

**NATIONAL CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE, FOUNDATION**



National Center For Professional  
Education Quality Assurance  
Foundation

**EXPERT PANEL REPORT**  
**ON INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION OF**  
**MKHITAR GOSH ARMENIAN-RUSSIAN INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY**

**Yerevan\_ 2014**

## INTRODUCTION

The institutional accreditation of Mkhitar Gosh Armenian-Russian International University (MGU) is carried out within the framework of World Bank grant project and with the support of Center for Education Projects of RA Ministry of Education and Science. The process of institutional accreditation is organized and coordinated by the National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance, Foundation (ANQA).

ANQA is guided by the regulation on “State Accreditation of RA Institutions and their Academic Programmes” set by the RA Government on 30 June, 2011 N978 decree as well as by N959-Ն (30 June, 2011) decree on approving RA Standards for Professional Education Accreditation.

The institutional audit was carried out by the expert panel composed according to the requirements of ANQA Regulation on the Expert Panel Composition. The expert panel consists of 4 local and 1 international experts.

Institutional accreditation aims not only to the external evaluation of quality assurance but also to the continuous improvement of the institution’s management and quality of academic programmes. Hence, there were two important issues for the expert panel members:

1. To carry out an audit of institutional capacities in line with the RA standards for state accreditation
2. To carry out an evaluation for the improvement of university’s quality and for its integration to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

This particular report covers the institutional audit of MGU on the basis of the ANQA framework and the peer review on the basis of international standards.

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## SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

### EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES ACCORDING TO ACREDITATION CRITERIA

The institutional accreditation process was carried out by the expert panel composed according to the requirements of ANQA Regulation on the Expert Panel Composition. The evaluation was carried out according to the 10 criteria set by the RA Government on 30 June, 2011 N 959-Ն decree.

While carrying out the evaluation it was taken into consideration that MGU solves a regional problem, and its mission is to assure the internationalization of the university, the employability of the graduates, the trends of economic and social development both in Vanadzor and in Yerevan as well as to provide students with affordable education.

MGU provides academic programmes in two levels: bachelor and master. It covers such spheres as humanities, social-economic and medical sciences and research in different fields. 5 faculties of MGU were combined because of the lack of financial and human resources. Nowadays MGU has 2 faculties instead of 5:

1. Faculty of Economics and Pedagogy
2. Faculty of Law, Foreign Languages and Medicine.

It should be noted that academic programmes have very weak links with research in spite of the fact that in master programmes there is a research component. Most of the students are not involved in research activities.

MGU has proper buildings for the implementation of its academic programmes. The library is not rich in modern information technologies and new literature both in Yerevan and Vanadzor, the number of books and journals is limited. There is no electronic/digital library (as mentioned in 2011-2015 strategic plan) except for a few search programmes. The equipment for implementing new learning methodologies is insufficient.

MGU has a well-respected teaching staff - the satisfaction of stakeholders and the comparative analysis of the courses serve as an evidence for that fact. The university signs a three-year contract with the teachers selected as a result of the competition. The university plans to invest in a credit system for the enhancement of the qualifications of the teaching staff. In some cases the university also encourages the promotion of young teachers. The university has classified positions of the teaching staff according to the regulation on the formation of the teaching staff. However, the university doesn't have a clear regulation on the promotion of the teaching staff. There are some cases of teachers' involvement in research activities but the cases are not numerous. Very few cases of teaching staff mobility have been registered.

The university has criteria for the recruitment, selection and admission of students and the selection policy is transparent. For making the recruitment and selection procedures of the applicants more effective, the university plans to organize visits and class observations in the colleges and to take part in the midterm examinations. However, the policy on student selection and admission is not targeted. Profession orientation activities as well as activities for raising the awareness of the university's educational opportunities are organized, but there is no policy set for it. One of the teachers from professional courses is a consultant for the students. The analysis of the survey result among students showed that students highly appreciate the work and advice of these consultants. There is also a schedule for the consultancy hours. However, the analysis does not fully reveal the effectiveness of consultancy and there is no basis for the comparison of students' needs and the effectiveness of the provided services.

The management of MGU consists of the Board of Founders and the Governing Board. There is confusion and ambiguity in their functions, duties and responsibilities. The participation of stakeholders in the decision making procedures is informal.

Most of the procedures concerning MGU's quality assurance are in the planning phase. The stakeholders' awareness of the issues concerning the quality management system and the investment of the stakeholders in the PDCA (plan-do-check-act) cycle is still at a low level.

### **STRENGTHS OF THE INSTITUTION**

1. MGU plays an important educational and social role and addresses the regional problems. MGU fulfills its mission, taking into consideration the local context in which it operates.
2. MGU has a very motivated and devoted teaching and support staff.
3. The university has a strong link with its graduates and employers who regularly have meetings with the university administration, teaching staff and students.
4. MGU has guidelines for the development of academic programmes and all the academic programmes are described with expected learning outcomes.
5. MGU has developed a number of documents and procedures for the aim of total quality management.

### **WEAKNESSES OF THE INSTITUTION**

1. The management structure is not flexible enough and doesn't give the internal and external stakeholders enough opportunities to be involved in the decision making processes.
2. There is a tremendous lack of financial means and consequently shortage of human resources for the implementation of the academic programmes at a university level.
3. The link between the objectives, teaching methods and the assessment is not strong.
4. Not all academic programmes have clear learning outcomes defined according to the guideline developed by the university.
5. MGU doesn't have the necessary resources for the fulfillment of all the elements stated in their mission.
6. There is a lack of professional literature in the MGU library and the electronic library needs much more financial and human resources.
7. Research activities are limited with respect to involvement of both the teaching staff and the students, as well as MGU's financial resources are not sufficient for carrying out fundamental research.
8. MGU's website does not provide full information about the university's activities and regular updates.
9. The level of external and internal stakeholders' systematic involvement in the quality assurance procedures is very low.
10. The competences and professional awareness of the staff of the MGU Quality Assurance (QA) center are not sufficient for fulfilling their duties.

### **MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Mission and Purpose**

1. Write a brief and clear vision and a realistic mission statement involving MGU's main features, describing in what concrete aspects MGU wants to reach excellence and how MGU wants to be perceived by others. What is the characteristic through which MGU wants to be known not only among its peers and the society but also at the international level? How will the university reflect its mission in the curricula, modules and teaching methods?
2. Review the strategic plan. The mission and strategy of the university should be relevant to the university's opportunities and compatible with the resources.

3. Expand, formalize and improve the process of keeping the stakeholders aware of the university's strategic plan /first of all internal stakeholders/.
4. Improve, construct and implement a regulated policy on revealing stakeholders' needs to ensure on the one hand the reliability of surveys and other mechanisms of feedback, on the other hand the transparency and justification of the decisions made on the basis of the survey results.
5. Along with the review of MGU's strategic plan and mission, plan and differentiate expected outcomes of the activities and indicators for the evaluation of their quality and performance, in order to outline necessary human and financial resources.

### **Governance and Administration**

6. Review MGU's organizational structure (organogram) where all the administrative and management units will be defined clearly, clearly define and approve functions, duties and responsibilities of all structural units/departments and the regulations and mechanisms of their member selection and recruitment. The nature of these structural units have to be mentioned (e.g. it is designed to have a participatory function or decision making function or management function or other)
7. Complement non-formal communication through formal documentation /protocols, reports, etc. / to fill the gaps of communication (only non-formal communication is insufficient for guaranteeing a sustainable PDCA cycle). ICT methods will have to be implemented to respond to this recommendation (on top of the informal communication which exists).
8. Develop a regulation of ethics which has to be in line with the university's mission/vision.
9. Develop and formalize the process of environmental scanning in the university.
10. Replenish short-term plans with mid-term and long-term ones with the appropriate indicators for measuring the expected outcomes.
11. Organize some formal meetings with the representatives of the professional field outside the university with the aim of knowing the opinion of external stakeholders.
12. Regularly give feedback to the stakeholders about the results of the surveys and the gathered information, using encouraging methods.
13. Study the best practices on education management as well as train MGU administrative staff in this respect. This will have a large impact on the development of the university's governance and administration.
14. It is advisable to take steps for the fulfillment of activities in line with the provisions of the PDCA cycle mentioned in the QA manual of the university, and to keep the stakeholders aware of the principles and guidelines.

### **Academic Programmes**

15. Involve external stakeholders in the formation and review of academic programmes, possibly to develop and implement joint programmes with other universities (internationally), as a means to import extra expertise and boost common research.
16. Develop procedures and a policy on doing comparative analysis of best practices which will foster the increase of compatibility of academic programmes at the international level as well as the mobility of students (e.g. by introducing a mobility window).
17. Regularly evaluate and improve new methodologies of teaching and learning methods.
18. Implement a regular evaluation of MGU's academic programmes, agree on a fixed procedure for their further development based on the principles of the plan-do-check-act cycle, disseminate the results in an open, systematic and transparent way, and incentivate the stakeholders for putting the results and improvement decisions into practice.
19. Foster the development of critical thinking among students, particularly in defining their role and rights in the university. Learning outcomes and teaching methods should contribute to the development of such features among students.

### **Students**

20. Enhance the efficiency of the central unit dealing with issues of graduates and career, for better coordination of the activities in the faculties related to the career of graduates, labor market demands, information gathering and disseminating. The development and implementation of a united policy on students' internships and career services is of great importance.
21. Involve students in different research activities.
22. Take steps for the enhancement of the procedure concerning the protection of student' rights.
23. Review the procedure on providing consultancy to the students based on its analysis and evaluation, in order to extract lessons for the enhancement of the university's governance and functioning.

### **Faculty and Staff**

24. Encourage the teaching staff to be involved in scientific-research activities.
25. Involve more teachers from other universities for exchanging the experience and ensuring extra professional development of the teaching staff.
26. Inform the stakeholders about the results of the evaluation of the teaching staff using flexible mechanisms of encouragement and disseminating better practice.
27. Form and develop systems for the formation, selection, and promotion and qualification improvement of MGU teaching staff.
28. Clarify the research component in the contracts with the teaching staff, letting the more talented staff spend more time on research, and take into consideration the results of their research in promotions and evaluation of their career.

