

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



**EXPERT PANEL REPORT
ON INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION CARRIED OUT
AT YEREVAN STATE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY**

Yerevan – 2019

INTRODUCTION

The institutional accreditation of Yerevan State Medical University after M. Heratsi (hereinafter YSMU) is carried out based on the application presented by the latter. The process of institutional accreditation is organized and coordinated by the “National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance” Foundation (ANQA). Whilst carrying out its operations, ANQA is guided by the regulation on “State Accreditation of RA Institutions and their Educational Programs” set by the RA Government on 30 June, 2011 N978-Ն decree as well as by N959-Ն (30 June, 2011) decree on “Approving RA Standards for Professional Education Accreditation”.

The expertise was carried out by the independent expert panel formed according to the demands of ANQA Regulation on the Formation of the Expert Panel. The expert panel consisted of three local and two international experts (one from India and one from Kazakhstan).

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 educational programs. Hence, there were two important issues for local and international expert panel members:

1. To carry out an expertise of institutional capacities in line with the RA standards for state accreditation,
2. To carry out an evaluation for the improvement of institution’s quality and for its compliance with international developments and the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) standards.

The report refers to the expertise of institutional capacities of YSMU according to the state criteria for professional education accreditation as well as the international standards for medical education.

Contents

INTRODUCTION	2
ASSESSMENT SUMMARY	4
EXPERTISE OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES ACCORDING TO THE STATE CRITERIA AND STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION ACCREDITATION.....	4
PEER REVIEW FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF INTEGRATION INTO EHEA	11
DESCRIPTION OF THE EXPERTIZE	15
EXPERT PANEL COMPOSITION.....	15
THE PROCEDURE OF THE EXPERTISE	16
EXPERTIZE ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA	19
BRIEF INFORMATION ABOUT THE TLI.....	19
I. MISSION AND GOALS.....	21
II. GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION.....	25
III. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS.....	31
IV. STUDENTS.....	38
CRITERION V. TEACHING AND SUPPORT STAFF	42
VI. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.....	46
VII. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES	49
VIII. SOCIETAL RESPONSIBILITY	53
IX. EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONALIZATION	55
X. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM	58
ASSESSMENTS BY ACCREDITATION CRITERIA.....	64
APPENDIX 1. RESUMES OF THE EXPERT PANEL MEMBERS	65
APPENDIX 2. SCHEDULE OF EXPERT VISIT.....	66
APPENDIX 3. LIST OF STUDIED DOCUMENTS.....	69
APPENDIX 4. ANALYSIS OF THE RESOURCES	71
APPENDIX 5. THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE HEI.....	72
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	73

ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

EXPERTISE OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES ACCORDING TO THE STATE CRITERIA AND STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION ACCREDITATION

The expertise of YSMU was carried out by an independent¹ expert panel formed according to the requirements of ANQA Regulation on the Formation of the Expert Panel. The evaluation was carried out according to 10 criteria set by the RA Government on 30 June 2011 N 959-Ն decree.

While carrying out the expertise the expert panel took into consideration the fact that “Yerevan State Medical University after M. Heratsi is an educational, scientific and clinical higher education institution, which considers its mission to prepare highly professional healthcare specialists aimed at preserving, strengthening and improving public health”.

Back in 2015, YSMU underwent an institutional accreditation process, as an outcome of which the TLI was granted accreditation of 4 years. Based on the recommendations provided in the expert report, YSMU developed a remedial action plan. In 2017, YSMU presented to ANQA the mid-term review of the executive action plan of addressing the revealed issues and improving the processes. ANQA carried out mid-term monitoring of the remedial action plan in 2017 and 2019.

YSMU taking into account the previous expert panel report on accreditation has improved its strategic plan (SP). The TLI’s current 2015-2020 SP specifies its vision, strategic objectives and concrete actions to achieve them. The needs of the TLI’s internal stakeholders are reflected in the SP, but its external stakeholders were not actively engaged, although the previous expert panel emphasized the necessity of enhanced cooperation with the external stakeholders. With the ratification of the new SP YSMU’s internationalization is defined as a priority, although the cooperation with foreign employers and other international stakeholders and managing relationship with them are not regulated and are implemented by medical associations.

The intended outcomes are not clearly and measurably defined, and there are no precise mechanisms for their timelines and assessment in the action plan of SP implementation. As a result, no quantitative and qualitative assessment of the realization of the TLI’s mission and strategic purposes is carried out, which reduces the effectiveness of SP implementation. It is worth noting that the previous accreditation expert panel also highlighted the importance of quality indicators based on the SP goals, which should be taken into account by YSMU in the coming years.

Meanwhile, YSMU’s financial planning has not yet been undertaken based on the strategic priorities, and resources are not allocated in accordance with the particular strategic goals.

¹ APPENDIX 1: CVS OF EXPERT PANEL MEMBERS

The expert panel evaluates positively the fact that since 2015, considering the recommendations provided throughout the previous accreditation procedure as well, certain steps aimed at reforms of the TLI's government system have been undertaken (review of the strategic plan, structural changes, e.g. establishment of career department, etc.). In YSMU, the elaboration of unit activity regulations, reunification of the faculties and position passport validations are in process as well. The TLI has carried out certain operations aimed at ensuring the compliance of the recurrent functions of structural subdivisions with the SP goals.

The expert panel highlights the importance of improving data collection mechanisms in YSMU. Now, the collected data does not contribute to the government's decision-making and does not cover all the university sectors. The further ways of applying the collected information are not clear as well, since it is mainly used if required, without ensuring feedback from the stakeholders. No clear indicators are available yet to detect the impact of external factors on all the areas of the TLI activity. This was also emphasized by the previous expert panel, and YSMU should focus on this over the coming years.

YSMU offers continuous and integrated Bachelor and Master's degree education programs in "Medical work", "Stomatology" and "Pharmacy" specializations. The Public Health Faculty of YSMU offers Master's degree programs /Healthcare organization and management, Business administration, Management of medical facilities/ that give two qualifications to the graduates: Public Health Master's (MPH) and Executive MBA. YSMU also has Faculty of Military Medicine, where "Medical work in the armed forces" program prepares doctors for the RA Armed Forces. YSMU's APs correspond to the TLI's mission, since it trains specialists who meet the requirements of the healthcare labour market.

In order to demonstrate the trustworthiness of the given qualifications, while developing the new professional education programs YSMU applied a new instrument known from international practice – Requirements traceability matrix. This helped analyze whether the program expected outcomes were in line with the sixth and seventh levels of National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

Based on the recommendations provided throughout the previous accreditation procedure a comparative analysis was undertaken: best practices of more than 25 countries were compared as well as the WFME and EU directives standards, changes were introduced in curricula, education programs were reviewed. However, it is worth mentioning that there are numerous other spheres in the above-mentioned standards, in particular: more targeted focus on the needs of healthcare sector stakeholders in AP outcomes; use of assignments aimed at shaping responsibility, analytical and research skills among the students; realization of data-driven education; improvement of the evaluation system through MiniCEX and OSCE differentiated examinations, personal portfolio, etc., that were not considered by the TLI during the comparative analysis.

The expert panel evaluates positively the fact that based on the recommendations provided through the previous accreditation procedure YSMU has implemented assessment

diversification and underlines the importance of assessment of practical skills, but the policy of multi-component assessment is still applied at several chairs only. Full implementation of the multi-component assessment system will contribute to strengthening the students' analytical and research skills and practical capacities. It is also worth mentioning, that implementation of the students' periodic and final evaluation methods is of particular importance according to international standards. This is about on-site evaluation, a student's portfolio, as well as management and monitoring of students' skills acquired during different cycles, which have not been fully realized yet, hindering the students' full acquisition of practical skills.

Positive is the fact that in YSMU, based on the outcomes of the previous accreditation, a policy and procedures of selection of teaching staff with professional qualities required for AP implementation have been developed. YSMU has a highly qualified teaching and administrative staff that is able to successfully realize its mission and strategic goals. It is also positive that specialists familiar with the problems of RA healthcare sector are operating in YSMU teaching staff. The policy of teaching staff selection, however, does not ensure the involvement of sufficient number of highly qualified biomedical scientists, which is highlighted in international standards in medical education (WFME). Notwithstanding the fact that YSMU implements trainings aimed at teachers' professional development, they are based on individual initiatives, and there are no clear indicators for teacher development, which hinders their continuous improvement and international agility. It is noteworthy that implementation of clear policy of teacher professional development was also highlighted by the previous accreditation expert panel, which should be the TLI's focus for the coming years.

In general, material, financial and human resources of YSMU, their management, university buildings, the location of university hospitals create sufficient and favorable conditions for implementation of YSMU mission and strategic goals. The expert panel evaluates positively the fact that the TLI has undertaken certain steps aimed at implementing the recommendations provided throughout the previous accreditation procedure. In particular, the TLI has developed procedures and started to conduct regular surveys on satisfaction with the resource base. Nevertheless, the analyses, improvement planning and further control need regulation. Positive is the fact that the TLI underlines the importance of acquisition of Mikaelyan Institute of Surgery, establishment of Center of Excellence in Dental Training and increase in the number of simulation centers, which is aimed at the development of the students' practical skills. However, the planning system of simulation center workload and the number of teacher staff per student during the sessions in those centers need revision as well. It is worth mentioning that assessment of unit needs for allocation of financial resources was not undertaken, which was underlined by the previous accreditation expert panel as well.

YSMU has mechanisms of student recruitment, selection and admission: for Armenian citizens, the processes are regulated by RA national legislation and the TLI's internal legal acts,

and for foreign citizens – by internal legal acts only. The implemented mechanisms contribute to distribution of information, recruitment of applicants from different countries and organization of effective admission. The expert panel evaluates positively YSMU's policy of revelation of the students' academic needs. The students have the opportunity to speak out about their academic needs during the regular meetings with the Rector, as well as with Vice-Rectors, deans, and heads of the departments. Such meetings contribute to the revelation of the students' needs and existing issues, and to the solution planning. The expert panel evaluates positively the existence of Legal Clinic in YSMU that is engaged in discussing the students' complaints, thereby promoting thorough and impartial examination of the students' problems and their solution within the law. The involvement of Legal Clinic in the TLI's management structure and regulation of its activity will contribute to a more systematic work of the infrastructure. Although YSMU has adopted a policy aimed at engaging the students in research operations, currently their engagement is based on individual initiatives and personal motivation. This is an obstacle to involving a greater number of students in research operations and developing analytical skills among them. It is noteworthy that the problem of students' involvement in research operations was highlighted during the previous accreditation procedure, and YSMU should focus on addressing this issue over the coming years.

Notwithstanding the fact that in YSMU, surveys on “teachers through the eyes of students” are carried out, which reveal education-related problems, dissemination of the outcomes and solution of the identified problems are not systematic yet, which hinders the continuous quality improvement of academic and consultation services.

It is positive that YSMU has undertaken certain steps aimed at eliminating the drawbacks mentioned in the previous accreditation expert report and has determined its interests and ambitions to support the implementation of more targeted research. Commendably, YSMU announces about its great ambitions concerning the development of research activities; meanwhile, a clearer planning of human and financial resources required for achieving its goal and setting of quality standards will contribute to consolidation of the TLI's achievements in research. Commendably, YSMU has adopted a policy of engaging teachers and students in research operations and encouraging them. However, now few teachers and students are actually involved in research, the reasons for which have not been investigated by the TLI yet.

Although in some faculties of YSMU, a system of student multi-component assessment has been introduced, involving assessment of research operations as well, the challenges in strengthening links between educational process and research are still present. It is uncertain which components of APs provide learning of scientific methods, medical examination methods, analytical and critical thinking and the principles of evidence-based medicine, which are of huge importance for the future innovative doctors. It is worth noting that the previous accreditation expert panel also highlighted the problem of the linkage between AP and research, and the TLI should focus on investigating and addressing it in the coming years.

