the establishment of external relations are committed to one structural unit with very limited resources which imposes a big burden onto the given unit, thus influencing the effectiveness of activities.

In the College foreign languages are taught to students which are integrated into APs but the hours allocated to foreign language teaching are very limited and are not sufficient to ensure satisfactory level of proficiency in foreign languages. The teachers are not given coordinated and long-term opportunities of participating in foreign language courses. In general, it must be stated that the level of foreign language proficiency among students and teachers is not sufficient yet for ensuring efficient involvement in processes of internationalization.

The College doesn't have access to databases of international journals and modern databases in foreign languages.

**CONCLUSION.** The expert panel evaluates the compliance of SSAC institutional capacities with the requirements of the Criterion 9 as *unsatisfactory*.

## CRITERION X. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

**CRITERION: The Institution has an internal quality assurance system, which promotes establishment of a quality culture and continuous improvement of all the processes of the Institution.**

### FINDINGS

Since 2017 the College has been involved in the institutional accreditation process under the precondition set by the EU budget support financial agreement N5 on "Qualification Enhancement for Better Jobs" and has launched activities in the direction of formulating internal quality assurance (QA) system. It is commendable that the Board, Head and internal stakeholders of the College express their readiness to support and participate in the process of formulating internal QA system. However, it must be mentioned that there are no QA policy and procedures in the College, the elaborated toolset is fragmental and it doesn't cover the full frame of the SSAC's activities. Currently the surveys are viewed as a main QA mechanism, and they are conducted among students and partially - among employers, but their impact on improvement of the College's activity is not tangible yet.

With the aim to manage internal QA processes, the College has opened one position. Although the expert panel appreciates the QA staff member's motivation and care towards his/her work, one position is not enough at all, taking into consideration the commitment to carry out a number of internal QA functions relating to different processes. Under the precondition set by the EU budget support financial agreement N5 on "Qualification Enhancement for Better Jobs", the staff members have participated in a row of trainings devoted to QA.

The College hasn't made analyses on satisfaction with material and financial resources in order to coordinate QA processes. Nevertheless, as the results of the site visit showed, material and financial resources which are necessary for management of QA processes are not allocated yet which is conditioned by the scarcity of financial resources.

As a result of the site visit and analysis of documents it turned out that different stakeholders have been involved in the self-evaluation working group, and questions relating to students' concerns are put forward by means of surveys and by addressing to chairs and other structural units of the College, and the teaching staff is involved in class observations. The involvement of employers is mainly ensured by participation in focus group discussions, mentoring of internships and engagement in final attestation committees. The receipt of feedback from alumni is very weak. The efficiency of mechanisms of involving stakeholders in QA processes is not evaluated yet.

The QA system is still in the phase of formation and it hasn't been monitored and evaluated yet.

The processes of data collection, analysis, dissemination and management of results are not implemented in a coordinated way.

The first attempt to accumulate information at the institutional level for external evaluation was made in the self-evaluation of institutional capacities. The presented self-evaluation is purely descriptive, and the analytical approach is missing.

In order to ensure transparency of the College's activity for internal and external stakeholders, the existence of information systems is not given importance to, which can be stated by the fact that the content available on the website of the College is rather poor and currently it is not active. In general, the College still has to take some activities in the direction of disseminating information about the QA of its activities, which will ensure the transparency of the SSAC's processes and will foster the increase of the College's rating.

**CONCLUSION.** The expert panel evaluates the compliance of SSAC institutional capacities with the requirements of the Criterion 10 as *unsatisfactory*.

## EVALUATION ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

<b>CRITERION</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>
I. Mission and Goals	Satisfactory
II. Governance and Administration	Unsatisfactory
III. Academic Programs	Satisfactory
IV. Students	Satisfactory
V. Teaching and Support Staff	Satisfactory
VI. Research and Development	Unsatisfactory
VII. Infrastructure and Resources	Unsatisfactory
VIII. Social Responsibility	Satisfactory
IX. External Relations and Internationalization	Unsatisfactory
X. Internal Quality Assurance System	Unsatisfactory

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Hakob Knajyan

24.01.2020

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1. CVs OF EXPERT PANEL MEMBERS

**Hakob Knajyan** - in 2009 graduated from the Faculty of Law of Northern University as a Diploma Specialist, in 2012 graduated from the same university with the qualification of Master in Lawyer-Pedagogue. In 2011-2015 H. Knajyan studied in part-time postgraduate education (8th level of NQF) at University of Economics and Management of Saint Petersburg in the specialty of "Sociology and Management".