### **Research and Development**

29. Develop regulations on the evaluation of research activities, academic honesty and research ethics. Plagiarism is mentioned in the self-evaluation report as a threat. This threat can be reduced by appropriate available software programmes, a regulation on research ethics and other mechanisms.
30. Make choices for excellence, e.g. choose one concrete research niche in each field /pedagogy, stomatology, law, language and literature, management/ that can be developed and brought to excellence.
31. Take steps for encouraging publications made by the university staff in internationally peer reviewed journals (e.g. co-publications with international partners – see also criterion IX recommendations)
32. The research component in the university's strategy should refer to the formation of mechanisms for choosing precise research areas, for organizing research activities, for identifying financial sources for research, for applying the research results and commercialize it as well as for the enhancement of students' involvement in research activities.

### **Infrastructure and Resources**

33. Develop a primary plan for the improvement of the academic environment giving priority to phased investments in ICT and the provision of academic resources (e.g. better access to journals and books, possibly in the framework of interlibrary exchange agreements). The ICT deployment plan includes trainings for the staff and administrative staff.
34. Based on the analysis and comparison of best practices, and new financial incomes (e.g. foreign student tuition fees, as was explained during the visit), continuously improve university's library, classrooms, environment for interactive teaching and learning, including all this in the strategic plan of the university.
35. Plan the use of indicators evaluating resources which will describe the quantity, quality, change of resources, the effectiveness of their use, and the mechanisms of defining the needs and priorities for specific new resources.
36. Invest in projects for the increase of financial flows.

## **Societal Responsibility**

37. Finalize and summarize the university's planned actions referring to the social responsibility and develop indicators for their evaluation.
38. Besides governing bodies, banks and lawyer's offices, activate internships in a number of other spheres /e.g. industry, business, small and medium enterprises/.
39. Strengthen and improve the mechanisms of feedback, to enlarge and develop links with the private and social sectors.
40. There is an urgent need to review MGU's website content and make it more informative, usable and user-friendly.
41. Gradually develop a strategy for technology and knowledge transfer which will not only help the graduates to find a work (some initial examples were described already) but also has to foster the flow of extra financial income to the university. This will give an opportunity to be involved in international research projects as well as in grant projects fostering students' and teachers' mobility.

## **External Relations and Internationalization**

42. Develop international and interuniversity links, evaluate the effectiveness of such links and define some indicators (proxies) evaluating the progress of the planned activities.
43. Encourage the participation of teaching and administrative staff in the international exchange and training programmes.
44. Review the contracts of international collaboration /international contracts should provide some privileged agreements, for example financial resources for students' exchange, tuition fee waivers, housing at reduced costs, .../ and ensure that they help solving your own urgent problems, e.g. solving the eventual problem of language, lack of human and other resources /literature, ICT, etc./.
45. Increase the mobility of the teaching staff and students giving an opportunity to participate in trainings or exchange programmes, and improve the policy on internationalization and make it more relevant to new developments.
46. Develop a concept of university's internationalization and/or strategy with short-term and long-term activities and methodology for monitoring progress.
47. It is of high importance for the international relations department to find new opportunities and disseminate that information among all the stakeholders of the university (mostly among students and the teaching staff).
48. Taking into consideration that the number of contracts with international universities is increasing in MGU, joint publications can also be initiated in such contracts to make the price of publishing in international journals lower as well as creating an opportunity to be involved in the international research area.

## **Internal Quality Assurance System**

49. Take urgent steps for the study of MGU's gained experience, for the evaluation of effectiveness of QA system and for the further development of that system based on the evaluation results.
50. Revise the professional requirements set for the staff of the QA department and organize regular trainings and courses with evaluation mechanisms of their effectiveness.
51. Make precise the mechanisms of surveys, their analysis, publication of results in the university, continuously improving the reliability of feedback.
52. Develop and introduce mechanisms for the evaluation and improvement of the quality assurance system based on the results of periodic and precise evaluation.
53. Enhance the transparency of internal evaluations carried out by the university and actively involve stakeholders in those procedures.
54. Develop and apply a realistic plan for the development of a quality culture and the enhancement of its effectiveness.



## PEER-REVIEW FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EDUCATION INSTITUTION'S INTEGRATION INTO EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA

**The international expert** conducted a peer review according to international standards resulting in a number of observations and recommendations related to the ambition of the university to be a partner in the European Higher Education Area.

### **Observations**

- MGU's vision is not clear and realistic. The strategic plan does not comprise university's priorities, and while setting strategic directions the limitations of the university budget were not taken into account.
- The internal stakeholders are highly satisfied with MGU internal procedures, but their satisfaction does not mean that their needs are taken into consideration and that the internal procedures fulfil the requirements of sound university governance.
- The effectiveness of the management system is linked with a common understanding of the organizational structure. MGU's organizational structure is not clear. An example is the Scientific Council. It has an important role in the internal activities of the university but it is not described as such in the organogram. Quality assurance is not mentioned in the charter of the Scientific Council, but functionally the Scientific Council has an important role in the education management and has to make sure that the university is in control of the QA cycle at all levels of internal governance. A description of the function, responsibility and authority of all entities of the organogram should be provided as well as the formal communication flows between them. The organogram itself should be simplified, clarified and a distinction should be made between academic and logistic/administrative units.
- The flow of information is not clear, as the responsibilities of all the bodies were not formally set. The system of information provision as well as formal communication is missing.
- The students lack in critical thinking. The university administration should pay attention to the involvement of components such as self-confidence and independent thinking in the learning outcomes of academic programmes. The students should be able to contribute to the implementation of innovations, the creation of new models and social activities and hence develop skills for disruptive thinking. They seem to be thankful to MGU, are satisfied about their education and the environment, but a complete absence of critical thinking has been observed during the site visit.
- There are numerous mechanisms for data collection but they are mostly paper versions which make the data analysis difficult and limit the effectiveness. There are no systems for data management and analysis based on ICT resources and hence aggregation of data is almost impossible, although it is a prerequisite to be in control of the QA at all levels of MGU.
- The learning outcomes are mainly defined on the course (module) level, and from the interviews it is clear that the global learning outcomes of the academic programmes are not always known by the staff participating in these programmes and by the programme coordinators.
- The training courses provided by MGU are not elaborated sufficiently, and currently the teaching staff is supposed to solve this issue on a personal basis.
- Even if there is a certain strategy for supporting the academic programmes by research, this is mainly understood as being the support from the external professional field, practical and hands on in nature. There are no financial resources for meaningful research activities as expected in a university context and hence there are only very few opportunities to publish in international journals.

- The university's Scientific Review is a good initiative and it gives opportunity to the students and teachers to publish articles at the local level and to practice their writing skills.
- The digital library is not digital at all and does not meet international standards. There are courses in MGU that require international literature which is not available in the MGU library. The proper functionality of a digital library requires serious and sufficient financial and human resources. MGU needs a more professional library with modern literature and/or strong agreements with other libraries for exchange of publications.
- The MGU study center is more like a reading hall and does not give students an opportunity to work there. The number of desks and the environment are not comfortable enough and do not give an opportunity of socializing. More and more, library and education centers are considered to be important elements for the creation of a research community and culture and for studying in groups.
- The computer center has a limited number of computers and the center closes at 17:00 taking into consideration the issues of security. But this is not a suitable time schedule for students. We suggest putting the responsibility to manage access and security on the Student Council.
- ICT resources are very limited taking into consideration the fact that the university considers the development of ICT resources as a strategic priority.
- MGU has already taken steps to enrich its budget, particularly by recruiting international students. The number of international students in 2014 has reached to 130 which will foster the internationalization.
- The services delivered to industry and government (e.g. through internships) are not providing the university with extra financial income. In the EHEA, these are generally providing extra income to the university.

### **Recommendations**

1. Write a brief and clear vision and a realistic mission statement involving MGU's main features, describing in what concrete aspects MGU wants to reach excellence and how MGU wants to be perceived by others. What is the characteristic through which MGU wants to be known not only among its peers and the society but also at the international level? How will the university reflect its mission in the curricula, modules and teaching methods?
2. The mission and strategy of the university should be relevant to the university's opportunities and resources.
3. Make the communication with the internal stakeholders more transparent and formal using ICT (on top of the informal communication which exists).
4. Create a new organizational structure, described in a clear organogram, where all the academic, administrative and management units are defined clearly. Complement non formal communication through formal documentation /protocols, reports, etc. / to fill the gaps of communication (only non-formal communication is insufficient for guaranteeing a sustainable PDCA cycle). ICT methods will have to be implemented to respond to this recommendation.
5. Clearly define and approve functions, duties and responsibilities of all structural units/departments and the regulations and mechanisms of their selection and recruitment.
6. The students should learn about critical thinking, especially when defining their role in the university. Learning outcomes and teaching methods should contribute to the development of such features among students.
7. In order to build up financial resources, projects with external funding should be acquired.
8. Create opportunities for the teaching staff to publish in internationally peer-reviewed journals (e.g. in international agreements including co-publication strategy, exchange programmes,).

9. Emphasize the research component in the contracts with the teaching staff letting them spend more time on research and take into consideration the results of their research for promotion and evaluation of their career.
10. Involve students and the teaching staff in (international) research projects and grant projects fostering their mobility.
11. Develop a phased plan for the ICT infrastructure and procedures, including training for the administrative and other staff.
12. The career center does not yet operate fully. It can play a central role in all aspects, for instance internships outside the university (also in industry, small and medium enterprises and value creating sectors), starting collaboration for international internships as well as career direction.
13. The QA center should be empowered to organize the QA coherently and university-wide.

**11 July, 2014**

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Vahan Sargsyan  
**Chairman of the expert panel**

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Varduhi Gyulazyan  
**Coordinator of the expert panel**

## DESCRIPTION OF EXTERNAL REVIEW

### COMPOSITION OF EXPERT PANEL <sup>1</sup>

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

1. **Vahan Sargsyan** -head of the practice department at Armenian State Pedagogical University, candidate of psychological sciences, associate professor
2. **Jan Cornelis**- vice rector on international relations at Vrije Universiteit Brussel, doctor in applied sciences, coordinator of research group IRIS on Digital Image and Video Processing
3. **Karen Grigoryan**- associate professor in the chair of macroeconomics at Armenian State University of Economics, candidate of economical sciences
4. **Geghecik Grigoryan** – dean of the law faculty at Haybusak university, associate professor in the chair of law at State University of Economics, candidate of law sciences
5. **Arusyak Harutyunyan**- MA 1<sup>st</sup> year student in the chair of Education Management at Armenian State Pedagogical University

The works of the expert panel were coordinated by Varduhi Gyulazyan -specialist at ANQA institutional and programme accreditation department.