YSMU has signed an array of contracts with foreign educational institutions and the flow of students and teachers participating in exchange programs has increased. Nevertheless, the absence of the “mobility window” in APs hinders the participation of a greater number of students in exchange programs. Positive is the fact that taking into account the recommendations provided by the previous accreditation expert panel, certain steps have been undertaken aimed at improving the level of foreign language proficiency of teachers and students. However, currently it is necessary to enhance English language skills among students, which will facilitate mobility, the participation of a greater number of students in exchange programs, and will increase their capabilities of using foreign literature.

The expert panel evaluates positively the fact that the TLI, following the recommendations provided by the previous accreditation procedure, has indicated “providing enhanced efficiency in the process of forming the culture of quality assurance” as its goal in 2015-2020 SP. Moreover, in 2018, it established the regulation of Education Quality Assessment and Assurance Center, where the functions and objectives of the Center, as well as the functions of the Center Chief and the staff were described. Nevertheless, the inconsistency between the ambitious formulation of the functions of the Center and the actually implemented quality assurance processes devalue the role of the system and its importance for the stakeholders, hindering the implementation of strategic goals in quality assurance. It is important to emphasize that there are no grounds for applying the designed documentary basis for quality assurance (self-evaluation, evaluation of effectiveness of different processes, KPI analyses, assessment and analysis of YSMU APs), as well as no active policy of quality assurance that would cover all areas of the TLI activity. This serves as an obstacle to revealing the existing problems and their continuous improving, as well as to the formation of the quality culture prerequisites. The importance of providing involvement of the largest possible number of stakeholders in QA processes, implementation of self-evaluations covering different segments of YSMU, regular feedback from stakeholders, and other procedures that are not fully realized yet, were highlighted in the previous accreditation expert report.

Strengths of the TLI:

1. A high bar of goals set to prepare competitive graduates for the international labour market and to make the TLI’s brand recognizable on the global level,
2. Student-centric activity,
3. High level of availability of the administrative and teaching staff for the students,
4. Provision of required human (especially practical) and financial resources,
5. Continuous improvement of logistics as a priority,
6. Implementation of trilingual APs that cover all areas of medical education,
7. High level of social and corporative responsibility,

8. Targeting of scientific activity course,
9. Realization of large-scale work aimed at internationalization, targeted use of the potential of foreign graduates and the Armenian community, adoption of a networking mechanism, the opportunity of free training for FMGE examination for international students,
10. Availability of reporting system and horizontal management.

Weaknesses of the TLI:

1. Proactive involvement of not all of stakeholders in quality management processes,
2. Lack of performance indicators for evaluation that cover all areas of YSMU activity, and improvements based on them,
3. Lack of mechanisms that reveal and disseminate best practices in YSMU,
4. Lack of long-term targeted financial planning,
5. Low level of pro-patient education (the number of hospitals per student resulting in low level of using of practical skills),
6. Imperfection of the student professional growth evaluation system,
7. Low level of student and teacher mobility,
8. Weak involvement of students and teachers in research,
9. Limitation of cooperation with external stakeholders,
10. Weak education-clinical study-science relationship,

Main Recommendations:

1. To expand external stakeholder involvement and their opportunities to influence on different processes in YSMU,
2. To set quantitative and qualitative indicators for evaluating the implementation of the TLI's mission and SP goals, and regularly collect data for improvement,
3. To review the financial planning system aligning it with the implementation of the TLI's strategic objectives,
4. To clarify the mechanisms that link research operations and academic processes, evaluating their performance,
5. To encourage the active engagement of teaching staff and students in research,
6. To develop a clear policy and procedures to ensure professional development of teaching staff based on the identified special needs,
7. To activate exchange programs and encourage students and teachers to participate in those programs by providing clear mechanisms and financial support,
8. To carry out regular self-evaluations and create stable mechanisms for getting feedback from stakeholders,

9. With the aim of developing practical skills among students, to introduce the practice of case studies, simulation-based education and assessment, as well as a student portfolio,
10. To develop a complex policy for QA and regulate the processes, to multiply QA mechanisms and tools covering all areas of the TLI's activity,
11. To develop and apply performance evaluating indicators for all the processes in the TLI and regularly analyze process efficiency contributing to revelation and dissemination of best practices.

PEER REVIEW FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF INTEGRATION INTO EHEA

1. Mission and goals

YSMU has clearly established and recently has revised its mission that is more focused on providing educational services as well as on social responsibility and internationalization of higher education. YSMY has successfully demonstrated that its management, administrative staff, teachers and students accept and realize the TLI's mission and strategic goals. The TLI, however, should consult with different stakeholders to make sure that the provided services meet the needs and expectations of the latter.

A clear definition of internal stakeholders' roles and responsibilities is suggested, as well as the identification of external stakeholders and the provision of their participation in the processes of mission defining and quality assurance.

In addition, WFME's basic standards for medical education are defined in "Mission and outcomes" as separate subdivisions – institutional self-governance and academic freedom, as well as learning outcomes, according to which the students are expected to show the results obtained from basic medical education and post-graduate studies as well as the results of the students' involvement in medical research by the end of their studies.

2. Governance and administration

The TLI's government and management system is in line with the implementation of its mission and strategic goals; it contributes to institutional efficiency and integrity, creates and ensures environment for studying, teaching, research and provision of services.

Nevertheless, it would be useful to draw up short-, mid- and long-time plans of strategic planning and revise the TLI's current 2020 SP as well as undertake performance assessment of achieving the goals set in it, including financial management and budgeting evaluation. PDCA method used for improving the TLI's strategic and institutional processes should be taken into account in the context of quality management and quality assurance systems with the use of predetermined growth indicators for annual revisions and elaboration of development plans.

On this standard: WFME's set of global standards "Governance and administration" includes additional subdivisions: academic leadership, educational budget and resource allocation, and interaction with health sector.

3. Academic program

YSMU ensures the planning, provision, monitoring, assessment and improvement of APs and academic degree granting.

YSMU APs demonstrate the sequence of academic outcomes and goals, the structure and content of the programs, the student admission policy and procedures, learning and teaching methods, the academic level of the learning and teaching achievements as well as the resources required for AP improvement.

The students were mainly concerned about lack of clinical practice and face-to-face communication with real patients in different clinical situations.

Suggestions on student involvement facilitation and further improvement of education:

- To apply innovative methods and technology advanced teaching that includes small-group teaching, PBL, TBL as well as case study teaching, bedside teaching and “flipped classroom” methods;
- To apply an assessment policy and methods of periodic and final evaluation: OSCE, on-site assessment and evaluation of reliability and validity of assessment methods.

On the third standard: Basic Medical Education WFME Global Standards for Quality Improvement, Standard 2. Educational program; 3. Assessment of students, 6. Educational recourses, 6.5 Educational exchanges, 7. Program evaluation should be taken into account for the implementation and improvement of YSMU integrated APs.

4. Students

YSMU in accordance with its mission defines an admission policy.

YSMU engages its students in the activity of its counselling bodies and supports students’ self-governance, Student Parliament in protecting the rights of the students. The TLI provides its students with academic support, consultation on career, healthcare and welfare, financial support and opportunities for personal growth.

Foreign students are provided with special academic support to get prepared for FMGE exam conducted by India’s National Board of Examinations and successfully pass it.

Basic Medical Education WFME Global Standards for Quality Improvement, Standard 4. Students includes admission policy and selection; student intake; student counselling and support; student representation.

5. Teaching staff

YSMU has staff recruitment and selection policy, procedures and standards and ensures equal employment opportunities in accordance with legal requirements.

The academic staff selection policy should ensure a sufficient number of highly qualified basic biomedical scientists as well as encourage and facilitate student participation in medical examinations in the relevant field of clinical sciences.

In accordance with Basic Medical Education WFME Global Standards for Quality Improvement, we propose to establish and implement 1) a staff development program and 2) an academic staff development policy and recognition of academic activity.

6. Research and development

YSMU has a policy of conducting scientific-research operations with clearly defined scientific priorities, which takes into account the interest of the investigators as well. However, it is unclear how the research priorities reflect and meet the country’s health needs.

The TLI has developed 2018-2028/38 science development strategy approved by the Science coordination council. This policy can be implemented only through integrated work of the Science coordination council, Science department, the respective academic departments and researchers, engaging the Students’ scientific society as well.

Regarding the requirements of Basic Medical Education WFME Global Standards for Quality Improvement, it is recommended to revise the TLI’s integrated medical APs and define

the components of which AP include medical principles of scientific method, medical examination methods, and those based on analytical and critical thinking, paper assessment and evidence. It is also advisable to understand at what extent the students are involved in research projects and examinational investigations.

7. Infrastructure and resources

YSMU has sufficient and relevant resources, informational resources, educational and informational technologies, resources required for clinical training and research, and sufficiently uses them for realizing its mission and strategic goals.

“The Electronic University”, which is still under development, is going to coordinate the whole learning process, use information and communication technology for efficient planning, management, and evaluation of APs and services.

The TLI annually calculates its own budget and the one allocated of public resources in accordance with its current needs.

YSMU should appropriately plan and allocate financial resources for the libraries and their infrastructures, and for the development of informational resources and technologies.

8. Social accountability

YSMU has a precise accountability policy for responding to the needs of society, and it has successfully demonstrated its ability to ensure effective communication with internal and external stakeholders.

9. External relations and internationalization

YSMU has a policy on international cooperation, academic exchange and internationalization. The TLI has established large-scale cooperation with an array of international and local tertiary level institutions, healthcare and research organizations, student unions and health associations.

The growing number of foreign students, visiting professors and honored physicians as well as the local and international collaboration, including student and teacher exchange and research projects with partner organizations, require appropriate resources and calculated annual budget.

10. Internal quality assurance

Basic medical education WFME global standards for Governance and administration (8.4 Governance and administration) require that medical education institutions formulate and implement stable internal mechanisms for quality assurance including their regular review.

YSMU has shown some elements of quality assurance system. YSMU should revise its current system of quality assurance and institutional processes (education, research, provision of services, governance and administration, including the current state of decision-making and confirmation, funding sources, budgeting and resource allocation, which is based on clearly defined needs, the development and improvement of the staff), ensure active role and involvement of internal and external stakeholders adopting a systematic approach, and use relevant standards for implementation of internal monitoring.

June 9, 2019

Mariam Momjyan
Expert Panel Chair

DESCRIPTION OF THE EXPERTIZE

EXPERT PANEL COMPOSITION

The external expertise of the institutional capacities of YSMU was carried out by the expert panel having the following composition:

1. **Mariam Momjyan:** lecturer at Russian-Armenian University, PhD in Economics,
2. **Karen Trchunyan:** Deputy Director of the Research Institute of Biology of YSU Faculty of Biology, researcher at Laboratory of Microbiology, Bioenergetics and Biotechnology of Research Institute of Biology, senior lecturer at the Chair of Biochemistry, Microbiology and Biotechnology, Doctor of Biology,
3. **Archit Pandit:** senior consultant and clinical director in department of surgical Oncology at MAX Institute of cancer care, Surgical Oncologist,
4. **Farida Nurmanbetova:** WFME adviser, Adviser for the Kazakh-Russian Medical University, MD,
5. **Iveta Arzumanyan:** student in the third year of a bachelor's degree at the Department of Milk and Dairy Product, Infant Food and Functional Food Technology, Faculty of Food Technologies of Armenian National Agrarian University.

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

The works of the expert panel were coordinated by Varduhi Gyulazyan – senior specialist of ANQA Institutional and Program Accreditation Division.

The translation was provided by Gourgen Karapetian – lecturer at Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences.

All the members of expert panel including the coordinators and the translator have signed impartiality and confidentiality agreements.

THE PROCEDURE OF THE EXPERTISE

Application for state accreditation

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

The ANQA Secretariat checked the application package, the data presented in the application form, and the appendices.

According to the decision on accepting the application request, a bipartite agreement was signed between ANQA and YSMU. The timetable of activities was prepared and approved.

Within the deadline set in the schedule, YSMU presented the Armenian and English versions of its self-evaluation report according to the form set by ANQA, and the package of attached documents.

The self-evaluation was carried out by a team formed by the order of YSMU rector.