Since 2009 Hakob Knajyan has worked as the Head of Alumni, Career and Internship Center at Northern University, since 2016 - Head of Quality Assurance Department of the same university. In 2012-2019 he was a teacher in the Chair of Law and Subjects in Social Sciences of the same university. Since February 2019 H. Knajyan is acting as the Head of Division of Educational Reforms at Armenian National Agrarian University.

Hakob Knajyan has participated in a number of trainings, national and international conferences. He has authored more than dozens of scientific articles and has been rewarded with many medals and certificates of honor. H. Knajyan has also been involved in a number of national and international grant projects.

**Elen Harutyunyan** - in 1992 graduated from the Faculty of Cybernetics of Yerevan Polytechnic Institute (currently: "National Polytechnic University of Armenia" foundation) in the specialty of "Industrial Electronics" and was awarded with the qualification of "Engineer of Electronic Engineering". In parallel with her studies E. Harutyunyan also took evening classes at the Faculty of Social Specialties in the specialty of "Medical Cybernetics" and was awarded with the qualification of "Medical Cybernetics". In 2009 she graduated from Armenian State Pedagogical University in the specialty of "Mathematics and Computer Science" and was awarded with the qualification of "Teacher and Mathematics and Computer Science".

In 2000 Elen Harutyunyan was a teacher of Physics at Yerevan school N 144, and in 1000-2010 - teacher of Mathematics and Drawing at Yerevan School N 5 after Mushegh Ishkhan, in 2001-2002 was in charge of the Deputy Head on Educational and Upbringing Affairs, and in 2004-2010 - President of Methodical Union of Subjects in Natural Sciences.

In 2009-2010 E. Harutyunyan was a Senior Lab Assistant at the Faculty of Applied Mathematics at National Polytechnic University of Armenia, in 2010-2019 - Deputy Head on Educational Affairs in Yerevan college of the same university, and up to now she is a teacher of the Chair of General Education in Mathematics and is the Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Applied Mathematics and Physics in the same university. She has participated in a number of professional, methodical and quality assurance related trainings.

**Arpine Darbinyan** - in 2002 graduated from the Department of Arabic Language of the Faculty of Oriental Studies of Yerevan State University and was awarded with the qualification of "Specialist of Arabic Studies". In 2004 she got the Master's degree in the same specialty and was awarded with the qualification of Master in Arabic History. In 1999-2000 A. Darbinyan studied at the Institute of Foreigners in Damascus. In 2003 she studied in Cairo University.

Since 2012 Arpine Darbinyan is an employee of the "Regional State College of Gegharkunik" non-profit organization, first - as a teacher, since 2013 - also as a staff member responsible for Career Issues, and since 2015 - also as a staff member responsible for Quality Assurance. A. Darbinyan has participated in a number of trainings. She has been involved in external evaluation processes of colleges as an expert.

**Romain Hulpia** - Doctor of Psychological and Pedagogical Sciences, University of Gent. In his working activity R. Hulpia was in charge of a number of positions such as Consultant of "MedicalSocial" Center, instructor of course on Management, trainer at "General Motors" company. Romain Hulpia was responsible for the courses on "Education Policy" and "Practice in Education" about 21 years, was the manager of the Flemish education project on investment of information and communication technologies, was a member of the team on "Quality Assurance System" of Universities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

R. Hulpia was the chair of accreditation of 20 new academic programs on behalf of the Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) as well as Quality Assurance expert of "VLHORA" and "VLHUR" Belgian organizations (he participated in about 400 site visits). Romain Hulpia is a member of a number of international organizations. He has authored many scientific articles.

**Ofelya Arzumanyan** - in 2019 graduated from Ararat Regional State College in the specialty of "Accounting and Automated Systems Software". Currently she is a 2<sup>nd</sup>-year student in the Department of Radio Engineering at the Institute of Information and Telecommunication Technologies and Electronics. O. Arzumanyan has participated in trainings for student-experts within the framework of the ANQA project on "Student Voice" as a result of which she has been involved in accreditation processes as a student-expert.