The translation was provided by Ani Mazmanyany -coordinator at the Center for Quality Assurance at Yerevan State Linguistic University.

All panel members as well as the coordinator and the translator signed a statement of independence and confidentiality.

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix 1 the curricula vitae of the panel members

## PROCESS OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW

### **Application for the State Accreditation**

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

The ANQA Secretariat checked the application package, the data presented in the application form, the appendices and the ANQA electronic questionnaire completed by the university. According to the decision on accepting the application request a tripartite agreement was signed between ANQA, Centre for Education Projects and the university. The timetable of activities was prepared and approved.

Within the deadline set in the schedule, MGU presented the Armenian and English versions of its self-evaluation report according to form set by ANQA and also the package of attached documents. The self-evaluation was carried out by a team composed according to the order of MGU rector.

### **Preparatory Phase**

The ANQA junior coordinator conducted a technical review against the ANQA requirements. Then ANQA Secretariat sent the report to the expert panel. The members of expert panel was agreed upon with the university and was confirmed by the director of ANQA.

Before the starting the desk-review process ANQA coordinator conducted several trainings for the panel for ensuring the effectiveness of the whole process.

Having observed the self-evaluation report and documents provided by the university the expert panel conducted the desk-review according to the format developed by ANQA and prepared the list of issues for different target groups and also list of additional documents needed for observation. Within the scheduled time the expert panel summarized the results of the desk-review and developed a time schedule of the site-visit<sup>2</sup>. According to the ANQA accreditation manual, intended meetings with all the target groups, close and open meetings, document and resource review were included in the time schedule.

### **Preliminary Visit**

The preparatory visit of the chairman of the expert panel, ANQA coordinator took place a week before the site visit. During the preparatory visit, the schedule of the site visit was agreed upon with the university, the list of additional needed documents were presented and organizational and technical issues concerning the site-visit were discussed. The rooms provided for the meetings were observed, their furnishing and technical resource allocation was clarified.

### **Site-visit**

The site visit took place from the 21<sup>st</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> of April, 2014. According to the schedule, the works of the expert panel initiated with the close meeting the aim of which was to discuss the site-visit assessment framework, the issues to be studied during the site-visit and the procedures of focus group meetings with Jan Cornelis. The whole staff of the expert panel including the coordinator and the translator participated in the site-visit.

The site-visit began and ended with the meetings with the rector and the founders. The teaching staff and the students for the focus group meetings were chosen randomly. All the meetings planned according to the schedule took place both in MGU Vanadzor and Yerevan campuses. During the site-visit the expert panel studied the documents, observed the resources and had meetings with focus groups in different buildings of MGU as well as in Yerevan branch.

At the end of each working day during the close meeting of the expert panel discussed the results of the evaluation and at the end of the site-visit the main results were summarized during the meeting at ANQA.

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<sup>2</sup> Appendix 2. Schedule of site visit at MGU

The evaluation was carried out according to the State Accreditation Criteria and Standards and ANQA procedures which imply two-level evaluation scale: meets or does not meet the requirements of the criterion. The assessment of the university's self-evaluation was carried out according to the standards set for each criterion and expert panel report comprises assessment according to each criterion.

### **Expert Panel Report**

The expert panel conducted the desk-review process based to the self-evaluation report, attached documents and the considerations drawn after the site visit. The chairman of the expert panel and ANQA coordinator, based on the observations and discussions, developed the draft version of the expert panel report which was agreed upon with the expert panel members.

## EVALUATION ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

### BRIEF INFORMATION ABOUT THE EDUCATION INSTITUTION

**HISTORY:** The University was founded in 1996 and got its permission of the activity of higher professional academic programme, aiming at during the activity to be guided by the principles of scientism, receptiveness, patriotism, humanism and justice.

In the years of 2006-2008 the required documents for the educational process with credit system organization was regulated in the university. The university aims to develop student-centered learning system. According to the provisions of Bologna process, student scientific unions were formed in the chairs in order to foster the development of student-centered learning.

During 15 years of its activity, the university has taken up an important and responsible role not only to prepare qualified specialists but also to bring up a patriot, respective individuals.

A number of issues which show the ambitions of the university are described in the self-evaluation and MGU's strategic plan.

**EDUCATION:** MGU's goals related to the academic programmes are mainly defined in the frames of "High-Quality Education" strategic goal where the university puts forward the following issues:

1. Develop legal and economic as well as medicine directions.
2. Reform the structure and content of academic programmes.
3. Improve teaching, learning and assessment procedures.
4. Align the assessment system with the requirements of ESG standards.
5. Reduce the cases of plagiarism.
6. Develop individual curriculum for students.

**RESEARCH:** In research sphere the university aims to create preconditions and fostering mechanisms to increase the number of research activities and to enlarge the involvement of teaching staff and students in research projects. The university also wants to enlarge the investment of its scientific potential in the economic and social development of the Republic, to motivate the active involvement of the teaching staff in research activities.

**INTERNATIONALIZATION:** The aim of MGU in the aspect of internationalization is to effectively collaborate with different institutions, scientific organizations, employers of relevant fields, to establish and develop new relation and through scientific-educational activities to strengthen the relations with foreign partner institutions and especially with Russian Federation.

**QUALITY ASSURANCE:** In QA sphere MGU aims to modernise and develop internal quality assurance system, to ensure the investment and implementation of modern technologies in quality management, to create internal QA systems in academic departments and to provide necessary conditions for assuring education quality within the frames of MGU's mission.

During the evaluation, the expert panel was guided by the principle "fitness for purpose" and viewed the above mentioned information as main ambitions and goals of the university.

## CRITERION I. MISSION AND GOALS

**Criterion:** The institution's mission and purpose are in accordance with the relevant reference levels and are consistent with the policies and practices that guide its operations.

### FINDINGS

#### **1.1 The institution has a clear, well-articulated mission that represents the institution's purposes and goals and is in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework (hereafter NQF).**

In the strategic plan 2011-2015 of Mkhitar Gosh Armenian-Russian International University (MGU) some points of the mission are mentioned, particularly internationalization of students, employability of graduates, economic and social development trends in Vanadzor. MGU's mission reflects the MGU goals and objectives. When comparing MGU's academic programmes with the National Qualifications Framework set in 2011, it can be seen that generally the university leads its activities according to the same descriptors that exist in NQF.

#### **1.2 The mission statement reflects the needs of the internal and external stakeholders.**

During the site visit it became clear that the university has taken up an important role among its external stakeholders. The choice of the university's fields of activities is the result of a regional needs analysis.

MGU tries to take initiatives for defining the needs of internal stakeholders, particularly carrying out surveys among teachers, students and graduates. The surveys mainly relate to the satisfaction of stakeholders with the teaching quality and effectiveness. Information about the objectiveness of the process is missing and during the meetings it became clear that the results of surveys not always reveal the factual situation.

#### **1.3 The institution has formal mechanisms and/or procedures to evaluate the achievement of its mission and purpose and to further improve them.**

The basis of the policy behind MGU's mission, goals and objectives is clear. During the meetings with the people that are responsible for QA and with other stakeholders, however, the expert panel did almost not find any procedures on the evaluation of the fulfillment of MGU's mission and goals and formal mechanisms for improvement. There are only informal mechanisms which work up to a certain level, but are not used actively enough. The expert panel also noticed that the QA cycle is in the construction phase, and that hitherto no complete closed PDCA cycle has been implemented yet. Not all the internal stakeholders deeply comprehend MGU's mission and goals.

A decrease in the inflow of students, as well as a flexible attitude towards compliance of fees with the local capabilities was observed (the social role of MGU in the local community is highly needed and should be appreciated). The resulting decrease in financial resources is hampering seriously the further development of MGU and is currently preventing MGU from fulfilling its full university mission.

### CONSIDERATIONS

MGU's mission is too ambitious and hence not precise and realistic, because it does not take into consideration the very limited resources. The items in the mission and strategic plan have a general and descriptive nature. MGU's priorities – seen the limited resources - are not mentioned in the strategic plan. It is not mentioned what MGU pays attention to and to what sphere it directs its priority actions to reach excellence. The expert panel finds the mission too general, and it needs to be specified in terms of results, evaluation indicators and needed resources. Not all the internal stakeholders comprehend MGU's mission and goals.



The mechanisms of stakeholders' involvement need to be improved; they are insufficient to motivate the stakeholders, to ensure their proactive participation. The lack of regularly scheduled and formally organized meetings for discussions prevents MGU from identifying the needs of its external and internal stakeholders in a structured manner. The communication with the external stakeholders is generally non-formal which prevents the structured data collection.

It is not clear to what extent the tools used during the surveys are reliable, how the effectiveness is measured, whether the norms of ethics are preserved during the surveys and how the survey results influence the decision making process. Because of being unaware of the survey results the stakeholders in fact are not able to participate in the decision making procedures and are not aware what steps are taken for processing their comments. Formal internal communication is lacking especially because of insufficient ICT.

The strategic plan is not realistic, the mission statement is not focused enough and there is a lack of internal communication. The mentioned problems need to be solved urgently. Generally MGU's structural organization is not clear; the university should simplify its structure (organogram) and mission and point out the main directions and priorities of the university.

**CONCLUSION:** The correspondence of MGU institutional capacities to the requirements of the criterion 1 is **satisfactory**.

## CRITERION II. GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

**CRITERION: The institution's system of governance ensures ethical decision-making and efficient provision of human, material and financial resources to effectively accomplish its mission, educational and other purposes.**

### FINDINGS

**2.1 The institution's governance and administrative structures and practices promote effective and ethical leadership and decision making congruent with the mission and purpose of the institution.**

After the meeting with MGU governing units, it became obvious that the functions of the Council of Founders and the Governing Board are not clearly distinguished and there is confusion and ambiguity in the definition of their rights and duties. The functions of vice-rectors are not precisely described either.

There are procedures and a policy on MGU staff recruitment, information dissemination, promotion in the career, and awards, but these are not sufficiently transparent and readily available. MGU does not have any document defining governance ethics. Also an intranet for internal employees is lacking.

**2.2 The institution's system of governance provides for student and teachers input in decision making in matters directly affecting them.**

According to the existing documents and stakeholders' opinions, the students and the teaching staff participate in the decision making procedures. The participation, however, is mainly informal and the university does not plan any activities to solve that problem.