Preparatory phase

ANQA coordinator observed the report with the aim of revealing its correspondence to the technical and substantive requirements of ANQA. Then ANQA secretariat sent the self-evaluation report to the expert panel, the members of which were agreed upon with the institute.

Four training on the following topics were organized for the expert panel members by ANQA members responsible for trainings, with the aim of preparing the latter and ensuring the effectiveness of the activities:

1. Accreditation process, the features of the expertise, expert ethics and rules of conduct.
2. Preliminary assessment of the institutional self-evaluation through the examples from the practice.
3. An expert visit through role-plays.
4. Preparation of the expert report.

During the trainings, the international standards for medical education quality assurance and certain aspects of the field.

Having observed the self-evaluation and the package of accompanying documents of the TLI, the expert panel conducted the initial evaluation. According to the format, the list of the issues and questions for different target groups or units and the list of additional documents needed for observation have been prepared.

During the preliminary assessment, the expert panel undertook training and examination observations. The expert panel visited YSMU “Center of Excellence in Dental Training” and observed the practical training. They also visited the Genecology department at “Armenia” Republican Medical Center and observed an oral exam, and Mikaelyan surgical institute to observe the Simulation center work and the students’ involvement in surgeries.

Within the scheduled time, the expert panel summarized the results of the initial evaluation and formed a time schedule of the site-visit. According to the ANQA manual on

the expertise the intended meetings with all the target groups, close and open meetings, document and resource review, visits to different units and else were included in the time schedule.

After having identifying the main issues and the documents to be investigated, the expert panel highlighted the issues to be discussed at meetings. At regular meetings, the questions on each standard were discussed, and the package of documents on the preliminary visit of the expert panel was prepared. The package included the time-schedule of the site visit², the questions to be investigated and explained for different target groups and the list of additional documents needed for observation during the site visit. From the lists provided by the TLI, the representatives of the teaching staff and students, graduates, employers were selected to participate in the meetings.

YSMU self-evaluation

On March 1, 2019, YSMU submitted the Armenian and English versions of its self-evaluation report according to the form set by ANQA, and the package of attached documents. The self-evaluation report was general and included mainly descriptive data without reflecting the integral implemented reforms resulted after the previous accreditation.

Preliminary visit

On May 6, 2019, a preliminary visit was paid to YSMU. Throughout the said visit the plan-schedule of the site-visit was agreed upon, the list of additional documents to be investigated was presented, discussions and mutual decisions were reached referring to organizational, technical, informative questions of the site visit. Questions related to the conduct and the norms of ethics of meeting participants were touched upon as well. The rooms prepared for focus groups and expert panel discussions were discussed, the issues related to the equipment and facilities were clarified.

Site visit

The site visit of the expert panel took place from May 20 to 23, 2019. In line with the timetable, the operations of the expert panel initiated with a close meeting, the aim of which was to discuss and agree the assessment framework with external panel members Archit Pandit and Farida Nurmanbetova, the issues to be clarified, strengths and weaknesses of YSMU per criteria, the procedure of focus groups, and to make further steps more precise.

All the expert panel members, including the ANQA coordinator, the translator and the record keeper assisted the meetings.

The site visit initiated and culminated with meetings with the YSMU Rector. All the meetings foreseen by the schedule have been carried out including the open meeting in which the representatives from the teaching staff and students took part. Throughout the site visit, the expert panel had document review³, resource observation⁴ and focus group meetings in

² Appendix 2. Schedule of site visit at ASPU

³ APPENDIX 3: Site-visit timetable

⁴ APPENDIX 4: List of reviewed documents

different infrastructures of the TLI. The expert panel visited Mikaelyan surgery institute and observed the simulation center work on the ground.

During close meetings of the panel at the end of each working day, the interim results of peer review were discussed and at the end of the site visit, the main outcomes of the site visit were summarized.

The assessment has been carried out within the framework of State Criteria and Standards of Accreditation and ANQA procedures, following which the assessment has two levels: satisfactory and unsatisfactory.

Expert panel report

The expert panel and ANQA coordinator prepared the draft of expert panel report. The international experts have prepared a separate peer review, which was included in the report. The preliminary report was handed over to YSMU in 09.07.2019. Later, YSMU sent its comments and remarks on the report to ANQA on 19.07.2018. The comments and remarks were presented in the Armenian language, which were then passed on to the local experts. On September 12, 2019, ANQA held a meeting with the experts and the representatives of the HEI during which the official response of the expert panel with regard to the presented comments were delivered to the representatives of the HEI. Following the discussion, the expert panel prepared the final version of the report, which was approved on 04.10. 2019.

Varduhi Gyulazyan

Signature of the coordinator

October 4, 2019

EXPERTIZE ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

BRIEF INFORMATION ABOUT THE TLI

History: The medical faculty of Yerevan State University was founded in 1919. In 1930, it was restructured into Yerevan State Medical University that included 30 chairs and 270 students. In 1989, by N 234 decree of the RA Council of Ministers Yerevan State Medical Institute was named after a great doctor and thinker Mkhitar Heratsi. In 1995, the Institute was granted the status of a university. By the RA Government decree № 450 on April 23, 2002 the University was restructured into a state non-profit organization, and in 2014, it gained the status of a fund.

During 95 years of its existence, the University has prepared over 34 000 highly qualified specialists, 3200 of which are foreign citizens. Many of the graduates became prominent scientists, skilled organizers of healthcare, state and public figures, greatly contributing to healthcare organization, disease prevention and cure, as well as the development of medical science in the republic.

Remaining true to its roots, the traditions and ideas of the Armenian medieval medical schools, YSMU now is guided by the requirements of the RA Higher education system, assuring competitive general level of qualifications and specializations on a European scale. It also facilitates mobility of teachers and researchers, gradually getting integrated into the European science and education area.

Education: The aim of YSMU is to ensure an educational environment where it is possible, based on the requirements of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education of Armenia, to organize appropriate higher and postgraduate medical education, improve academic methodology and better the activity of educational-scientific and educational-productive complexes, ensure the integration of modern technologies into education and research. Today, the TLI is guided by both the classical and the three-level APs, namely Bachelor's, Master's and Fellow researcher's degree programs. The TLI has the Faculties of General Medicine, Stomatology, Pharmacy, Military Medicine, Public Health, Postgraduate and Continuing Education, as well as a Medical college and the Department of preparatory education. The structural units of the TLI are the Faculties, the Chairs, the scientific centers, the clinical complexes, the College, the Departments, the scientific library, the student residence, the typography, production bases, etc. The TLI also provides an array of services: computer centers, cultural and sports clubs, food and leisure activities centers, and education-training-health centers. The governmental bodies of the TLI are the Board of trustees and the CEO-Rector. The student self-governance body is the student parliament.

Research: To develop research and science, YSMU claims to become a university with international academic recognition, ensure its competitive position and stable progress in academic environment through the excellence programs of fundamental and applied research. High performance of the highlighted targets in the concept will ensure the improvement of

the TLI's position in the rating of international universities, being listed in top 1000. With the aim of reaching a competitive position, YSMU should provide a smooth transition of the direction of its activity from the predominantly educational field to the scientific and educational one in the coming 10-20 years.

Internationalization: YSMU claims to improve its international rate by implementing a policy that promotes international partnership. In strengthening and enlarging its international relations, YSMU cooperates with Russian, French, the USA, Iranian, German, Georgian and other medical TLIs. YSMU is a member of the following organizations: The International Association of Universities, World Federation for Medical Education, the American International Health Alliance, the International Pharmaceutical Federation, the International Federation of Medical Students Associations, and the European Medical Students' Association. It is also involved in an array of European and international education and science programs (TEMPUS, ERASMUS-MUNDUS, USAID, UNESCO, and WB). 25 % of the university students are foreigners.

Quality assurance: In quality assurance, the TLI foresees to have a system of education quality assurance that is based on the performance indicators, and that includes the whole cycle of processes, aimed at the gradual and continuous improvement of all the processes. In the TLI's 2015-2020 SP, the long-term improvement of the system of education quality assurance, the periodicity of self-evaluation of the TLI's different units, the comprehensive involvement of the TLI's educational, scientific and financial activity in the QA processes are highlighted.

While carrying out the expertise, the expert panel was led by the principle "fitness for purpose", and it has regarded the above-given information as the ambitions and aims of YSMU.

I. MISSION AND GOALS

CRITERION: The Tertiary Level Institutions' (TLI) policy and practices are in line with its mission, which is in accordance with the Armenian National Qualifications Framework (ANQF).

Findings

1.1. The TLI has a clear, well-articulated mission that represents the institution's purposes and goals as well as is in accordance with the ANQF.

The mission of the TLI is represented in YSMU 2015-2020 strategic plan (SP) approved by the YSMU fund 30.01.2015 scientific council, according to which the TLI's mission is defined as follows: "Yerevan State Medical University after M. Heratsi is an educational, scientific and clinical higher education institution, which considers its mission to prepare highly professional healthcare specialists aimed at preserving, strengthening and improving public health". According to the same SP, YSMU confirms that the SP is "the description of the implementation process of the TLI's long-term (5 years) mission and main goals, it undergoes monitoring and can be regulated in accordance with a new situation". However, it is worth mentioning that the assessment of YSMU's previous, 2009-2014 SP outcomes was not carried out. Meanwhile, based on the outcomes of the previous accreditation, the SP goals have been reformulated.

YSMU's mission is in line with the NQF in that the TLI organizes Bachelor's and Master's degree educational programs as well as Clinical residency, offering also continuous and integrated APs and educational outcomes, matrixes to align with the NQF. Based on the outcomes of the meetings of the expert visit and the Rector's statement, YSMU priority goals are to target YSMU as a medical and scientific center of RA, concentrate RA's core capacity in the university, and create tools for engaging trained specialists from hospitals into academic activity. The processes in the TLI are aimed at reaching these goals.

The vision, nine strategic goals and objectives of the TLI's activity are indicated in its SP on development with certain strategic objectives for certain goals. Nevertheless, the interconnection of the TLI's mission, goals and undertaken actions is not clear, since the processes taking place in the TLI outperform the goals set by the mission. Besides, the main substantive part in the SP, namely "the TLI's strategic goals, objectives and the ways of their implementation", often describe the ways of reaching the goals instead of the objectives (e.g., Goal 1 is defined as "To implement reforms of the University governmental system and ensure the modernization and long-term development of the medical education concept", and under the objectives of that goal it is stated "to optimize the governmental structure with the aim of effective implementation of the strategic and ongoing plans and governance processes, to implement internal personnel audition aimed at the targeted and effective use of the workplaces, and other objectives").

1.2. The TLI mission, aims and objectives reflect the needs of internal and external stakeholders.

According to the outcomes of self-evaluation and the expert visit, YSMU highlights the revelation of its external and internal stakeholders' needs and their reflection in the SP and other documents. The main processes of need revelations in the TLI are mainly aimed at revealing the needs of internal stakeholders. The clear definition and distinction of external stakeholders (in particular, the employers including those living and working outside the RA territory) is not provided. A part of the employers considered as the TLI's external stakeholders is equated with internal stakeholders, since they are the lecturers of clinical chairs. The Charter of YSMU define the TLI's stakeholders as individuals and entities of health sector, educational, scientific, research or other field provided by the TLI Charter. Consequently, the needs of the stakeholders that live and work abroad were not clearly considered in the formulations of YSMU mission, goals and objectives. According to the self-evaluation, the representatives of internal and external stakeholders participated in the discussions of the TLI SP. Still, mainly the needs of internal stakeholders are reflected in the SP. What concerns the consideration of the needs of internal stakeholders in the SP, it happened through their inclusion in the collegiate bodies as well as their participation in surveys. The revelation of the students' needs is also implemented mainly through surveys and participation in the student organization meetings. The site visit has revealed that the TLI undertakes certain steps aimed at facilitating feedback with external stakeholders (including alumni and international stakeholders). The relationship with international employers is mediated by the alumni association, and the relationship with the local employers is implemented through professional medical associations. Nevertheless, the site visit has revealed weak involvement of external stakeholders in defining the strategic priorities, as well as low awareness of the ongoing processes.