## APPENDIX 2. TIME-SCHEDULE OF SITE-VISIT

### A G E N D A

#### OF SITE-VISIT OF THE EXPERT PANEL FOR INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION OF STEPANAVAN STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE AFTER PROF. A. KALANTAR

**14.01.2020-16.01.2020**

<b>14.01.2020</b>		<i>Start</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1.	Meeting with the Head of the College	09:00	09:30	30 minutes
2.	Meeting with the Board of the College	09:40	10:10	30 minutes
2.	Meeting with Deputy Heads of the College	10:20	11:00	minutes
3.	Meeting with members of self-evaluation working group (8-10 representatives)	11:10	11:50	40 minutes
4.	Meeting with heads of administrative structural units	12:00	12:40	40 minutes
5.	Lunch, expert panel discussions	12:50	13:50	60 minutes
6.	Meeting with alumni (8-12 representatives)	14:00	15:00	60 minutes
7.	Meeting with employers (8-12 representatives)	15:10	16:10	60 minutes
8.	Review of documents and close meeting of the expert panel	16:20	18:00	100 minutes

<b>15.01.2020</b>		<i>Start</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1.	Meeting with heads of chairs	09:00	10:00	60 minutes
2.	Meeting with teaching staff (8-12 representatives)	10:10	11:10	60 minutes
3.	Visits to chairs and review of documents	11:20	12:20	60 minutes
4.	Lunch, expert panel discussions	12:30	13:30	60 minutes
5.	Visits to structural units of the College and review of documents	13:40	15:40	120 minutes
6.	Review of documents and close meeting of the expert panel	15:50	17:00	140 minutes

<b>16.01.2020</b>		<i>Start</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1.	Meeting with members of the Student Council (8-12 representatives)	09:00	10:00	60 minutes
2.	Meeting with full-time students (8-12 representatives)	10:10	11:10	60 minutes
3.	Meeting with part-time students (8-12 representatives)	11:20	12:20	60 minutes
4.	Lunch	12:30	13:30	60 minutes
5.	Open meeting with the expert panel	13:40	14:10	30 minutes
6.	Observation of resources (classrooms, sports halls, labs, cabinets, library, Medical Point, Canteen)	14:30	15:30	60 minutes
8.	Meeting with the staff member(s) selected by the expert panel	15:40	16:20	40 minutes
9.	Review of documents and close meeting of the expert panel	16:30	17:30	60 minutes
10.	Final meeting with the Head of the College	17:40	18:00	20 minutes

### APPENDIX 3. LIST OF REVIEWED DOCUMENTS

N	Name of Document
1.	Charter of the College
2.	Annual action plan of the College
3.	Minutes of sessions of the College's Boards and Educational-Methodical Committees
4.	Annual reports of the College
5.	Curricula of specialties
6.	Class-schedules
7.	Personal documents of students
8.	Time-schedules of examination period and failures
9.	Records of students' grading
10.	Regulation of transfer of students
11.	Regulation on partial compensation of students' tuition fees
12.	Regulation of chair activity
13.	Annual plan of the chair activity
14.	Procedure of conduction of chair sessions
15.	Minutes of chair sessions
16.	Annual reports of chair activities
17.	Register of class observations
18.	Register of students' attendances and assessment
19.	Class-schedule of chair staff members
20.	Packages of professional academic programs
21.	Modular courses
22.	Calendar plans of courses
23.	Course packages
24.	Regulation of student assessment and criteria
25.	Regulation of appeal of grades
26.	Programs of conduction of educational, production/industrial and other internships

27. Composition of educational consultants, time-schedule of meetings
28. Course papers
29. Minutes of state final committees for the last 3 years, minutes of their discussions and made decisions
30. List of staff of the College
31. Norms of academic load
32. Schedule of conduction of seminars, respective minutes
33. Results of surveys on teaching quality held in 2018
34. Tarrification of teachers
35. Samples of essays
36. Examination tickets and samples of tests of 3 secondary education subject courses for 1st year study
37. Analysis of students' activeness in library (2017-2019)
38. Lists of specialties
39. Contracts on conduction of internships
40. Regulation on ethics and code of conduct
41. Memoranda of understanding with international organizations
42. Questionnaires and minutes of evaluation of students by employers
43. Reports of State Qualification Attestation
44. Individual works
45. Examination records
46. Internal disciplinary rules
47. Regulation on academic honesty