The students are involved in different councils and they speak out during those sessions. But students are not aware about the opportunities that are proposed during decision making procedures.

According to the students, they are satisfied with their involvement in the decision making procedures but they take very few active initiatives in the upcoming changes. There is a lack of criticism from students on solutions of different problems of the university.

**2.3. The institution carries out short, medium, and long term planning consistent with its mission and purpose as well as appropriate monitoring tools ensuring implementation of the plans.**

MGU has a short-term planning but the information on mid-term and short-term plans was not available to the expert panel. As it is mentioned in the self-evaluation report, “the second level of the MGU’s planning is the strategic planning which has vague components as a number of external factors influence the university’s activity and governance”.

**2.4. The institution conducts environmental scanning and draws on the findings to enhance its effectiveness.**

MGU is aware of the environment in which it fulfills its activity both on external and internal levels. The external stakeholders support MGU and the implementation of academic programmes by acting as experts, teachers, invited teachers etc. But during the site visit the expert panel didn’t record any formal process of studying the factors influencing the university’s activity. During the meetings and in the self-evaluation the existence of unclear components in the strategic plan- and consequently the difficulty in estimating the impact of external factors especially from the perspective of mid-term and long-term planning - has been stated several times. During the site visit it became clear that the university collects different data concerning its activities but generally these are collected and presented on paper, which makes the data collection and aggregation difficult and hence limited in effectiveness.

**2.5 The management of the processes draws on the quality management principle (plan-do-check-act - PDCA).**

During the site visit and while examining the documents it became clear that MGU’s quality management cycle is still under construction and the plan-do-check-act cycle is not yet fully implemented. The mechanisms evaluating the objective qualitative and quantitative information about MGU’s academic programmes and awarded qualifications are missing and the stakeholders are not aware enough about the PDCA activities.

**2.6. There are mechanisms in place ensuring data collection on the effectiveness of the academic programmes and other processes, analyses and application of the data in decision-making.**

**2.7. There are mechanisms in place providing up to date, objective and impartial quality (quantitative and qualitative) information on the academic programmes offered and qualification awards.**

The policy and procedures on public dissemination of information as well as mechanisms evaluating the availability and objectiveness of published information are missing.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

The real picture of MGU’s management functions is not clear and comprehensive, which is illustrated by the fact that the duty assignment of MGU management functions and the decision making process are not explicit enough and transparent. Decision making generally has a nature of situational solutions. MGU’s management as well as QA system is not justified/logical in terms of workload.

MGU has a problem in actively involving external and internal stakeholders in the decision making procedures and there are gaps in the communication mechanisms. The needs of the region are observed, but the collected information is treated and used ad hoc without formal procedure for transforming it into well motivated actions on the curricula and the educational processes. Also the monitoring of the effects of these actions is rudimentary and lacks a systematic approach. Moreover, the results of current monitoring of academic programmes are not available for the external and internal stakeholders.

There is an urgent need to review, simplify and clarify MGU's organogram because one cannot clearly identify what the functions of different units are. As an example, the roles of the Board of Founders and the Governing Board are not clear. The effectiveness of the management system depends on the common understanding of the organizational structure and this common understanding is not shared within MGU. There is a problem concerning involving external and internal stakeholders in the decision making processes. There are shortcomings in the communication mechanisms. There is a data collection mechanism but it is not fully elaborated and put into operation yet. Formal mechanisms for data collection are missing and the survey results are often not available for the stakeholders. ICT support is very weak.

**CONCLUSION:** The correspondence of MGU institutional capacities to the requirements of the criterion 2 is **unsatisfactory**.

### CRITERION III. ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES

**Criterion: The programmes are in concord with the institution's mission, form part of institutional planning and resource allocation, are intellectually credible and promote mobility and internationalization.**

#### FINDINGS

**3.1 The academic programmes are thoroughly formulated, according to the intended learning outcomes, which correspond to an academic qualification and are in line with the state academic standards.**

The university has academic programmes which are described with expected learning outcomes. The academic programmes are generally in line with State Academic Standards and NQF. The university also tries to improve its programmes by studying and introducing best practices. Some programmes are already under revision, for example the academic programme of "Foreign Languages" is already revised and new approaches were involved in the programme.

**3.2 The institution has a policy that promotes alignment between teaching and learning approaches and the intended learning outcomes and ensures effective learning.**

While examining academic programmes it was found out that there is a partial alignment of expected learning outcomes of the academic programmes with the teaching and learning methods. During the meetings it became clear that student centered learning is primarily achieved in internships and practical activities. Though the university has guidelines for the elaboration of academic programmes, not all academic programmes correspond to these guidelines yet. The set policy on choosing appropriate teaching methods for student centered learning relevant to the learning outcomes is missing. MGU's 5 faculties have been combined because of lacking financial and human resources. Now instead of 5 faculties the university has 2 faculties: 1. Faculty of Economics and Pedagogy, 2. Faculty of Law, Foreign Languages and Medicine.

**3.3 The programme ensures impartial evaluation of students' level of achievement against the learning and educational objectives and promotes academic integrity**

MGU has elaborated a regulation on students' assessment but the university doesn't have a policy on and mechanisms for assuring academic honesty. The organization of written examinations serves as a kind of implicit academic honesty mechanism. The information about the effectiveness of the regulation on students' assessment is not available for the expert panel.

**3.4 The programmes are intellectually credible, designed coherently, and articulate well with other relevant programmes, promote mobility of students and staff as well as**

### **internationalization.**

Although the academic programmes were developed as a result of comparisons with academic programmes in some leading universities, a clear policy or set procedure for internal and external benchmarking is missing in MGU.

Most of the stakeholders mentioned in the context of the comparison of MGU's academic programmes are leading universities in RA, but the criteria for choosing the leading university are missing. The mechanisms for the mobility of students and teaching staff are missing.

### **3.5 There are mechanisms in place ensuring academic programme approval, monitoring, and periodic review.**

The university has elaborated a policy and regulation on the monitoring of academic programmes, at the same time current assessment and revision are carried out, yet the procedure of evaluating and monitoring academic programmes does not correspond to the plan-do-check-act principle. The process of revealing needs of external and internal stakeholders, examination and data analysis is not regulated.

## **CONSIDERATIONS**

MGU's academic programmes are designed in line with State Academic Standards and NQF and are described with the expected learning outcomes.

Taking into consideration that the review of academic programmes is planned and is in progress, the expert panel reacts positively to the chosen way and the changes made in the academic programs. However, the review process should be implemented periodically and according to the set procedures. The university still has to improve the quality of learning outcomes as they are currently described very generally. The involvement of external and internal stakeholders in the elaboration and revision of academic programmes should be strengthened.

The teaching methods have weak links with the assessment principles. The expert panel finds that the transition to student centered learning is not completed yet and the university should make additional efforts in this respect.

Written examinations do not assure and guarantee academic honesty and absence of plagiarism. During the meetings, the stakeholders mentioned that the assessment policy and procedures need to be reviewed.

The benchmarking of academic programmes is not completed yet, which prevents students' mobility. Very few teachers and students participate in exchange programmes. In fact, it was clear that there is little encouragement from the university in this respect. That's why the mobility and internationalization of students and teaching staff is at a low level.

**CONCLUSION:** The correspondence of MGU institutional capacities to the requirements of the criterion 3 is **satisfactory**.

## **CRITERION IV. STUDENTS**

**CRITERION: The institution has student advising and support services which provide for productive and learning environment.**

### **FINDINGS**

**4.1 The institution has set mechanisms for promoting equitable recruitment, selection, and admission procedures.**

There are criteria in MGU for student recruitment, selection and admission, the selection policy is transparent. To make the recruitment of students from the colleges more effective, the university plans to organize visits, class recordings and to participate in the midterm exams. Other basis for the effectiveness of admission and selection were not presented. Yet the policy on selection and admission of students is not targeted. The works for the professional orientation and for informing about the educational opportunities of the university are organized, but the policy is missing.

#### **4.2 The institution has policies and procedures for assessing student educational needs.**

One of the mechanisms for identifying students' academic needs is their involvement in faculty councils and the scientific council. The identification of students' academic needs is one of the problems addressed by the student council. The students usually turn to the student council and the revealed problems are solved immediately if possible, otherwise they are discussed in the extended sessions of the student's council. Students' academic needs are also revealed through the surveys carried out among the students and graduates. According to the self-evaluation report the faculties have installed academic consultants. These consultants identify the students' academic needs, follow their academic progress and help to overcome the difficulties arising during the educational process. The mechanisms assuring transparency of survey result analysis and decision making procedures based on the results are missing.

#### **4.3 The institution provides opportunities for extra-curricular activities aimed at supporting student learning.**

Teachers provide consultancy to students of each profession. Consultants present a report to the faculty council about the works carried out during the term. However, during the site visit it became clear that the bases/grounds for these reports are missing. The result analysis of the surveys among students showed that students highly appreciate the works of consultants. There is also a schedule for the consultancy hours. Yet the mentioned mechanism does not fully reveal the effectiveness of consultancy and there is no basis for the comparison of students' needs and the effectiveness of the provided services. The activities of the consultant are described in details but it is not clear to what extent they are effective for the student.

#### **4.4 There are special hours set for students to visit the faculty administrative staff for additional support and guidance.**

The results of surveys carried out among students about the quality and effectiveness of teaching showed that the students appreciate the works of deans and are satisfied with their support and guidance. In some cases there is a schedule for students to turn to the administrative staff but during the meetings the stakeholders mentioned that the support provided to the students greatly exceeds the schedule hours and the students are fully satisfied with the consultancy. However, it should be mentioned that the corresponding regulation is missing.

#### **4.5 The institution has special student career support services that prepare graduates for employment.**

The main activities fostering students' career are carried out in the faculties. There is a unit for students' career coordination but the information about its effective activity is not available. The information about the cohesion of career and internship and the policy on this issue is not available, either.

In spite of the existence of the corresponding unit in MGU, there is a lack of information about such services to the students. The data collection about the employment of the graduates is newly planned. Some steps were taken in this respect but the processes are still under construction and the evaluations of their effectiveness and resulting improvements have not been carried out yet.

#### **4.6 The students are actively involved in the research the university majors in.**

In MGU's master programmes, the research component is clearly distinguished but there are no mechanisms of encouraging students to be involved in research activities. During the meeting some

teachers mentioned that they involve their students in research activities. However, the students are not fully aware of this process of involvement in research activities.