1.3. The institution has approved mechanisms and procedures to evaluate the achievement of its mission and goals and to further improve them.

In the action plan of the SP of YSMU, the descriptions of the intended outcomes are general (e.g. efficient and targeted use of the workplaces, priority directions, preconditions for creating an excellence center, etc.) and not clearly measurable for specific target timelines. With the aim of short time planning of the SP implementation, the TLI applies the mechanism of elaborating working plans by each of the units per academic year, by which the facts of implementing the planned operations and undertakings are monitored. With the aim of evaluating the realization of YSMU mission and strategic goals, mainly the system of reports by the units and managers (the Rector, Vice-Rectors, Department of External Relations, Faculty Deans, Head Chairs, etc.) is applied. However, the reports mostly state the undertaken work and facts; they have informational character, and there is lack of analyses or the improvement plans resulting from them, in some cases they even do not exist at all. The performance assessment of the units is not implemented. In particular, the fact of

implementation of the work prescribed by the working plans of the Departments of international cooperation and work with foreign students is recorded with the note “done” in those plans, and the TLI does not follow the outcomes and effectiveness of their conduction.

With the aim of financial planning, a preliminary budget estimate throughout one academic year over the entire YSMU is established. The TLI does not implement budget planning based on the strategic goals. The financial planning is implemented based on the requirements of the planned budgeting provided by RA state budgeting process.

There are no mechanisms and procedures aimed at precise quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the outcomes of YSMU mission and goals implementation.

Considerations: The current 2015-2020 SP of YSMU, that is the updated and expanded version of 2009-2014 SP, clarifies the vision of YSMU, the strategic goals of its activity and concrete steps for reaching them. Nevertheless, the TLI’s mission partially reflects the strategic goals and objectives. The operations conducted in the TLI are outperforming, and the high bar of activity is not reflected in the current SP. The definition of the mission does not emphasize research and internationalization as priority for YSMU. Making the outcomes in the action plan of the SP measurable and identifying the implementation timelines will contribute to more focused operations and a higher speed of response to changes. The actual activity of the TLI is based mainly on the policy of short term planning (except for the planning of scientific activity), which makes the process of long-term improvement of the TLI risky. In addition, the quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the outcomes of YSMU mission and goals implementation is not conducted clearly, since the SP action plan does not contain precise mechanisms for evaluation and timely achievement of the goals as well, the outcomes are not clearly defined and measurable. This reduces performance of the assessment of SP implementation and the evaluation of the TLI’s pace of development. Consequently, the procedures aimed at the improvement of the SP are not established yet.

The involvement of the TLI’s internal stakeholders in the processes of revealing their needs for the implementation of the TLI’s strategic goals is active, but cooperation and relations with external stakeholders are still weak. The revelation and investigation of the needs of internal stakeholders are generally carried out through surveys, but the mechanism of further use of the information obtained and the improvement of the outcomes are not clarified, which reduces the level of targeted use of the information obtained. YSMU defined internationalization as a priority action, but the collaboration with foreign employers and other international stakeholders is fragmentary, and the management of the relationship with them is situational and is mediated by the associations. If YSMU does not deepen cooperation with external stakeholders and does not regulate it, that will hinder the implementation of the identified goals. With respect to the effective implementation of the strategic goals, the budget planning in accordance with the strategic goals is also important. YSMU does not carry out clear financial planning in accordance with the strategic goals, and does not pursue the policy

of clear resource allocation, which can jeopardize the implementation of the strategic goals and the continuation and interconnectedness of the QA policy.

In YSMU, the system of annual reporting of the structural units, the Vice-Rectors and the Rector is considered as the main mechanism of the implementation of the mission and goals. These reports primarily have the character of asserting the facts and refer to both the achievements and failures, as well as the immediate plans. However, lack of the analyses of the record outcomes and the assessment of the undertaken actions, as well as absence of the precise indicators of the quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the outcomes of the unit activity do now give opportunity to assess the performance of the TLI and its units.

Summary: Taking into account the fact that based on the outcomes of the previous accreditation YSMU has reformed its SP, now having a clearly formulated mission that is in line with the NQF of RA, there is a strategic plan that includes the operational plan, reflecting the goals and activity priorities that are in accordance with the mission, and internal stakeholders are engaged in the process of defining and implementing the strategic goals and objectives, the expert panel concludes that YSMU complies with the requirements of Criterion 1.

Conclusion: The expert panel evaluates correspondence of YSMU institutional capacities to the requirements of Criterion 1 as **satisfactory**.

Recommendations:

1. To revise the TLI's SP clearly defining the long-term activity targets, and separate the strategic goals and the ways of their implementation.
2. With the aim of monitoring the improvement process and evaluating the outcomes, to establish clear mechanisms and procedures of the qualitative and quantitative assessment of the outcomes of the strategic goals implementation as well as the improvement of the SP,
3. Ensure active involvement of external stakeholders in the implementation of the SP and further feedback from them,
4. Revise the policy of financial planning and resource allocation to facilitate the strengthening of the interconnectedness of the operations carried out within the framework of strategic goals and financial planning.

II. GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

CRITERION: The TLI's system of governance, administrative structures and their practices are effective and intend to the accomplishment of its mission and goals by keeping the governance code of ethics.

Findings

2.1. The TLI's system of governance ensures regulated decision-making process in accordance with defined code of ethics and has efficient provision of human, material and financial resources to accomplish its educational and other purposes.

According to the Charter of YSMU, "The University operates through its bodies, namely 1) the board of trustees, and 2) the executive body – the Rector".

The TLI's current activity is managed by the Rector, and the collegial management bodies are the board of trustees and the scientific council. The TLI's inner stakeholders are involved in its governmental process – the decision-making aimed at revealing and meeting their needs. The members of the board of trustees and the scientific council selected by the students comprise 25% of those bodies. The board of trustees also includes the representatives of the TLI founder and the authorized body.

The expert visit has revealed that the TLI functions under the operational control system in conditions of complete trust by the collegial management bodies. The TLI has structural and separated units for the implementation of the relevant functions, namely educational-methodological department, scientific department, department of clinical management, education quality evaluation and assurance department, scientific-research center, department of international collaboration, department of international students, department of public relations, center of scientific research, innovation and entrepreneurship, career center and the body responsible for practical trainings, dean's offices, chairs, library, student parliament, legal clinic, electric and thermal energy station, etc. In 2015, based on the recommendations provided throughout the previous accreditation, with the aim of improving the government system of YSMU, an array of fundamental documents have been designed and implemented that regulate the activity of the TLI's structural units, and the organized processes. In particular, the adoption of the Charters for individual units has partially clarified the framework of the operations of those bodies, the procedure of competitive selection of the teaching staff has been developed, passports for individual positions (mainly administrative positions) were developed, but a selection process according to those regulations has not been carried out yet.

The investigation of the structural scheme of the units of the TLI's current management system and the meetings during the expert visit have demonstrated that the framework of responsibilities and powers determined for particular positions are not clearly identified. In particular, the site visit has revealed that the functions of the department of international collaboration and the department of international students repeat, for the functions provided by the Charter of the department of international collaboration are partially implemented by

the department of international students (processing of visas, providing of informational materials, etc.). The status of the legal clinic is not clarified as well; the functions of the career center, the development department and the person responsible for practical trainings are not precisely described (with regard to the organization of practice, career support to the students, marketing policy, feedback from the alumni, the development and implementation of the TLI's improvement policy). In YSMU, there is one job for the person responsible for practical trainings, although some of the stakeholders believe there is need for increasing the number of practical trainings.

The TLI organizes its operations based on the annual budget, but the financial planning in line with the SP goals is not carried out. In the subdivision of financial resources of the "science development targets" department in YSMU 2018-2028 concept of science development, for instance, the financial resources necessary for the science development and their financial sources mentioned in that document are not estimated and described.

Moreover, in 2018, the parts of the resources dedicated for funding the student parliament and innovating the library collection are not much different in the TLI budget spending, 40 000 and 48 800 AMD, respectively.

YSMU has a disciplinary committee in accordance with the approved Code of Ethics, which operates transparently and publically.

2.2 The TLI's system of governance provides students and teachers the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes directed to them.

In 2015-2018, the documents designed during the reforms of the government system and the implementation of those documents were as well aimed at facilitating the involvement of external and internal stakeholders in the management processes of the TLI. 25% of the members of YSMU board of trustees and scientific council are the students nominated by the Student Parliament (according to the Carter – the students' council). The representatives of the teaching staff are also the members of the TLI's board of trustees and scientific council. On other levels, the teachers' participation in the governmental decision-making is provided through the chairs and faculties, and the students' participation – through the Student Parliament, Students' scientific society, mandatory committees, as well as through surveys. To reveal the needs of foreign students and ensure their participation in governmental decision-making, there are the Dean's office of International Students and the Department of International Students.

However, despite the positive cases of addressing the problems indicated by the students /expanding the library collection, implementation of alternative practice, etc. /, the analysis of the student activity in discussing the governmental decisions in the collegial management body has not been carried out (e.g. bringing the particular topics to the agenda on their own initiative).

2.3 The TLI develops and implements short, mid, and long-term planning consistent with its mission and goals and has clear monitoring and implementation mechanisms.

The main living documents for YSMU long-term planning of 5 years are 2015-2020 SP and its operational plan, which contain the descriptions of the actions, the steps, outcomes, indicators of measuring the outcomes, timelines and the process, the people responsible and the resources. Another long-term document concerning one of the priority directions of the TLI's activity is implemented as well, namely YSMU 2018-2028/38 science development concept.

However, the regulated mid-term planning based on YSMU SP, the risk-assessment and the alignment of long-term planning based on it are not implemented. In 2017, a disposable document of "action plan aimed at solving the issues revealed during the infrastructural accreditation and improving the processes" was prepared, the impact of which is not evaluated as well. The majority of the actions highlighted in the document are still in process. The structural units of YSMU develop their annual operational plans based on the SP. However, the mechanisms implemented for their monitoring are not available. For example, the expert visit has revealed that the Department of international collaborations in the framework of certain operations provided for by its operational plan sends information sheets to the stakeholders, but it does not implement performance assessment for that operation. As the assessment mechanisms for the act of execution the reports of the relevant structural units are implemented that have the character of statement of facts.

With respect to the financial planning in line with the mission and goals, YSMU implements the budget planning for a short period, by designing an estimate for a year, where the financial inflows and spending are reflected by separate articles, for the whole university (not by its structural units or activity directions). In this context, there are no precise mechanisms for monitoring and improving the budget execution as well (including efficient use of resources).

2.4 The TLI conducts environmental scanning and draws on reliable data during the decision-making process.

Decision-making directed at management of YSMU is mostly based on surveys and oral discussions aimed at revealing the needs of stakeholders, as well as on the information about the achievements of the alumni. Together with Shanghai Ranking Consultancy, for the first time in YSMU, benchmarking of the scientific activity was conducted, resulting in the clarification of neurosurgery as the priority scientific activity. In addition, based on the analyses of the RA Ministry of Healthcare priorities and the outcomes of the discussions with them, YSMU foresees to include actions aimed at preventing medicine in the priority activities of YSMU. In spite of this, there are no regulated mechanisms of foreseeing external factors, and the assessment of their impact. Analyses of external environment directly influencing internationalization (including evaluation of the changes in the foreign labour-market demands and other targeted factors), and SWOT analyses are scarce. The effectiveness of the

mechanisms of assessing integrity and credibility of the information provided by stakeholders (especially external stakeholders) is not evaluated as well.

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

The functions listed in the regulations /November 28, 2018, session 15 no. 18-11-16-05 resolution/ of the Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance allow for implementation of the principle of cycling quality management. The preliminary stage of the planning is the revelation of issues, opportunities and development perspectives, their investigation and the preliminary assessment of realism of their implementation /e.g. based on the issues identified by the person responsible for practical trainings, the alternative practice was introduced, upon request/. With the aim of managing different processes, information is collected in form of reports, but few cases were registered when that kind of information was used for improvements (except for the system of assessment and evaluation of a teacher's qualification).