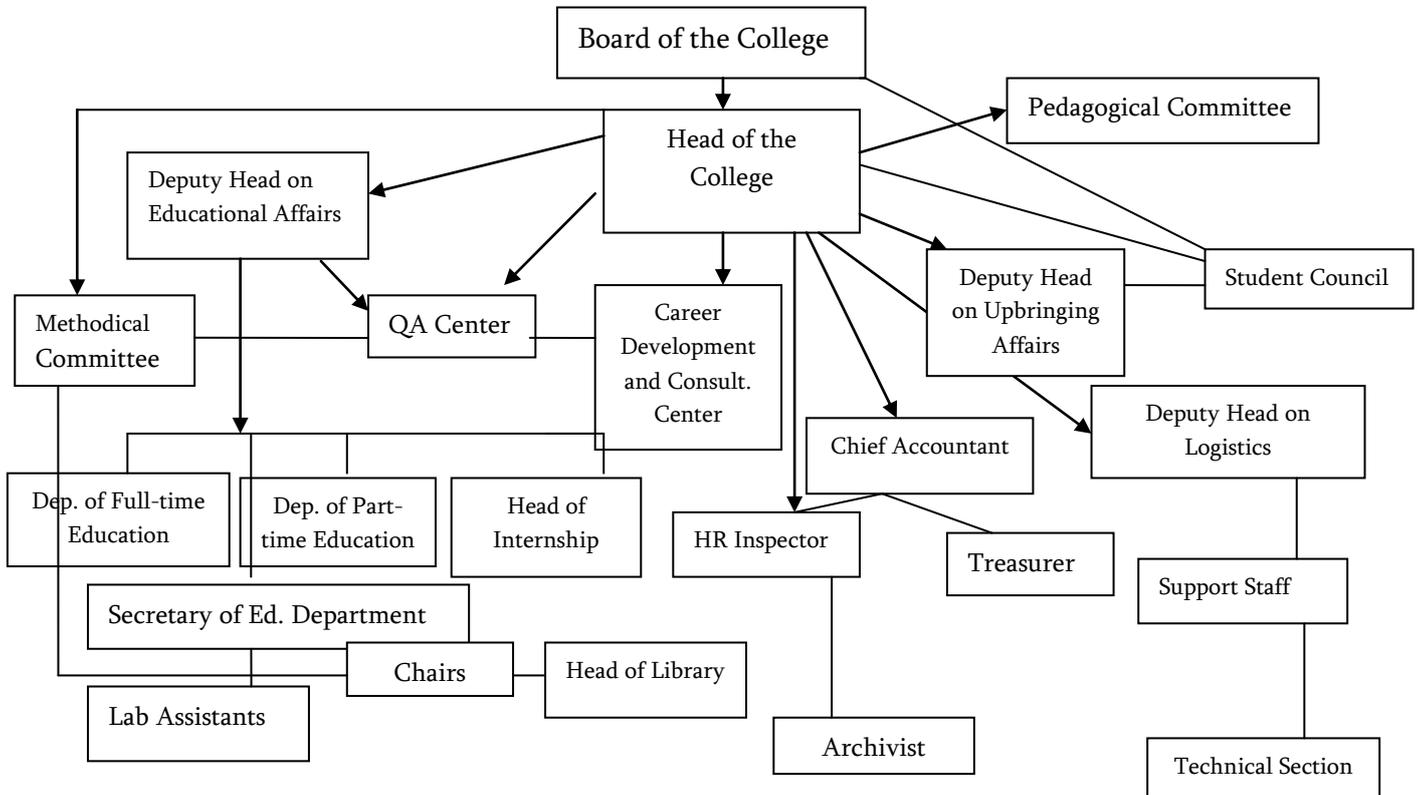
## APPENDIX 4. OBSERVED RESOURCES

1. Classrooms
2. Computer room
3. Teachers' room
4. Chairs
5. Laboratories
6. Structural units
7. Library
8. Book depository

## APPENDIX 5. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE COLLEGE

The organizational structure of the College according to hierarchy and communication lines is presented below.

January 2018



## APPENDIX 6. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

**AP** - academic program

**SP** - strategic plan

**QA** - quality assurance

**LO** - learning outcome

**PDCA** - plan, do, check, act

**SSAC** - Stepanavan State Agricultural College

**KPIs** - key performance indicators

**SC** - Student Council

**RA** - Republic of Armenia

**ANQA** - National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance Center

**NCVETD** - National Center for Vocational Education and Training Development (NCVETD)

**NQF** - National Qualifications Framework

**IQA** - internal quality assurance