#### **4.7 The institution has a special body that promotes students' rights protection**

The students turn to the Student council for the protection of their rights where the questions raised by the students are discussed. The students are free to turn to the deans, heads of chairs etc. it depends on the content of the raised question. The students are satisfied with the services provided to them. At the same time it should be mentioned that besides the Student Council there is no other unit in MGU for the protection of students' rights.

#### **4.8 The institution has set mechanisms that ensure quality of the student services and the students are involved in the quality assurance practices**

The evaluation of consultancy, academic and other services and quality assurance are implemented through the surveys among students about the effectiveness of teaching and learning, and surveys among the graduates about the satisfaction from the education they get. The presented questionnaire and the meeting during the site visit did not clarify the issues concerning the reliability of the surveys.

### **CONSIDERATIONS**

MGU students get support and consultancy from the administrative staff and the consultants on the issues concerning their education and career. Their academic needs are revealed but these processes are mostly vague, particularly the data analysis about their needs as well as the processes of informing the stakeholders about the results are not fully transparent, systematized and substantiated because the tools and functions of the units which should coordinate those processes are not clearly defined. Some of the services provided to the students by the Career Center are planned or under construction. During the meetings with different groups, the expert panel noticed differences of organization of the mentioned process in Vanadzor and Yerevan. Some of the students were familiar with the works and functions of consultants but some of them were unaware of the consultancy provided by the teachers which illustrates that the system is not fully implemented.

In spite of the fact that the research component is distinguished in master programmes, the students' involvement in research activities is not systematized yet, mainly because of the absence of concrete strategic research priorities, monitoring of academic programmes and lack of resources. The participation of students in QA and evaluation processes is not clearly regulated in MGU, and the mechanisms of QA implementation /surveys, suggestion and complaints box/ are not generalized and analyzed.

The expert panel finds that the involvement of students in the university management processes and in the councils is well regulated but attention should be paid to the fact that from the qualitative perspective they should take more participation in decision making. The assurance of cohesion of policy on students' internships and career and their involvement in research activities should be more systematized giving them also more opportunities of mobility.

**CONCLUSION:** The correspondence of MGU institutional capacities to the requirements of the criterion 4 is **satisfactory**.

### **CRITERION V. TEACHING AND SUPPORT STAFF**

**Criterion: The institution provides for a high quality faculty and staff to achieve the set goals for academic programmes and institution's mission.**

## **FINDINGS**

### **5.1 The institution has policies and procedures promoting recruitment of a highly qualified teaching and supporting staff capable of ensuring programme provisions.**

The university has a regulation on the formation of the teaching staff. As the study of the self-evaluation report, the Strategic Plan and related documents showed, the university has set the priority to recruit qualified staff. The university also carefully chooses the support staff which undergoes attestation once every 3 year; they have also a position passport.

### **5.2 The teaching staff qualifications for each programme are comprehensively stated.**

At this date, the recruitment of the teaching staff is implemented through competition or invitation; the competition committees and the administration pay special attention to professional qualities of the staff. In all the chairs of the university a rating sheet for the evaluation of the teacher's scientific pedagogical activity is filled by the teacher, head of the chair and dean according to which the teacher is given scores for his scientific-pedagogical, educational-methodological and organizational activities. MGU did not yet clearly set the requirements for the professional qualities of the teaching staff according to each academic programme.

### **5.3 The institution has well established policies and procedures for the periodic evaluation of the teaching staff.**

MGU has evaluation mechanisms for the activities of the teaching staff which foster the enhancement of the qualification and accordingly a reward policy is also implemented.

The following tools are used for the evaluation of the teaching staff: a rating sheet for the evaluation of the teacher's scientific pedagogical activity is filled in by the chair, following the regulation on surveys of "Satisfaction of graduates from the education they got in the university".

### **5.4 The institution promotes teacher professional development in accordance to the needs outlined during regular evaluations (both internal and external)**

MGU teaching staff has participated in a number of trainings but they were not organized according to their needs. Since the academic year 2013-2014, the elaboration and approval is planned for "the structuring and defining of a scientific study on how to enhance the qualification of the teaching staff by monitoring based on an adequate credit system".

In the new programme the enhancement of the qualification of the teaching staff will be viewed both as a component of lifelong learning of the teacher in the direction of continuous development of his competences, and as an important component of the internal QA system of education in the university.

### **5.5 There is necessary permanent staff to provide for the coverage of qualifications adequately.**

MGU has a well-respected teaching staff for its academic programmes. The satisfaction of the stakeholders concerning the teaching staff illustrates this fact.

Based on the results of the competition, the university signs a three-year contract with the teaching staff member. The university plans to introduce a credit system describing the enhancement of the qualification of the teaching staff. In some cases the university encourages the progress of the young teachers. The university has classified positions and their descriptions in the regulation on the formation of the teaching staff. But it doesn't have a clear regulation on the promotion yet.

### **5.6 There are set policies and procedures for the staff promotion in general and the young ones in particular.**

MGU encourages the progress of the teaching staff with different methods /cooperation with other organizations within the framework of the training of the teaching staff/. In some cases the university encourages the professional development of the beginner-teachers, yet policy and procedures on the professional development as well as analyses on effectiveness of the mentioned

activities and ways-of-doing are missing. The university has planned and elaborated a regulation on differentiated payment /bonus/ for the teaching staff, where different indices are applied.

**5.7 There is necessary technical and administrative staff to achieve the strategic goals.**

MGU has administrative and support staffs. The quality of those staff members is assured by a number of mechanisms, including trainings, attestation and work experience which are mentioned in the regulation on attestation of the support staff. However, the regulation of their selection as well as policy and the procedures are missing.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

The requirements for the professional qualities of the teaching staff are not documented and they are sometimes formulated in a much generalized way. The meeting with the stakeholders showed that the selection of the teachers is implemented according to the normative legal act, yet the clear description of professional qualities according to the requirements of the academic programme is missing in the current documents and procedures. According to the stakeholders' opinion, the evaluation of the teaching staff sometimes has not been carried out with enough transparency, and the application of the results during the decision making is not clearly presented to the stakeholders.

The trainings organized for the teachers were often initiated by the teachers themselves. The university sometimes supports the mentioned processes based on the arrangement with different organizations. But that support is not formalized yet.

MGU doesn't elaborate and implement regular trainings for the teaching and support staff based on the analysis of the needs of academic programmes. This could give an opportunity to improve the teachers' professional qualities. It can be done by studying best practices involving leading professionals of the corresponding field.

The expert panel met the motivated teaching staff who was considerably involved in the processes of improvement, review and elaboration of the academic programmes. However, the involvement of the teaching staff in the research activities and their mobility is low and hence this needs to be elaborated further and should be set as a priority for the university's short term activities.

**CONCLUSION:** The correspondence of MGU institutional capacities to the requirements of the criterion 5 is **satisfactory**.

**CRITERION VI. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**

**Criterion: The institution promotes research objectives, projects and expected outcomes.**

**There is a research ethos and culture, and mechanisms for the validating research outcomes**

**FINDINGS**

**6.1 The institution has a clear strategy promoting its research interests and developments.**

The university plans to develop its scientific methodology and research activity by investing in innovation. Some positive examples have been mentioned, but a global policy, concepts, scientific pedagogical cooperation, are lacking. At this moment, the university doesn't have a proved strategy on research which corresponds with its interests and ambitions in the fields that MGU covers.

**6.2 The institution has a medium and short term programmes which address its research interests in a due manner.**



MGU doesn't have a long term strategy and mid-term and short-term plans which reflect the university's interests and ambitions in research. However, it is positive to note that the chairs make some scientific research activities in which master students take part.

### **6.3 The institution promotes development and innovation through sound policies and strategies.**

There are no clear procedures and policy on the implementation and development of research activities although some representatives of the teaching staff are involved in research. The university provides resources for them to participate in conferences and trainings. The publication of the teaching staff scientific works is partly financed by the university's budget which is however insufficient for the systemized implementation of research.

### **6.4 The institution emphasizes internationalization of its research.**

The university gives importance to the internationalization of research activities and considers it a main objective of the activities of faculties and chairs. This is conditioned by the international nature of science and potential financing by international sources. At the same time, the policy and recognition system to encourage the involvement of students and teaching staff in international research activities, the publication policy for contributing to the internationally peer reviewed literature and professional as well as precise programmes for the development of a research culture, are not properly introduced. It should be mentioned that there are almost no substantial accomplishments in this respect.

### **6.5 The institution has well established mechanisms for linking research with teaching**

The policy and procedures linking research with teaching are missing.

## **CONSIDERATIONS**

The financing capabilities for research and publication in scientific journals are very low. They are insufficient for publicizing in international journals and to carry out profound research. Therefore priority number one should be targeting extra incomes by delivering R&D output and by participation in externally funded projects. Services to private industry should be remunerated, participation in funded (international) project and programmes should be targeted, a symbiosis between spin offs and local SME's should be set up, international agreements should allow for joint publications; collaborations with well-equipped institutions and university research centers could alleviate the need for large own investments. Part of the extra income from international student's tuition fees should be re-directed towards research. Probably the best research entry are (i) strategic research (generic, risky but with a valorization potential that could generate financial return) and (ii) innovation close to the application in real life and transferred via technology and knowledge transfer mechanisms that have to be put in place taking into account the Armenian context.

It should be noticed that students participate in research activities within academic programmes and this serves as a research component in the educational process, but the majority of the students is unaware of the requirements for doing research and their involvement in separate research activities implemented by the teaching staff is small. R&D is guiding the content of the curricula, but it is primarily coming from the current practice in the professional world and lacks innovation power.

The policy and procedures linking research with teaching are missing but the university plans to set preconditions and promoting mechanisms for enlarging students' and teaching staff's involvement in research projects.

The expert panel concludes that the research activity is limited from the perspective of both learning outcomes and the level of involvement of students and teaching staff in the process of elaboration of academic programmes. Anyway, MGU should develop a research strategy in its strategic plan. The quality research fields have to be chosen and need to be improved in order to be

competitive on the national and international levels. The expert panel finds that MGU needs to enrich the resources for research, and needs to elaborate a realistic strategy (taken into account the limited resources) which would reflect the university's ambitions and interests in consciously selected concrete research fields.

**CONCLUSION:** The correspondence of MGU institutional capacities to the requirements of the criterion 6 is **unsatisfactory**.