After the introduction of the QA system of YSMU, large-scale operations aimed at procedure and policy development and implementation have been carried out, especially in 2018. During the expert visit, at the meeting with the Rector, measurable indicators for the SP goals of the TLI, but they were not reflected in the TLI's strategic documents and regulations of the separate structural units.

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

With the aim of data collection on the effectiveness of the academic programs and other processes, YSMU has elaborated questionnaires, carried out surveys among the students. The TLI undertakes certain steps aimed at engaging external stakeholders into the processes of improving the APs of professions (including organization of discussions with them and obtaining information from them through surveys). In particular, using the potential of the graduate associations abroad, YSMU collects information on the achievement of its alumni. There is no established protocol of the AP monitoring and reviewing (although it was foreseen by the action plan of 2015-2020 SP).

In addition, the information required for the improvement of the APs and other processes (material and technical support, financial provision, staffing, etc.) and the collective mechanisms are not available as well.

2.7 There are impartial mechanisms evaluating the quality of quantitative and qualitative information on the academic programs and qualification awards.

The publications of quantitative and qualitative information on the APs and qualification awards in YSMU are mostly available on the TLI's website, in "Future doctor" journal, on Facebook page as well as in the manual for the freshmen (in particular, information on the number of graduates, their achievements, and articles about their activity). However,

the regulated mechanisms of assessing the objectivity of the publications on the quality of the APs and qualification awards are not available yet. There are individual analyses of the results of international quality examinations taken by international students, as well as the practical achievements of international students and Armenian alumni out of RA.

Considerations: The expert panel evaluates positively the fact that since 2015, considering the recommendations provided throughout the previous accreditation procedure as well, the SP has been reviewed, and certain structural changes have been undertaken (establishment of Career center, etc.).

YSMU is in process of developing regulations for the units' activity, reunification of chairs and validation of the position passports. In the TLI, certain work has been undertaken to ensure the functional significance of the current structural units and their compliance with the SP goals. Nevertheless, the functions of certain structural units and the responsible staff are not clear yet, in particular, those of Department of international collaboration, Department of international students, Dean's office of international students, scientific department, scientific-research center, center of innovative research, educational-methodological department, as well as those of the heads of educational-methodological councils, career center, development department, and the person responsible for practical trainings. Meanwhile, not using of the passports of approved positions and competitive selection of not all the teaching staff can also influence on the provision of YSMU with relevant professional staff and the quality of the educational services.

The expert panel evaluates positively the fact that internal stakeholders generally have the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes related to them; however, the level of initiative to raise questions is low, especially among international students. Work is in progress on increasing the activity of external stakeholders, but the mechanisms are not regulated yet. However, incomplete information about the requirements of international labour market can make the implementation of strategic goals risky, namely the further deepening of the TLI's internationalization and the preparation of competitive graduates.

Positive is the fact that YSMU has an approved Code of Ethics, a disciplinary committee actively operates, and the students are informed about its activity.

The meetings with YSMU management and internal stakeholders have clarified that the governmental units consider availability of required human and material resources satisfactory in order to perform their functions. The assessment of the efficient allocation of human, material and financial recourses of the structural and separated RA units has not been carried out by the TLI. Meanwhile, during the meeting with the Rector, the diversification of the sources of the TLI's financial resources was highlighted.

In YSMU, the revised SP is considered as a long-term planning document, but it does not contain clearly measurable outcomes of development, the composition of measurable implementation indicators, which makes it risky to evaluate the executive act of implementing the strategic goals and objectives, and develop a development scenario.

In YSMU, a regulated mid-term planning and risk assessment are not carried out. YSMU views the units' operational plans for a year as its mid-term planning. The reports that have the character of statement of facts and issues, and do not foresee performance evaluation, serve as the indicators for an executive act. In addition, the financial planning is carried out within the university, and it does not correspond to the strategic goals, which is a risk factor in terms of effective provision of the necessary material and financial resources consistent with the strategic goals and their allocation. Particularly, with respect to research implementation, capacity building of the university clinics, which require clear planning on short-, mid- and long-term basis.

YSMU conducts surveys aimed at revealing the issues related to internal stakeholders. However, besides the surveys, lack of investigation of external factors that affect the TLI's activity, as well as lack of SWOT analyses limit the credibility of obtained data. The directions and mechanisms of further usage of the collected data are not clear as well, since they are mainly carried out if necessary and on the principle of situational control, without ensuring feedback from stakeholders. By improving the mechanisms of assessing and analyzing the collected data it will be possible to enhance the stakeholders' involvement, especially that of international students.

With the aim of increasing the effectiveness of the quality assurance system, certain procedures and regulations have been developed, which positively affects the provision of administration of service delivery. However, in the majority of processes of management system, the PDSA cycle is not close yet: they are either on the stage of planning or implementation. There are no mechanisms for assessing the collected data on the processes that passed the stage of study, and systematic approaches to implement them for improvement.

With the aim of making the information about its education services available for stakeholders, the TLI uses its journal, Facebook page and official website, the graduates' association abroad and the offices of international program coordinators. However, the development and implementation of the mechanisms of collecting, analyzing and implementing the trustworthy information on the quality of assessment of the TLI's other operations, the APs and qualification awards will promote trust of stakeholders and international partners.

Summary: Taking into consideration the fact that from the last accreditation, there were tangible changes in the management system of YSMU, which resulted in the improvement of the governmental system: now management decisions are made in the atmosphere of pluralism with the engagement of stakeholders, the management system of YSMU has sufficient human and material resources, the main components of the planning system are available. Therefore, the expert panel finds that YSMU complies with the requirements of Criterion 2.

Conclusion: The correspondence of YSMU institutional capacities to the requirements of Criterion 2 is **satisfactory**.

Recommendations:

1. To reform the organizational structure of the TLI: ensure that the functions are not repeated for different units, activate horizontal relations among the units and develop a clear system of assessing the performance of the management system.
2. To facilitate and activate the involvement of internal stakeholders in the management processes.
3. To review the system of financial planning, aligning it to implementation of the strategic objectives of YSMU.
4. To adopt a system of mid-term planning and risk analysis and assessment.
5. To develop a composition of measurable indicators for external factor impact, monitoring, assessment and revision of the SP and plans, as well as mechanisms for their implementation with the aim of evaluation and analyses.
6. To clarify and regulate the amount of the collected information necessary for performance evaluation and analysis of the APs and other processes, as well as the mechanisms of its processing and implementing.

III. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

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

Findings

3.1 The academic programs are thoroughly formulated according to the intended learning outcomes, which correspond to an academic qualification and are in line with the institution's mission and the state academic standards.

In its 2015-2020 SP, YSMU foresees to take the following steps aimed at improving the medical field: “ensure high quality of teaching through reforms in educational programs and the forms of education organization, meeting the requirements of the labour market and facilitating mobility and internationalization”. YSMU also foresees to refine the education methodology and enhance the performance of the educational-scientific and educational-industrial complexes, ensure the integration of modern technologies in education and research processes.

YSMU has the continuous and integrated AP of “Medical work” specialization (normative duration: 6 years, qualification: “physician”, organized by the Faculty of General Medicine), the continuous and integrated AP of “Stomatology” specialization (normative duration: 5 years, qualification: “doctor-stomatologist”, organized by the Faculty of Stomatology), the Bachelor’s AP of “Pharmacy” specialization (normative duration: 4 years, qualification: “Bachelor of Pharmacy”) and that of Master’s (normative duration: 1 year,

qualification: “Master of Pharmacy”) organized by the Faculty of Pharmacy. YSMU has the Faculty of Public Health with Master’s degree programs (Health care organization and management, Business administration, Management of medical facilities) that gives two different qualifications: Public Health Master's (MPH) and Executive MBA. YSMU also has the Faculty of Military Medicine, where within the “Medical work in the armed forces” AP it prepares doctors for the RA Armed Forces.

The APs of YSMU are in line with the TLI’s mission in that the TLI prepares health specialists that meet the requirements of the labour market of the field. The expert analysis revealed that YSMU tried to bring the outcomes of the APs in line with the sixth and seventh levels of the NQF by developing the appropriate matrixes. The academic plans are described according to the awarded qualifications and education outcomes. Taking into account the recommendations provided by the previous accreditation, a comparative analysis was carried out aimed at revising the APs and describing the education outcomes. The best practice of more than 25 countries was investigated and compared, but it is worth noting that the content analysis of the subjects has not been carried out yet. Both expert analyses and meetings with different stakeholders during the visit have revealed the fact that the effectiveness of the proportion of theoretical and practical courses is not evaluated, since both external and internal stakeholders emphasized lack of courses aimed at obtaining practical skills as well as the low number of hours for courses providing biological knowledge.

During the comparative analysis, the standards of WFME and EU directive were compared as well, certain changes were made in the curriculum, and the APs were revised. However, it is worth mentioning that there are many other spheres in the requirements of the above-mentioned standards: more targeted consideration of the needs of health stakeholders in the AP outcomes, responsibility among students, use of assignments that shape analytical and research skills, implementation of data-based education, improvement of the evaluation system through MiniCEX and OSCE through differentiated examinations, personal portfolio, etc., that were not considered by the TLI during the comparative analysis.

Based on the outcomes of the previous accreditation, YSMU educational units within the framework of Tempus ALIGN project and 03.07.2015 session of the educational-methodological council have adopted a new format of documentation of continuous and integrated APs and their courses, as well as the manual on filling those documents, trainings and workshops for teaching and administrative staff have been carried out.

The TLI also foresees to introduce cross-curriculum courses within the framework of the continuous and integrated AP of “Medical work”, which was the recommendation of the previous accreditation expert panel.

The visit has revealed that YSMU foresees to become a research-oriented university in the coming years, but the courses that shape research and analytical skills among students are still missing.

3.2. The TLI has a policy that ensures alignment between teaching and learning approaches and the intended learning outcomes of academic programs promoting student-centered learning.

Based on the outcomes of the previous accreditation, YSMU has adopted a policy of selection of teaching and learning methods promoting student-centered learning as enshrined in 2015-2020 SP.

YSMU has developed a policy and procedure of innovating the teaching and learning approaches and methods. The TLI uses not only traditional methods of teaching, but also case study, interactive and group methods. The APs were developed in accordance with the intended outcomes, based on which the teaching methods are selected. The AP packages also contain teaching methods in line with the outcomes of each subject.

It is worth noting that establishment of two centers of excellence, in compliance with international standards and financed by the World Bank and the Competitive Innovation Fund of the Center of Education Programs of RA Ministry of Education and Science, has created wider opportunities for implementing practical trainings. The expert visit revealed that in the Simulation Center, the simulators are mainly used for training by clinical residents and doctors. It also became clear that there is no separate funding for the centers. Allocation of human and material resources necessary for the centers is not carried out through advanced planning. The expert visit revealed that the groups receiving practical courses in the Simulation Center and the Center of Excellence consist of 12 students, but the effectiveness of that number of group members.

3.3. The TLI has policy on students' assessment according to the learning outcomes and ensures academic integrity.

It is stated in YSMU SP that the TLI foresees to improve the policy of student evaluation using the system of multi-component assessment based on the learning outcomes.

Based on the recommendations provided through the previous accreditation procedure, taking into account the experts' remarks and recommendations, YSMU implemented assessment diversification considering the types of courses and respective outcomes, and gradually moved from 2006-2011 exceptionally test method of outcome evaluation to the multi-component assessment system. However, it is worth mentioning that the multi-component assessment system that includes students' active involvement in research operations and the component of portfolio is not introduced in all the chairs. In addition, the teaching staff has not undertaken trainings on implementing the multi-component assessment system.

Within the courses of clinical subjects, the types of test and oral examinations are implemented. The evaluation of obtaining respective practical and patient communication skills is carried out in clinics.