## CRITERION VII. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

Criterion: The TLI has its own property and resources, which effectively support the implementation of its stated mission and objectives and create a learning environment.

### FINDINGS

#### **7.1 The institution takes due care to create a learning environment appropriate to the academic programmes offered**

MGU has buildings proper for the requirements of its academic programmes. There is a lack of new books in MGU's library. The library is not rich in modern information technologies and new literature, the number of books and journals is limited. There is no electronic library (as mentioned in 2011-2015 strategic plan) except a few search programmes. Foreign language literature is very limited; there are no international journals in spite of the fact that some of the courses at the university require international journals.

According to the self-evaluation report most of the stakeholders are satisfied with the provided resources. MGU buildings are partly furnished and technically equipped. MGU lecture halls and laboratories have a technical base, and it is planned to create new ones in line with modern requirements. But the facts about the resource availability and efficiency are missing. There are no factual grounds for the stakeholders' satisfaction with the resources.

#### **7.2 The institution endeavors to secure adequate financial resources and distribution of the latter to provide, maintain and operate the facilities and equipment as needed to achieve its mission and objectives**

The university has a clear and transparent budget in terms of incomes and expenses. The distribution of the budget is implemented in terms of partial correspondence to its mission, according to best practices. From the self-evaluation and the study of the budget it becomes clear that more than 95% of MGU financial resources has to be allocated on inevitable and absolutely necessary spendings to maintain the delivery of education. This leaves only a minor part of the budget for new plans and ambitions. The analysis of financial flows in recent years shows decreasing incomes, which is mainly due to the decrease in the number of students.

#### **7.3 The institution has sound financial policies and capacity to sustain and ensure the integrity and continuity of the programmes offered at the institution.**

The current resources give the opportunity to assure the fulfillment of the academic programmes now, but the budget does not allow assuring its continuity, to implement sufficient investment in research activities and logistics (ICT, equipment, library). The expenses have increased during the recent years which is explained by the mandatory social fees, salaries and expenses concerning the improvement of educational environment.

#### **7.4 The institution's resource base supports the institution's academic programmes and its strategic plans for sustainability and continuous quality enhancement.**

The university has provided additional resources from external sources for the continuous improvement of education quality. The current monitoring of academic programmes which was

presented as an evaluating mechanism for resource provision is carried out according to the regulation on monitoring, which does not plan the evaluation of resource provision.

#### **7.5 There is a sound policy and procedure to manage information and documentation**

In the strategic plan of the university it is planned to create a unified central information system and to assure its availability for the students and the staff. The works in this respect are still in process and have not been reviewed yet and the analysis of needs has not been carried out.

The information presented on the university website ([www.mkhitargosh.com](http://www.mkhitargosh.com)) does not reflect the current situation of the activities and does not provide relevant information about the decisions made in the university. MGU does not have an internal system for the documentation. Hence the expert panel finds that the university does not have mechanisms for aggregating the information systematically and analyze it according to the modern requirements.

#### **7.6 The institution ensures the environment is safe and secure through health and safety mechanisms that also consider special needs of students**

The health service in MGU is provided by the university medical unit which has necessary medicine and equipment, but for providing first aid it needs to be reequipped. It was recorded during the meetings that the mentioned services operate and the students of the medical department take an active part in it.

The policy and procedures on providing services to the students with special needs is missing in the university.

#### **7.7 There are special mechanisms in place that ensure quality of the resources, their effectiveness, applicability and availability**

Surveys conducted among students and the teaching staff are considered to be mechanisms for evaluating usefulness, availability and efficiency of the provided resources and services in MGU.

### **CONSIDERATIONS**

MGU doesn't have the necessary resources for fulfilling all the items mentioned in the mission. Particularly, the lecture-rooms provided for interactive teaching are very limited. Having a digital library requires detailed analysis of expenses, a business plan, as well as collaboration with other libraries. The effort and the consequences of going digital are underestimated by MGU. No benchmarking has been made in this field. Having a digital library for now is not realistic for MGU as there is a lack of necessary financial and human resources. Therefore the urgent priority is to establish collaboration agreements with other libraries. The library and the teaching center are important components for creating a research environment and culture. The university hardly uses information technologies in its internal procedures despite of the fact that the university considers it as an objective in its Strategic Plan.

The strategic directions and goals do not have clearly planned financial resources. Though the budget is clearly allocated, it leaves no margins for new initiatives and hence MGU should study how to get extra incomes.

Surveys conducted among students and the teaching staff are considered to be mechanisms for evaluating usefulness, availability and efficiency of the provided resources and services in MGU but their results do not reflect the real situation of availability and effectiveness of resources. The information about the evaluation is missing and the stakeholders are not aware about the decisions that are made based on the results.

The expert panel states that in conditions of limited financial resources the university has to reconstruct its library including new literature and collaboration with local and international libraries. MGU has to pay attention to the development of IT resources in the university taking into consideration its strategic priorities. The university should regularly evaluate the effectiveness of

faculties from the point of view of MGU's strategic development. Such evaluation should include data collection about the necessary conditions for the students and staff with special needs.

**CONCLUSION:** The correspondence of MGU institutional capacities to the requirements of the criterion 7 is **unsatisfactory**.

## CRITERION VIII. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

CRITERION: The institution is accountable to the government, employers and society at large for the education it offers and the resources it uses to meet these objectives.

### FINDINGS

#### **8.1 There is clear policy on institutional accountability.**

The university has a policy on institutional accountability but it doesn't have mechanisms of analyzing its effectiveness. During the interviews it became clear that the institutional accountability to the RA Government, employers and public is evaluated as satisfactory by the stakeholders. The reports about the activities carried out by the university's administrative staff are available.

#### **8.2 The institution ensures transparency of its procedures and processes and makes the results of the latter publicly available.**

The public awareness on MGU's activity is supposed to be promoted by the official website ([www.mkhitargosh.com](http://www.mkhitargosh.com)) as well as by the "Mkhitar Ghosh" scientific-methodical review and "Mkhitar Ghosh" newspaper. But the site visit showed that the information on the website does not fully illustrate the transparency and availability of the university's procedures and processes. The "News" section in the MGU website does not have an archive which would give a full picture about how and to what extent MGU assures the transparency and availability of the university's study programme offer, procedures and processes to the public. There is no intranet for the essential internal communications and information dissemination.

#### **8.3 There are strong links with the society and it is expressed through firm feedback mechanisms.**

MGU's feedback mechanisms to form links with the society are surveys, stakeholders' opinions expressed during the Scientific Council sessions, different non-formal meetings with the stakeholders, etc.

In the spheres of public relations, the application of feedback mechanisms is still in the planning process which was noticed during the study of the self-evaluation report and the site visit.

#### **8.4 The institution has mechanisms that takes care of knowledge transfer to the society and contributes to development of citizenship.**

The university fulfils its activities with schoolchildren and applicants providing professional orientation consultancy. Meetings, discussions and other events are regularly organized in schools. MGU also organizes additional educational services and a number of foreign students participate in them.

### CONSIDERATIONS

MGU has mechanisms for formal accountability which are mainly reflected in the internal procedures /rector's report, reports of the deans, etc. / but the mechanisms of accountability for the larger public are not formalized yet. A lack of information about different fields of activity of

MGU can be noticed, particularly the information on the website is very poor, and the information about some faculties is even missing.

It should be mentioned that the investment in analyzing the feedback mechanisms from the initiatives taken to establish links with the society is not completed in the university yet. The data collected by means of students surveys and their results are not fully disseminated to the society (e.g. student satisfaction, successful alumni, testimonials). The communication with graduates and employers is strong; they are involved in the activities of the university in different formats, e.g. as invited teachers etc. However, it should be mentioned that all these links have a non-formal nature. To build firm grounds for the feedback the university should formalize links with all the stakeholders. The Career Center can play a central role in the field of social responsibility by organizing internships outside the university, international internships etc. and maintain systematic data on alumni as well as organizing events (e.g. including some fund raising) for sustained binding of alumni to the university life.

In general, there are no clear qualitative indicators for evaluating the performance of the planned actions which does not allow to get feedback about the effectiveness of the activities and to develop internal and external accountability.

The expert panel finds that the procedures directed to the social responsibility are transparent in essence, but the university needs a feasible system which will publicize survey results, will inform stakeholders, will evaluate and finally implement those results.

Special attention should be paid to the MGU website as it needs to be improved.

**CONCLUSION:** The correspondence of MGU institutional capacities to the requirements of the criterion 8 is **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

**9.1 The institution promotes its external relations through sound policies and procedures aimed at creating an environment conducive to experience exchange and enhancement and internationalization.**

MGU's internationalization is viewed as a priority, which is mentioned in the strategic plan. In recent three years the number of foreign students in MGU has increased especially those from Georgia. According to the self-evaluation report, the documents on foreign relations and internationalization are incomplete. The university accepts the weak points of its internationalization policy. The documents on internationalization of MGU are mainly of conceptual and guiding nature and they do not contain methodological and organizational instructions to reach the set goals. The version of the MGU website in foreign language is under construction which will foster the establishment of foreign relations, cooperation and internationalization.

**9.2 The institution's external relations infrastructure ensures smooth flow of the process.**

The vice-rector is responsible for the foreign relations and internationalization of MGU. In spite of the position of vice-rector on international relations, the procedural, guiding and working documents on effectively regulating institutional current and future activities are missing.

**9.3 The institution promotes fruitful and effective collaboration with local and international counterparts.**

There are a number of bilateral agreements in MGU, which are however not properly managed. The

university clearly understands the issues in this field and clearly points them out. Some planned actions which are mentioned in the strategic plan are still in the process of implementation. The number of the MGU partners and the scope of cooperation is narrow especially taking into consideration the fact that MGU is considered to be an international university. The nature, experience, achievements and usefulness of relations, joint programmes, financial directions, and underlying principles are not revealed clearly to the commission either.

#### **9.4 The institution ensures the appropriate level of a foreign language for internationalization purposes.**

The university takes steps to upgrade the students' and teaching staff's level of knowledge of foreign language. The informative materials in foreign languages are missing. There is a system for organizing language courses for all the students and teachers in MGU. A foreign language course is included in the curriculum for the students and there are training courses on foreign languages for the teachers.

### **CONSIDERATIONS**

MGU's internationalization is viewed as a priority, which is mentioned in the strategic plan and MGU takes steps in this direction. Some steps are still in the planning phase, and their implementation is in process. Nevertheless, MGU has shortcomings in the sphere of foreign relations and internationalization. The management of some agreements has been neglected. The expert panel views the increase of the number of foreign students as positive clearly pointing out the necessity to rapidly responding challenges and also partly as a solution for the immediate financial difficulties.