Throughout the site visit, it became evident that there are a procedure and a common form of designing tests. In addition, 30% of the test content is updated each semester. It became

evident that students have the opportunity to appeal against the results of the tests. As was revealed during the site visit, students appeal for both technical and content issues of the tests. 90% of the complaint are settled.

During the site visit, it became clear that in clinics, oral examinations are conducted simultaneously by different lecturers separately. In case of clinical subjects conducted in clinics, there are no precise evaluation indicators in accordance with the intended learning outcomes (how many times a student should repeat the action so that it is considered positive). There are no data on with how many patients the student should communicate in order to obtain the necessary practical skills. Throughout the site visit, it became evident that concrete clinical cases are rarely discussed during the exams of clinical subjects.

The mechanism of supervising the cycles in clinics is not clear. There are no portfolios for the work students conducted during the cycles, and no information is collected on which student gained what skills at clinical cycles and what kind of issues still exist.

The TLI's final certification for the continuous and integrated APs of "Medical work" and "Stomatology" are three-stage. The proportion of the three components in composing the final mark is the following: 10% - practical examination, 40% - computer test, 50% - oral answer. This proportion is not based on the practical knowledge and skills of the intended learning outcomes. Moreover, almost 60-70% of the students were assessed as satisfactory at the final certification. Meanwhile, it is worth noting that there are no external employers or the representatives from the Ministry of Health in the certifying committees.

In YSMU, students undergo practical trainings in different clinics and medical institutions of RA and the Republic of Artsakh that annually signs contracts with the TLI. Students can also undergo practice abroad if they get the appropriate agreement with clinics in advance. The head of practice is appointed by the director of the medical institution, who guide and supervise the students' practice, but the precise mechanisms of the TLI's supervision of the practical trainings are not available. The practical trainings are conducted from the second academic year, during the summer. The summer practice is carried out beginning from the week following the main examination period of spring semester. Based on the recommendations provided throughout the previous accreditation procedure, since 2015, besides the summer practices, students can undergo the alternative practice, go on duty; however, the alternative practice is based on the students' request.

The site visit also revealed the existing difficulties in practice organization related to the large number of students.

3.4. The academic programs of the TLI are contextually coherent with other relevant programs and promote internationalization and mobility of students and staff.

Based on the recommendations provided throughout the previous accreditation procedure, YSMU has established a new all-university unit – Department of academic programs of the Educational-methodological office, in order to support the implementation of educational and methodological reforms.

A comparative analysis was carried out for the continuous and integrated AP of “Medical work” with 30 APs of more than 20 universities, and for the AP of “Stomatology” with the curricula of 28 APs of 14 countries. The contents of the APs and the necessary changes are discussed and subsequently recommended in the educational-methodological council. As the chains of the primary stage, the respective chairs participate in the process of coordination and development of the objectives in their field of specialization.

In spite of the comparative analyses if the APs conducted in the TLI, there are still subjects that do not correspond to the foreign programs (e.g., international students study mathematics that is not available in the similar foreign programs).

During the site visit, it became clear that there are subjects necessary to include in the curricula, which are not recommended by the EMC yet, although they have been discussed for many years. Moreover, reduction of the prerequisite subjects took place in the curricula, although YSMU aims toward WFME standards where great importance is attached specifically to biological prerequisite subjects.

Notwithstanding the conducted comparative analyses, the international mobility of teachers and students in YSMU is scarce.

3.5. The TLI has policy ensuring academic program monitoring, effectiveness assessment and improvement.

YSMU has relevant infrastructures for developing, assessing and improving APs. There are mechanisms and toolkit-chains (Chair – EMC – Scientific Council) that monitor and approve the APs. Nevertheless, throughout the site visit, it became evident that the proposals for changes in both workload and content of different subjects in curricula (especially in case of the clinical subjects) are not always properly discussed by the EMC, or they do not reach the relevant chains for discussion and conclusion.

In the EMC, the number of hours for the prerequisite subjects is regularly discussed: in particular, the compliance of the knowledge provided by the theoretical chairs with the requirements of the clinical subjects. However, the site visit has revealed the fact that the knowledge provided by the theoretical chairs and the proportion of the number of hours for practical skills retained. Moreover, the resources of the theoretical chairs (financial, territorial and financial) are not enough according to the TLI’s policy of bringing the APs in line with the WFME requirements.

There are no external stakeholders monitoring the APs in the EMCs. The performance of the EMC operations have not been assessed yet.

The APs are also evaluated by different questionnaires, focus groups and individual meetings. However, the policy of monitoring the APs and implementing assessment of their performance is not available.

Considerations: The expert panel evaluates positively the fact that certain reforms were implemented in YSMU APs after the previous accreditation: the APs were brought in line with the TLI’s mission and the NQF’s requirements as well as the international standards (WFME,

EU directives), which is an important precondition for implementing the goals set by the SP. Since the internationalization of the TLI and the growing number of international students are considered as the strategic priority of YSMU, the expert panel finds that with the aim of implementing and improving the integrated APs of YSMU, the APs need to be more reconciled with the international standards (WFMY Standard 2. Educational program; 3. Assessment of Students; 6. Educational Resources; 6.5 Educational Exchanges; 7. Program Evaluation). This will ensure the competitiveness of the APs on international level. The expert panel evaluates positively the creation of excellence and simulation centers, which will facilitate the formation of practical skills required by the AP outcomes among students. Nevertheless, the expert panel finds that it is necessary to adopt such policy that would allow undergraduate students to use the simulation facilities more frequently. Moreover, the individual financing of the excellence and simulation centers will promote their continuous development.

The expert panel evaluates positively the fact that based on the outcomes of the previous accreditation certain changes occurred in the teaching methods. Besides the traditional teaching methods, some chairs of YSMU use the method of small-group teaching based on problem investigation, but it is not universal. The expert panel finds that the implementation of innovative teaching methods and different technologies, including the adoption of the policy of universal implementation of group teaching, case study teaching, and bedside teaching will contribute to high-quality education and achievement of the identified outcomes.

Positive is the fact that based on the recommendations provided through the previous accreditation procedure, YSMU has implemented assessment diversification and it underlines the importance of assessment of practical skills, but the policy of multi-component assessment is still applied at several chairs only. Full implementation of the multi-component assessment system will contribute to strengthening the students' analytical and research skills and practical capacities. It is also worth mentioning, that implementation of the students' periodic and final evaluation methods is of particular importance according to international standards. This is about on-site evaluation, a student's portfolio, as well as management and monitoring of students' skills acquired during different cycles, which have not been fully realized yet. The practice of simultaneous examination of different students by different lecturers during the oral examinations in clinics reduces objectivity of evaluation. Allocation of only 10% of the rating to evaluation of practical skills during the final certification results in that the theoretical component plays the predominant role, which does not show the level of obtaining the intended outcomes defined in the APs. Meanwhile, the absence of isolated external employers in the certifying committees does not promote the formation of impartial opinion on qualification awards.

Universal application of alternative practices implemented in the TLI in accordance with the established policy will facilitate students' motivation and responsibility.

Notwithstanding the fact that YSMU has carried out a comparative analysis of the APs together with a number of foreign universities, currently there are certain issues related to adding biological prerequisite subjects, activating the mobility of teachers and students, which hinder the provision of more attractive education in line with international standards.

YSMU has different units and committees responsible for AP monitoring, surveys are conducted for the assessment of AP performance, but external stakeholders are not involved in the processes of developing and revising the APs. In addition, there are no relevant official written surveys, which hinders the implementation of the strategic goal of the TLI, namely the preparation of highly qualified specialists appropriate for the health field and the labour market.

Summary: Taking into consideration the fact that the APs of YSMU are in line with the TLI's mission, their compliance with the NQF characteristics was analyzed, the curricula and educational plans were revised based on the benchmarking with the APs of many foreign universities, the teaching and learning methods were reformed based on the outcomes of the previous accreditation, the components of the evaluation system were diversified, the excellence and simulation centers were opened aimed at shaping and improving practical skills, different units regularly conduct project monitoring and discussions of the outcomes with the chairs, the expert panel considers that the TLI corresponds to the requirements of Criterion 3,

Conclusion: The expert panel evaluates the correspondence of YSMU institutional capacities to the requirements of CRITERION 3 as **satisfactory**.

Recommendations:

1. To implement a comparative analysis of the APs including the content comparison of the subjects and making of the necessary changes, with the aim of full compliance with the international standards.
2. To fully adopt the multi-component assessment system and differentiated methods of examinations /MiniCEX and OSCE/, as well as a student's portfolio, with the aim of shaping research and analytical skills among students.
3. To adopt the practice of case study, and teaching and evaluating based on the simulation facilities, with the aim of developing practical skills among students.
4. To define the financial and human resources necessary for simulation centers, with the aim of their continuous improvement.
5. To review the name list of the biological subject, as well as the number of hours for their classroom, practical and laboratory lessons, bringing them in line with the international standards.
6. To implement a system of controlling and monitoring the operations of different cycles, with the aim of ensuring the students' professional growth.
7. To increase opportunities of the students' practices by making the alternative practice compulsory for all the students.

IV. STUDENTS

CRITERION: The TLI provides relevant student support services ensuring the effectiveness of the learning environment.

Findings

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

YSMU carries out the student admission in accordance with the RA legislation, except for the foreign students. Generally, each year YSMU admits 700 local students on average.

YSMU carries out the admission of foreign students independently, under the established procedure of the internal examinations. The admission of the Indian students is carried out in India with the participation of the TLI's representative – Vice-Rector. In case of other foreign students, the entrants take examinations in YSMU. To organize and coordinate the examinations, an Admission Committee is formed by order of YSMU Rector.

Those foreign citizens who have a leaving certificate proving that they have received education equivalent at least to secondary education of RA can apply for admission at YSMU. The entrant's knowledge is tested through examinations of English language, and Physics, Chemistry and Biology. The entrant has the right to choose two of the subjects: Physics, Chemistry and Biology. One out of every four students of YSMU (about 25%) is a foreigner.

Besides the planned admission, there is another practice when the TLI initially appeals to the Ministry of Education and Science of RA for approval to organize additional (on average, 150 students annually) admission. Those additional places are taken by the entrants who took the exams but did not manage to pass.

Dissemination of the information about YSMU admission is carried out by the TLI's official website, social network, media and press. The TLI also organizes numerous meeting in schools where the professions available at YSMU are presented.

Based on the remarks of the previous accreditation expert panel, with the aim of revealing the effectiveness of the student recruitment and admission mechanisms, YSMU Center for Quality Assessment and Assurance implemented the correlation analysis of the entrants' quality at the time of admission and their progress during further learning. Based on the presented analysis, the TLI is now discussing the efficiency and feasibility of admitting students with low ratings on additional request. Together with the relevant department, the question of making changes in the admission policy and ensuring independence in the TLI is being discussed.

4.2 The TLI has policies and procedures for revealing student educational needs.

YSMU has several mechanisms of revealing the students' educational needs. Students discuss their problems with the head of the chair or the supervisors for academic affairs. Students of all the Faculties have meetings with the Rector 2-3 times a year.

The reception days are appointed for the meetings with the Rector and the Vice-Rector for academic affairs. The concerns spoken out by the students are discussed during the meetings of the Faculty and Scientific Councils as well as the sessions of the Board of trustees.

The TLI conducts surveys among students aimed at revealing the level of learning resource availability, the efficiency of current evaluation and teaching methods. Based on the revealed issues, certain changes were made in the evaluation methods. The system of multi-component evaluation was introduced, and students are satisfied with it, but it is still applied partially and is not implemented in all the chairs.

During the site visit, it became evident that only 50-60% of students participate in the surveys by the Center for Quality Assessment and Assurance. The level of participation of international students is also low.

4.3 The TLI provides advising services, opportunities for extra-curricular activities supporting students' effective learning.

Organization of additional lessons for students as well as consultation with professors and lecturers is implemented in YSMU.

Based on the number of students in each faculty and the index of student-dean's office assistant interaction, YSMU has increased the number of the vice-deans in the Faculty of General Medicine to organize the activities of each year, appointing a vice-dean and an inspector for providing consultation (which is based on the large number of 400-500 students in each year of that faculty).

During the study visit it became clear that duty schedules are made in chairs and dean's offices, there are on-duty lecturers in all the chairs that provide students with consultations in the course of the whole semester, but according to the data of the study visit student participation level is not high, and the reasons behind low participation level are not yet investigated by YSMU.

Extra lessons are also organized for the students who have missed lessons, according to "The order of compensation of the missed lessons".

Additional thematic lectures on the topics of students' choice are also organized upon the suggestion of students. The study visit revealed that students are actively involved in these processes. Within the framework of the University's "GLOBUS" and "FMGE" programs, the Career Center has organized 3-6 months of free additional courses with the inclusion of American and Indian medical theoretical and clinical modules for the 5th, 6th year students and clinical interns of the Faculty of General Medicine in 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 academic years also taking into account the fact that foreign students have recorded lower scores on the FMGE exam. More than 94 students were enrolled in additional classes.

4.4 The TLI has set regulation and schedule for students to receive additional support and guidance from the administrative staff of the faculty.

In YSMU there is a clear regulation for the students to apply to the administrative staff. They can apply both with the help of the monitors selected by the groups or divisions, student council, and individually according to the dates set for meetings; three times a week with the vice-rectors, once a week with the rector and every day with deans and vice-deans.

During the meeting with the students, it became clear that they were highly satisfied with the administrative staff with regard to support and guidance.

4.5 The TLI has student career support services.

The functions of the Career Center responsible for providing services which promote the students' career are regulated by are set by a statute. The career center has been operating since 2017 according to the results of previous accreditation. There is a Graduates Association in the university, a student registration platform on the website.

For the past 3 years the YSMU Career Center has established a Graduates Club, which currently has over 2,500 graduates working in different countries around the world (India, USA, RF, UK, Lebanon, etc.).

The university also systematically updates the student autobiography database. The Career Center collaborates with various pharmaceutical companies (TAKEDA, Servier Laboratories), foreign pharmaceutical networks (Georgia Pharmaceuticals), laboratories (FMD k&l), large medical centers ("Shengavit" MC, "ArtMed" MC, Ministry of Healthcare of The Republic of Armenia Scientific-Medical Center of Dermatology and STD). As a result of the collaboration, 20 graduates are pursuing professional activities in the aforementioned medical centers. The Career section of the YSMU official website has the subsections "For employers", "For graduates", "Vacancies" to disseminate information.

During the study visit it was revealed that the Career Center collaborates with regional administrations, establishes contact with employers, RA employment center, and professional associations.

4.6 The TLI promotes student involvement in its research activities.

Based on the advice given by the expert group of the previous accreditation YSMU has added the following issue in its ST: to develop policies and mechanisms for engaging the majority of the students in scientific research activities. For solving the given issue YSMU has developed the process of crediting the students' research activity, which will result in evaluating the students' participation in research activities and scientific events. However, it should be noted that this process has not yet been implemented.

A multi-component grading system has been developed and implemented in some chairs, with its research component having a clear portion. As a result of the implemented system, the students' participation in the research activities has become more active in the Chair of Hygiene and Ecology, where 252 research works were carried out by the students within a year.

The study visit revealed that the students' participation in scientific research activities is voluntary. Clinical research is limited. Mechanisms for encouraging the students' involvement in research activities have not yet been developed.

The study visit revealed that the students' involvement in research activities greatly depends on their motivation, that is why the SSS (Students' Scientific Society) organizes events ("Student scientific day", "First steps on the way to scientific research", "The scientific conference of foreign students", etc.) to motivate students.

4.7 The TLI has responsible body for the students' rights protection.

The bodies responsible for protecting students' rights, discussing their problems and representing their interests at YSMU are the Student Council, the Legal Clinic, whose functions are fixed in their statutes. But the status of the legal clinic has not yet been confirmed.

The aforementioned structures disseminate information, reveal the students' problems and protect the rights of local and foreign students. There is a person in the Student Council responsible for coordinating work with foreign students.

The Legal Clinic, which has been operating since 2017, has received approximately 100 applications from students since the start of its activity. The students generally apply to the legal clinic for tuition fees, tuition discounts, issues concerning the procedures of filling out the missing classes, right for military service deferment and more. 99% of the applications are satisfied.

4.8 The TLI has evaluation and quality assurance mechanisms of student educational, advisory and other services.

At YSMU, the survey mechanism about the evaluation of the lecturers by the students and the satisfaction from the education received is implemented for providing quality and evaluating educational, consulting and other services. Surveys revealed problems with the literature, cycle control at different clinics, lack of practical classes, and lack of time spent in simulation centers.

The study visit revealed that student participation in surveys is not high and that need assessment surveys are rarely conducted among foreign students.

It is important to note that there are no other mechanisms for providing quality and evaluating educational, consulting, and other services to students except the survey "lecturer in the eyes of the student". Besides, the results of the conducted surveys are not discussed with the students.

Considerations: The expert group considers it positive that the implemented mechanisms of student recruitment, selection and admission ensure the dissemination of information, effective implementation of the admission process, and student engagement from different countries.

The expert group considers the policy adopted by YSMU to control the educational needs of the students remarkable. The students have the opportunity to voice their concerns during meetings with the rector, vice-Rectors, deans and heads of chairs. These meetings help to identify the students' needs and problems and plan solutions. The expert good considers the presence of the legal clinic active in YSMU, which investigates the students' complaints, promotes a thorough and unbiased study of the problems that students face and their resolution within the law, to be a good experience. However, the incorporation of the Law Clinic into the Structural System of the University and the regulation of its activities will contribute to more coordinated work of the infrastructure. The presence of the Student Parliament at YSMU also contributes to the discovery of student issues in the educational process and the protection of students' rights.

Although YSMU has adopted a policy of engaging students in research, at present the process is based on the personal initiative and motivation of students more, which does not ensure the involvement of a large number of students in research and may be an obstacle for them to acquire analytical skills.

The expert group considers it positive that the students may turn to the on-duty lecturers of chairs as well as vice-deans for advice, guidance and support on various issues. The students, including the foreign ones, are provided with opportunities for additional lessons, which give the opportunity to compensate the missed classes. The aforementioned mechanisms contribute to the students' progress and effective learning.

Although the "lecturer in the eyes of the student" surveys are conducted at YSMU, as a result of which various problems related to learning are discovered, the expert group thinks that the dissemination of survey results and the resolution of the identified problems is not yet systematic in

nature, which may impede the continuous improvement of the quality of educational and consulting services.

Summary: Taking into account the fact that YSMU has clear and transparent mechanisms for student selection, recruitment, admission, information dissemination is implemented both on national and international levels, there are various mechanisms present for discovering the students' needs, the students have the opportunity to voice their problems and discuss them on various levels of the administrative circle, as well as there is an opportunity to compensate the missed lessons, there are different structures for protecting the students' rights, the university provides the students with corresponding support to raise the efficiency of the educational atmosphere, the expert group considers the activity of YSMU to correspond to the requirements of CRITERION 4.

Conclusion: The expert group assesses the conformity of the institutional capacities of YSMU with the requirements of CRITERION 4 satisfactory.

Recommendations:

1. To enhance student participation in research by developing and investing clear mechanisms that will allow a large number of students to be involved in research activities.
2. To diversify the mechanisms for assessing students' educational, counseling needs, broaden the range of survey participants, ensure regularity, and discuss results with stakeholders.

CRITERION V. TEACHING AND SUPPORT STAFF

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

Findings

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

In its strategic plan, YSMU intends to "ensure the presence of academic personnel with high professional qualification and moral values as the main guarantee of higher medical education.

The selection of the academic personnel in YSMU is implemented based on the regulation "On Chairs and Academic Personnel", which defines the rules of organizing the educational-scientific process of the chair, the criteria of forming the academic personnel, the standards of the lecturers' education and qualification, the limits of teaching and educational workload, lecturer election procedures. The study visit revealed that despite the existence of the competition order, not in all of the chairs has the academic personnel been selected according to it yet.

In YSMU, the system of "Professor's qualification assessment" has been introduced, discussed and confirmed by the educational-methodological council in April of 2016.

The elections of the university's supplementary personnel are held according to the regulation of "Organizing and Conducting Vacancy Competition" established by the rector's office protocol No. 22/7 of June 27, 2017. The supplementary personnel of the university include 105 professionals. The passports of the academic personnel categories are not yet developed in YSMU, and the efficiency of the academic and supplementary personnel selection policy and processes is not yet assessed.

However, it should be noted that the best healthcare professionals, practitioners from different clinics teach at YSMU.

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

The requirements for the professional qualifications of the academic personnel are systematized with the regulation concerning the functions and descriptors presented to different categories of lecturers (head of a chair, professor, associate professor, senior lecturer, lecturer). In case of narrow professional disciplines there are specially defined requirements for lecturers, particularly education in the clinical residency of that profession, etc. However, the obligatory requirements for the lecturers of interdisciplinary subjects are not yet clearly developed, as well as requirements stemming from the peculiarities of the SAP-s and the requirements for the professional qualities of the lecturers are not yet defined in the SAP-s.

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

The “Lecturer qualification assessment” system is implemented in YSMU. The results of the lecturer's activity of 5 years are evaluated using a clear scoring system that covers different aspects of the lecturer's activity. However, there is no evaluation of the lecturer's scientific activities in the system, and it is clearly defined in the competition order.

According to the results of the lecturer selection 2018, the qualification commission has evaluated the activity of 4 lecturers not satisfactory. Besides, “lecturer in the eyes of the student” surveys are held regularly, the scores of which are taken into account during the lecturer selection with the competition order. 5 lecturers were not guaranteed to participate in the competition as they received a low score in the surveys. It should be noted that the information on the results of the survey is in most cases not accessible to the students and staff. During the study visit, it was revealed that the score given by foreign students to the lecturers is low, which is due to the small number of students participating in the survey. The efficiency of the surveys and reasons behind low scores are not yet checked by the Education Quality Assurance and Assessment Center.

5.4 The TLI implements teacher professional development in accordance to the needs outlined during regular evaluations (both internal and external).

Based on the analysis of the results of the surveys on the need for pedagogical and psychological trainings among the lecturers in 2012, the “Lecturer Qualification Improvement” department has been functioning in YSMU since 2013, which performs lecturer qualification improvement functions through a course which has the following three modules: “Pedagogical psychology”, “Pedagogy” and “Organizing knowledge check through testing”. Lectures by invited specialists are held once every 3 years for 10 days within 3 modules. 2015 Within the framework of the development of the integrated academic program of the profession “General Medicine” employees from the department of academic programs trained in The Republic of Armenia and abroad have carried out consulting-explanatory work with all chairs. Later this experience has been extended to the continuous and integrated program of "Dentistry" and Master's programs in "Pharmacy". The issues of professional training of young lecturers are also resolved in the framework of international cooperation. Within the framework of various international programs, 34 lecturers from the university have undergone six-month trainings, 73 lecturers - three-month trainings and more than 320 lecturers - short-term trainings in American universities and clinics. The majority of the trained lecturers are from clinical chairs. There are no professional trainings in theoretical chairs. The number of international trainings is not large, they are based on individual initiatives. The university does not have a clear implemented encouragement mechanism and does not allocate funds for the development of professional and research capacity of

the academic personnel. There are also no clear quality indicators for assessing the professional development and improvement of the lecturers.

5.5 The TLI ensures the sustainability of the teaching staff according to academic programmes.

The academic programs of YSMU are carried out by the academic personnel of 1074 professionals from 73 chairs. It should be noted that among the total number of lecturers the main staff is 73.7%. The average age of heads of 73 chairs is 57, for 59 professors - 61, for 228 associate professors - 53, for 81 senior lecturers - 49, for 420 professors - 41 and for 203 assistants - 32. The average age of the personnel in theoretical medicine chairs is higher than that of clinical chair lecturers. For the past 5 years 1 academician, 6 corresponding members, 119 PhDs and 397 candidates of science from RA NAS have been working in the academic personnel. The student-teacher ratio is 1:5.