In particular, internationalization can help in supporting MGU /foreign literature, ICT, hostel issues, etc. /. The fact that some agreements are not operated properly is explained by the lack of resources and by the absence of clear planning. The efficiency of courses for upgrading the level of foreign language and the satisfaction of stakeholders have not been evaluated yet.

The initiatives and steps taken towards internationalization need to be planned more clearly. The resources for MGU's internationalization need to be coordinated. The initiatives and actions should be precise and targeted.

**CONCLUSION:** The correspondence of MGU institutional capacities to the requirements of the criterion 9 is **satisfactory**.

## **CRITERION X. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE**

**CRITERION:** The institution has a set infrastructure for internal quality assurance, which promotes establishment of a quality culture and continual development of the institution.

### **10.1 The institution has internal quality assurance policies and procedures that are in line with the ESG standards.**

Within the framework of World Bank grant project MGU has elaborated a QA manual in which QA policy, procedures, and other regulatory documents are introduced. The main regulations describing the educational processes were developed. However, they are not fully implemented and their effectiveness was not yet assessed. The level of awareness of stakeholders on total quality management issues, as well as on the factual processes of investment and usage of the PDCA cycle is low.

### **10.2 The institution allocates sufficient time, material, human and financial resources to manage internal quality assurance processes.**

As the site visit showed, the Center for Quality Assurance of the university really has the necessary facilities and factual authorization to fulfil its functions. Though the university's input is poor and the main facilities are bought by the mean of the World Bank grant project, the existing equipment is

sufficient and are directed to the management of the internal QA processes. However, the QA staff does not have a clear view on the weak and strong points of MGU and on the QA processes of the university. The staff's level of awareness on their own task and work description is low in the QA structural unit. The head of the Quality Assurance unit explains that the main reason is retention of the staff. The trained staff are involved in the activities of the chair or moved to an other job. But other representatives of the university's administration, particularly the rector and some members of the Board of Founders are well aware of QA processes.

### **10.3 Internal and external stakeholders are involved in QA processes.**

For involving internal and external stakeholders in MGU's QA processes the university regularly organizes meetings with employers and students, discussions in the Scientific Council and in other formats. The surveys conducted among students are viewed as a mechanism of involving stakeholders in QA processes. Students are mainly involved and the involvement of students is evaluated satisfactory. But as the meetings showed their awareness of the university's decision making processes, based on the feedback they get, is low. The meetings with external stakeholders showed that the involvement of employers in the university quality management processes is often informal and the involvement of graduates is almost absent. As a shortcoming the stakeholders point out the lack of mechanisms fostering their involvement in QA processes.

### **10.4 The internal quality assurance system is periodically reviewed.**

The QA system of MGU is still in the process of development and hence its efficiency has not been evaluated and any kind of reviews have not been implemented yet. The university doesn't have a policy, procedures, mechanisms and tools for monitoring and analyzing the effects of the internal QA system.

### **10.5 The internal quality assurance system provides valid and sufficient background for the success of the external quality assurance processes.**

The internal QA system does not provide sufficient grounds for external evaluation of the QA processes. The presented grounds are very descriptive or are sometimes missing, which makes the process of external evaluation difficult, certainly when the evaluation has to be done according to each criterion. The awareness of the QA unit representatives about QA tools and processes is low. As the meetings during the site-visit showed, the data collection has been organized with the active involvement of internal stakeholders but in a number of cases the collected data and their analysis do not correspond to the real intended requirements associated to the given criterion. In some cases, it is so that there is a misinterpretation of the meaning of the QA criterion. The involvement of the internal QA unit in the actual QA process is low. During the meetings with the stakeholders it was found that the organized surveys are not evaluated reliably by them, from the perspective of getting full information.

### **10.6 The internal quality assurance system provides for the transparency of the processes unfolding in the institution through providing valid and up to date information on the quality of the latter.**

At the same time the opportunities of the MGU website have not been exploited to deliver transparent information to the stakeholders. Also, there is no MGU intranet for internal information dissemination to the employees. As the self-evaluation states, MGU doesn't yet have any centralized information system having one general data management structure. The availability of existing information as well as stakeholder's awareness on the decisions made on the basis of the collected information is low. The level of transparency and the stakeholders' awareness of MGU website and other data repositories are low.

## **CONSIDERATIONS**

The QA manual of MGU which has been elaborated by MGU staff, introduces documents regulating the internal QA process in details but it does not give the information on (i) what kinds of best practice was chosen to put at work the mentioned policy and approaches and (ii) to monitor to which extent the stakeholders are aware of it and satisfied. During the site visit it became clear that an attempt was made to generalize the experience gained on the sample of a number of leading universities within RA.

However, the quality culture in MGU is not fully formed because (i) the existing QA human and professional resources and their expertise level are insufficient to carry out a good QA job, (ii) the majority of stakeholders are not aware of the university's processes, (iii) the QA mechanisms do not function clearly, and (iv) the mechanisms evaluating the efficiency of the internal QA system are absent. Though, surveys are carried out in the university, they do not have regular and continuous character. The results are seldom published, which serves as an obstacle for the evidence based decision making and for the continuous improvement of the university activities.

The professional resources set for internal quality management do not meet the requirements which are usually set or necessary for the full functioning of the university's QA unit. The partial changes within the system are ad hoc and not based on valid evaluation results yet. To understand, analyze and evaluate the factual processes more detailed analyses are often required as far as they are not always available in documents relating to the assessment of internal quality.

The MGU self-evaluation didn't contain the necessary information based on the analysis results. As the site-visit revealed, the level of involvement of internal and external stakeholders in QA processes is low. The awareness of QA mechanisms as well as professional competences necessary for the realization of MGU's QA unit staff's functions is low. It is obvious that the quality culture is not fully developed and that the PDCA cycle is still not closed.

**CONCLUSION:** The correspondence of MGU institutional capacities to the requirements of the criterion 10 is **unsatisfactory**.



## EVALUATION ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

<b>CRITERION</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>
<i>1. Mission and Purpose</i>	<b>Satisfactory</b>
<i>2. Governance and Administration</i>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
<i>3. Academic Programmes</i>	<b>Satisfactory</b>
<i>4. Students</i>	<b>Satisfactory</b>
<i>5. Teaching and Support Staff</i>	<b>Satisfactory</b>
<i>6. Research and Development</i>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
<i>7. Infrastructure and Resources</i>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
<i>8. Social Responsibility</i>	<b>Satisfactory</b>
<i>9. External Relations and Internationalization</i>	<b>Satisfactory</b>
<i>10. Internal Quality Assurance System</i>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>

**11 July, 2014**

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**Vahan Sargsyan**

Chair of the expert panel

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1. CVS OF THE EXPERT PANEL MEMBERS

**Vahan Sargsyan:** In 1999 graduated from Armenian State Pedagogical University the faculty of psychology. In 2005 was an applicant /PhD student/ in the chair of applied psychology. In the same year defended his thesis “The Deviant Behavior of an Individual as a Consequence of Influence of Emergency Situations and the Ways of Overcoming It” with the profession of “Legal Psychology, Political Psychology”. He is a candidate of psychological sciences, is an associate professor and head of the practice department at Armenian State Pedagogical University

**Jan Cornelis:** Mechanical & Electrotechnical Civil Engineer, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium, 1973, Ph.D. Applied Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium, 1980. Professor in digital image processing and electronics, coordinator of research group IRIS (computer vision, image processing). From 2012 he is Vice rector international relations at VUB. From 1997 onwards, he became consultant professor at the North-Western Polytechnic University, Xi'an, China. Current research interest: Image and video compression, Medical imaging.

During 20 years Jan Cornelis is active in R&D-management: head of department of the department ETRO - Electronics and Informatics, initiator and first chairman of "BI3 NV" -incubation fund, and co-founder of ICAB NV - Incubation Centre of VUB. In 2001-2008 he was Vice rector for research at VUB. In 2009-2010, he was deputy head of cabinet in the Ministry of Science Policy and Innovation. He then became academic coordinator Knowledge Innovation and Technology Transfer at VUB. He is now representing the Flemish Government in the Board of Directors of IMEC. He is board member of the Institute of Broad Band Technology iMinds. He has co-initiated the first interuniversity (UGent, VUB, UA) early seed fund Qbic in Flanders-Brussels, which started in June 2012. From 2012 he is Vicerektor international relations at VUB.

**Geghecik Grigoryan:** In 1979 graduated from Yerevan State University the faculty of law, in 1999-2001 was an applicant/PhD student/ in RA National Academy of Sciences the institute of Philosophy and Rights. She is an expert-lawyer in National Research Institute for training the civil officers. Now she is candidate of law sciences, the dean of the law faculty at Haybusak University, associate professor in the chair of law at State University of Economics.

**Karen Grigoryan:** In 1997 graduated from Yerevan State Institute of National Economy /nowadays Armenian State University of Economics/ the faculty of general economics with the profession of “State Regulation of Economy”. In 1999-2003 was a PhD student in the university with the profession of macroeconomics. He is a candidate of economical sciences, is an associate professor in the chair of macroeconomics at Armenian State University of Economics,

**Arusyak Harutyunyan:** In 2013 graduated from Armenian State Pedagogical University getting bachelor degree in pedagogy and psychology. Now is “Higher Education Management” MA 2<sup>nd</sup> year student at Armenian State Pedagogical University.

## APPENDIX 2. SCHEDULE OF SITE VISIT

MGU Vanadzor 21.04.2014 -23.04.2014

MGU Yerevan 25.04.2014 -26.04.2014

<b>21.04.2014</b>		<b>Launch</b>	<b>End</b>	<b>Duration</b>
1	Leaving for Vanadzor	08:30	10:30	120 minutes
2	Meeting with the Rector	11:30	11:45	15 minutes
3	Close meeting of the expert panel, study of the documents	12:00	14:30	150 minutes
4	Meeting with the founders	14:30	15:10	40 minutes
5	Meeting with the Rector	15:20	16:15	55 minutes
6	Meeting with the self-evaluation working group	16:25	17:55	90 minutes
7	Close meeting of the expert panel	18:00	18:40	40 minutes
<b>22.04.2014</b>		<b>Launch</b>	<b>End</b>	<b>Duration</b>
1	Meeting with the heads of the departments /10-12 people/	9:00	9:40	40 minutes
2	Meeting with the vice-rector of educational affairs and the representatives of educational-scientific department	9:50	10:30	40 minutes
3	Meeting with the deans	10:40	11:10	30 minutes
4	Meeting with the heads of chairs	11:20	12:20	60 minutes
5	Resource observation	12:30	13:30	60 minutes
6	Break, internal discussions of the expert panel	13:40	14:40	60 minutes
7	Meeting with the teaching staff (10-12 people)	14:50	15:50	60 minutes
8	Meeting with the students and the representatives of Student Council and Student Scientific Union (12-15 people)	16:00	17:00	60 minutes
9	Close meeting of the expert panel	17:10	18:10	60 minutes
<b>23.04.2014</b>		<b>Launch</b>	<b>End</b>	<b>Duration</b>
1	Meeting with the representatives of QA department	9:00	9:40	40 minutes
2	Meeting with alumni (10-12 people)	9:50	10:50	60 minutes
3	Meeting with the employers (8-10 people)	11:00	12:00	60 minutes
4	Open meeting	12:10	12:40	30 minutes
5	Break, discussions of the expert panel	12:50	13:50	60 minutes
6	Study of the documents	14:00	15:00	60 minutes
7	Resource observation, visit to the deans offices and chairs	15:10	16:10	60 minutes
8	Close meeting of the expert panel	16:20	17:20	60 minutes
9	Closing meeting with the Rector	17:25	17:45	20 minutes
10	Leaving for Yerevan	18:00	20:00	120 minutes
<b>25.04.2014</b>		<b>Launch</b>	<b>End</b>	<b>Duration</b>
1	Meeting with the vice-rectors	10:00	10:15	15 minutes
2	Meeting with the heads of departments	10:25	11:05	40 minutes
3	Meeting with the teaching staff	11:15	12:15	60 minutes
4	Break, discussions of the expert panel	12:25	13:25	60 minutes
6	Meeting with the students (10-12 people)	13:40	14:40	60 minutes
7	Meeting with the alumni (10-12 people)	14:50	15:50	60 minutes
8	Close meeting of the expert panel	16:00	17:30	90 minutes
<b>26.04.2014</b>		<b>Launch</b>	<b>End</b>	<b>Duration</b>
1	Meeting with the representatives of QA department	10:00	10:40	40 minutes
3	Resource observation and study of the documents	10:50	11:50	60 minutes
4	Break, expert panel discussions	12:00	13:00	60 minutes
5	Closing meeting with the founders, Rector and vice-rectors	13:10	13:40	30 minutes
6	Close meeting of the expert panel	13:40	15:40	120 minutes

### APPENDIX 3. LIST OF DOCUMENTS OBSERVED

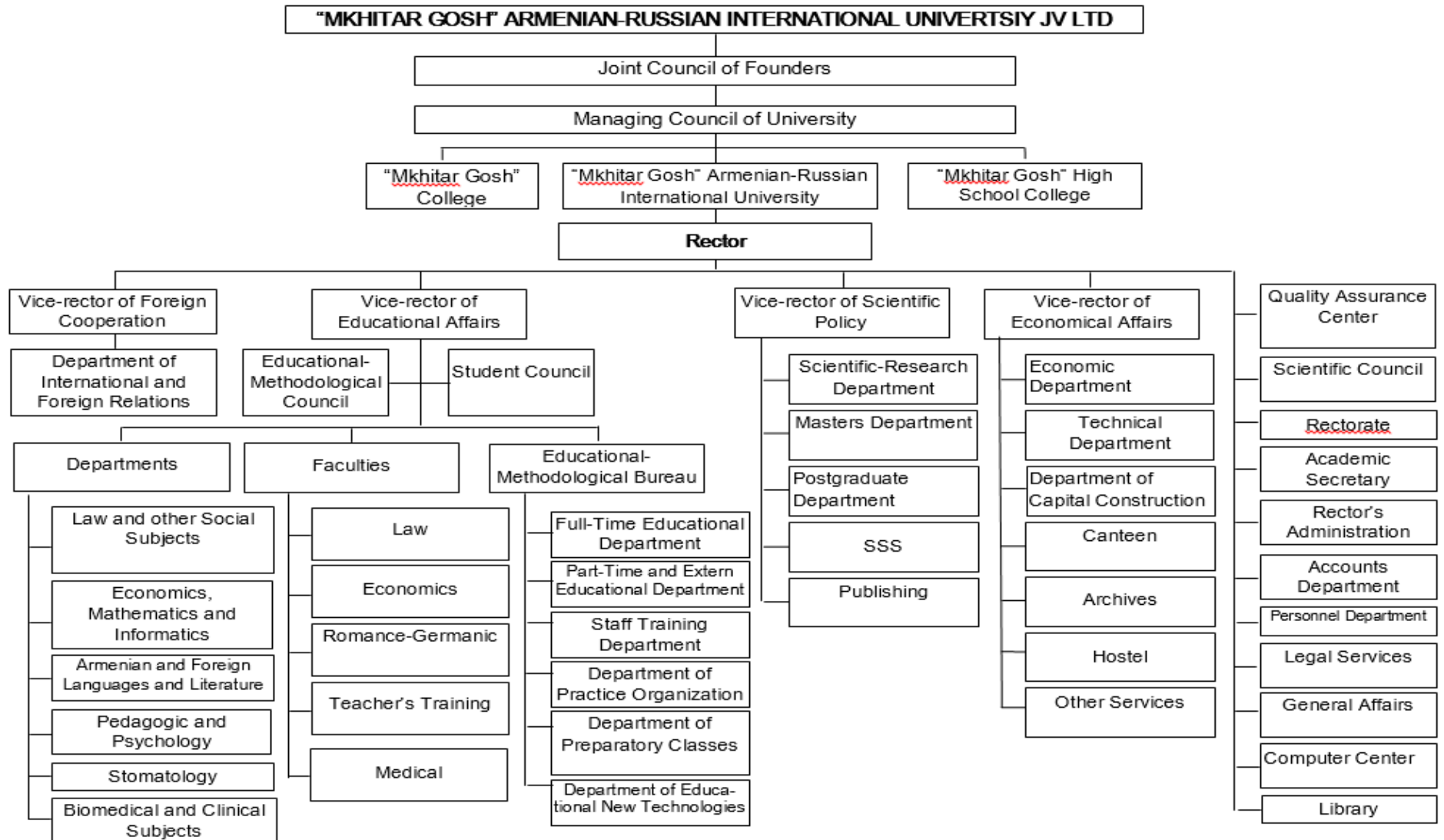
N	Name of the document
1	Decisions, excerpts or minutes of MGU Scientific Council sessions stating about the discussion, approval and monitoring of MGU's strategic plan.
2	Annual reports of MGU Rector (2010-2013 3 reports selectively)
3	Agreements with different organizations for organizing internships
4	Examples of surveys for examining the labour market and their analysis
5	Results and analysis of written and oral surveys conducted among MGU's internal and external stakeholders /resources, academic programmes, evaluation, etc. /
6	List of MGU structural units and their regulations
7	List of MGU professions provided both in bachelor and master levels.
8	Data about the mobility of the teaching staff and students.
9	Learning guide and course handbooks.
10	Examples of bachelor and master diploma appendix with the European format.
11	Individual plan of a teacher.
12	Form evaluating teacher's scientific-pedagogical activity.
13	Regulation on the survey about the alumni's satisfaction with the education got at the university.
14	Regulation on the differentiated bonuses for MGU teachers
15	The list of universities and organizations collaborating with MGU and the agreements.
16	Examples of graduate papers and master theses according to each profession.
17	The requirements for master thesis.
18	Examples of students assessment through mid-term and final exams /filled in tests, copybooks, and other written sources/:
19	Reports on the final state exams.
20	Grounds for the performance of strategic plan.
21	Complete data about the teaching staff /degree, title, courses taught, trainings, work experience, workload/
22	Contracts about obtaining new literature and equipment during the last 3 years.
23	Policy and procedure of budget allocation.
24	Short term ad long term strategic plans of the chairs and faculties.
25	Espressamente regional foreign language centre
26	Any document about the consultancy services providing to the society: 1. Regulation 2. Contracts / about implementing joint educational activities/, 2011 Accordo commercial e di collaborarione 3. Certificate 4. Data about master educational centre
27	Policy on the allocation of financial resources / estimate of budget allocation/
28	Charters of the faculties
29	Charters of Student Scientific Union and Student Council
30	Regulation on learning with credit system in bachelor and master levels.
31	Report of the final attestation committee.
32	Academic programmes: bachelor- stomatology, management, law, foreign language, master-management, law, foreign language.
33	Assessment form of the defence of bachelor graduate papers and master theses.
34	Regulation of the review of bachelor graduate papers.
35	Regulation of MGU alumni final attestation.
36	Minutes of faculty sessions.

37	Internship diary- reports, internship description.
38	Reference about international students.
39	Report on MGU QA.
40	List of Yerevan alumni.
41	Article on the topic "The Evaluation of the Teaching Staff in Quality Management System of the University" /V. Brutyan/
42	Quality assessment form of the courses /practical works, laboratory works, seminars, lectures/
43	Work plan of the chair.
44	Order of the teachers' position.
45	List of foreign students learning at MGU.

#### APPENDIX 4. RESOURCES OBSERVED

N	Vanadzor	Yerevan
1	Sports hall	Computer room
2	Hall	QA center
3	Swimming pool	Educational department
4	Clinics of stomatology	Deans office
5	Computer room	Lecture rooms
6	Military cabinet	Library
7	Canteen	
8	Library-reading hall	
9	QA centre	
10	Career centre	
11	Human resource department	
12	Accounting department	
13	Lecture rooms	
14	Chairs	
15	Cabinet of biology	

## APPENDIX 5. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION INSTITUTION



## **APPENDIX 6. LIST OF THE ABBREVIATIONS**

1. **ANQA**-National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance, Foundation
2. **EHEA**-European Higher Education Area
3. **ESG**-Standards and guidelines for Quality Assurance in European Higher Education Area
4. **MGU**-Mkhitar Gosh Armenian-Russian International University
5. **PDCA**- Plan Do Check Act
6. **QA**-Quality Assurance
7. **RA**- Republic of Armenia
8. **R&D**- Research and Development
9. **SME**- Small and Medium Enterprises