The university is taking some steps to rejuvenate the academic personnel by expanding the academic personnel with its own graduates. Each year the academic personnel is updated with an average of 45 young people (up to 30 years old) who, after working as a lecturer assistant for 3 years and gaining the appropriate level of training, are then promoted to lecturers. In the last 5 years, 243 young professors (22.6% of the teaching staff) have been admitted to the university and 5 have been fired. However, the average age of the academic personnel is still high. It should also be noted that the percentage of lecturers having education in the field of biology is very low in the academic personnel.

5.6 There are set policies and procedures for the staff promotion.

YSMU carries out various activities to encourage lecturers: particularly, lecturers are awarded for their academic work. Moreover, from 2018 YSMU provides the best graduates with free postgraduate education opportunity and creates conditions for working as a lecturer. As a result of previous accreditation recommendations, YSMU now encourages lecturers to publish their works in international periodicals with an impact factor by providing additional fees. The study visit revealed that professional trainings are held on the basis of the lecturers' individual initiative and attending lectures by invited specialists, and there are no clear policies and procedures for ensuring the professional progress of young lecturers. Besides, there are less trainings ensuring professional progress in theoretical chairs than in clinical chairs.

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

In recent years passports for administrative positions have been developed in YSMU. The total number of employees in the university and university clinics is 3162, out of which 1341 are involved in the educational process, with 1074 in the academic personnel and 267 assistants (228) and laboratory assistants (39). However, the lecturer / laboratory assistant as well as student / laboratory assistant ratio is very low. One laboratory assistant serves forty-five students.

During the study visit, it was revealed that the number of laboratory assistants in theoretical chairs is low. The principles of formation of the supplementary personnel are not specified.

Considerations: The expert group considers it positive that according to the recommendations of the previous accreditation policies and processes for selecting academic and supplementary personnel having the necessary qualities to implement the academic programs have been developed. YSMU has a highly qualified academic and administrative personnel which is able to bring to life the university's mission and strategic goals. It is also positive that doctors well-aware of the issues in the healthcare field of The Republic of Armenia work in the academic personnel of YSMU.

The university substantiates the correspondence of the academic personnel's qualifications to the requirements and levels of their position by their degrees, research experience, clinical practice,

professional experience and qualifications. The policy of the academic personnel selection does not ensure the involvement of a sufficient number of biomedical researchers, which may jeopardize the students' acquisition of the SAP-s.

According to the peculiarities of the SAP-s, the establishment of the requirements to the qualities of the academic personnel and the development of the passports of academic personnel categories will contribute to the selection and formation of an academic personnel having the necessary qualities for the field.

The expert group considers it positive that academic personnel assessments are conducted in YSMU, however the absence of dissemination of the assessment results and solving the discovered issues jeopardizes the improvement of teaching quality and the progress of the academic personnel.

Although measures to improve the skills of the lecturers are taken at YSMU, they are based on individual initiatives, as well as there are no mechanisms for encouraging lecturers and clear indicators of improvement, which hinder the lecturers' continuous progress and international mobility.

It is notable that YSMU has adopted a policy of lecturer rejuvenation, which will contribute to the sustainability of the academic personnel. It is commendable that according to the recommendations of the previous accreditation YSMU has adopted a policy to encourage the academic personnel to publish articles in international journals. A clear policy and allocated funds for the academic personnel's improvement are not yet established in the university, which can jeopardize their professional progress and realization of quality education.

YSLU has the necessary administrative personnel to realize its strategic goals. And the low number of the academic personnel can lead to the incomplete realization of the educational services.

Summary: Taking into account that a policy of academic and supplementary personnel selection is implemented, "lecturer in the eyes of the student" surveys are conducted, trainings for the academic personnel and experience exchanges with invited lecturers are held, highly-qualified practical specialists well aware of the problems of healthcare teach at YSMU, YSMU considers the rejuvenation of the academic personnel important, the expert group thinks that YSMU meet the requirements of criterion 5.

Conclusion: The expert group assesses the conformity of YSMU-s institutional capacities to the requirements of CRITERION 5 satisfactory.

Recommendations.

1. To include the involvement of highly qualified biomedical researchers in the teaching process as an issue in the policy of academic personnel selection.
2. Based on the peculiarities of academic programs, to involve clear requirements to the professional qualities of the lecturers in the SAP-s.
3. To diversify the assessment methods in order to assure the objectivity of the lecturers' assessment results.
4. Adopt an academic personnel development and professional improvement policy, as well as develop and implement clear quality indicators for the lecturers' improvement.
5. To replenish the chairs with laboratory assistants and other supplementary personnel in order to fully implement the educational processes.

VI. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

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

6.1 The TLI has a clear strategy for promoting its research interests and ambitions.

Based on previous accreditation recommendations, the university has developed a "YSMU Science Development Strategy and Policy 2015-2020" which outlines the planned activities in the field of science and research, particularly "to separate from the total university budget the budget allocated for science, allocating at least 5% of the budget to science without taking into account grant programs in 2015-2020, to define the main research directions based on world trends, priorities of RA medical science, professional potential of chairs, material-technical base, access to applied medicine, to establish a link between the teaching process and research, to create the prerequisites for the improvement of a university Excellence Center, based on the reconstruction of the research center and the creation of a new, modern vivarium, take as a basis the rejuvenation of science, its steadily increasing development and smooth generation change, to amend and develop research regulations and other legal acts, to create a scientific environment and to internationalize science."

After the previous accreditation, exploring its scientific potential and corresponding publications in the WoS database, YSMU identified "Brain Research" as the leading discipline in science development in 2015, which is noted in Science Coordination Council's decision No. 8 of 25 December 2015. The expert meetings revealed that research is also carried out in infant death, cardiology and other areas.

The "YSMU Science Development Concept 2018-28/38", which defines the long-term vision and mission of science, as well as the targets of science development, has also been developed. Meetings with YSMU head personnel also revealed, that YSMU is planning to become a research university from a teaching university by 2028. The strategy of science development was discussed in the chairs with the representatives of the academic personnel.

During 2017-2018, the University has been ranked internationally by several methodologies (QS World University Ranking, The Times Higher Education World University Rankings etc.): Benchmarking-analysis of YSMU scientific activity was carried out for the first time in collaboration with Shanghai Ranking Consultancy, as a result of which leading fields of science were re-established.

2017 The Young Scientists Council has been reaffirmed as a Young Researchers' Union.

The expert analysis shows that the Students' Scientific Society (SSS) is also making efforts to engage students in research by organizing various scientific events. Despite the current policy, the number of lecturers involved in research is still low.

In recent years, funds allocated to science by YSMU have increased and in 2018 they have reached 24 million AMD, with which equipment has been purchased. However 5% of the outflow of budget intended for science funding mentioned in the strategic plan is not marked in a separate line in the expense articles of the budget estimate.

6.2 The TLI has a long-term strategy as well as mid and short-term programmes that address its research interests and ambitions.

YSMU has short-term and long-term programs that define YSMU's interests and ambitions, and the Science Coordination Council, the Science Department, and the Research center are responsible for the realization of those plans. Grant programs funded by the Science Committee of the RA Ministry of Education and Science represent YSMU as a mid-term research project. However, it is

clear from the grant allocation procedure that programs and, correspondingly, financial planning cannot be sustainable. Moreover, the university receives basic funding, which is also not long-term, but for one year, and there are no clear funding policies and mechanisms in place to ensure sustainable financial flows. The expert analysis has shown that the amount of money allocated by YSMU and the effectiveness of the number of employees / published works is not evaluated.

6.3 The TLI ensures the implementation of research and development through sound policies and procedures.

The university's research policies and procedures are stated in a number of documents: "YSMU Science Development Strategy and Policy 2015-2020", "YSMU Science Development Concept 2018-2020 / 38", "On the implementation of encouragement methods in case of publishing research articles in periodicals having an impact factor" order plan: Publishing scientific articles in journals registered in the WoS database has become mandatory for the academic personnel. There is a procedure for encouraging YSMU personnel to publish their works in databases with an impact factor. 27 employees received incentive fees. Center of Innovation and Entrepreneurship has been established at YSMU, but its main functions were unclear (as it was undergoing structural changes), and various workers and students were unaware of the unit's existence. The university does not view the research results as a financial source and does not commercialize them yet.

6.4 The TLI emphasizes the internationalization of its research.

YSMU has adopted the tradition of organizing lectures of invited professors and honored doctors from abroad. Various scientific events have been organized in recent years, also Nobel Prize winners have been invited to conduct lectures. The "Nobel Days in Yerevan" event has also been held and attended by 2250 participants, out of which 1650 have been students and 22 have been from abroad. YSMU allocates funds for the organization of Student Science Day and Youth Science Day events.

About 65% of all published research articles by the university personnel is co-authored with personnel from different centers abroad, but overall, the number of research works remains low and there are still no high-ranking researchers at YSMU with a high index.

There are few cases when the university allocates resources to ensure mobility for students or staff.

6.5 The TLI has well established mechanisms for linking research with teaching.

Multi-component grading system is implemented in some of YSMU's chairs for linking research activities and teaching process, including implementation and evaluation of research work.

Students at the Faculty of Pharmacy have the opportunity to do research and defend a master's thesis, but few students are involved in research and few students choose a master's thesis as a type of final attestation.

The expert analysis revealed that there is little discussion and analysis of specific clinical cases in the clinics, and the link between research and theoretical subjects is little. The hours of pre-requisite subjects, which have a direct link to the improvement and inclusion of the research component in the future, are also few.

Considerations: The expert group welcomes the fact that YSMU has been working to fix the issues identified in the previous accreditation expert report. It is positive that YSMU has clearly defined its interests and ambitions in the research field, both for clinical and theoretical research, which will contribute to a more targeted research conduction. It is welcomed that YSMU has set a high benchmark for the development of research activities, but at the same time for the fulfilment of the set

ambitions YSMU needs to plan human and financial resources more clearly and to set progress indicators in order to ensure and sustain the success of YSMU in the field of science and applied research.

It is positive that there are long-term and short-term science development programs at YSMU, however, the development of mid-term programs and indicators of the effectiveness of scientific activities will allow to discover achievements and problems and clarify long-term programs.

It is welcomed that YSMU has adopted a policy of engaging and encouraging lecturers and students in research. However, few lecturers are currently involved in research activities and few are encouraged, which impacts on student participation in research activities. The university has not studied the reasons behind the lack of involvement of the lecturers or students in research activities. YSMU Students' Scientific Society is also working in the direction of increasing student participation in research activities, but it is still based on individual motivation and can hinder the students' acquisition of analytical skills as well as the involvement of a large number of students in research activities.

It should also be noted that the scientific laboratory infrastructure is partly equipped with the latest equipment, essential materials and laboratory supplies, which does not allow the university to deepen the research according to the goals of the strategic plan and to promote the growth of YSMU's reputation in various international ratings through the publication of the results.

It is positive that various events are held to promote the internationalization of science, publications in international journals are encouraged, visits and lectures of Nobel Prize winners are organized in YSMU, but the effectiveness of those events and effect on the improvement of the teaching process has not yet been assessed.

Although YSMU has implemented the multi-component assessment system in some chairs, which also includes the assessment of research, however, there are still issues in terms of strengthening the link between the teaching process and research activities. It is unclear which components of the curriculum ensure the development of scientific methods, methods of medical research, the acquisition of analytical and critical thinking, and evidence-based medicine principles that are crucial for future innovative doctors.

Summary: Considering that YSMU has developed a strategy for the development of the field expressing its research interests and ambitions in the field, has long-term and short-term plans, has adopted a policy of involving students and lecturers in research activities, encourages the lecturers to publish their works in journals having a high index of international impact for the internationalization of science, has adopted the policy of inviting Nobel Prize winners and other well-known professionals in the field to YSMU and delivering lectures, takes steps to strengthen the link between teaching and research, the expert group finds that YSMU meets the requirements of criterion 6.

Conclusion: The expert group assesses the compliance of YSMU institutional capacity with the requirements of STANDARD 6 satisfactory.

Recommendations.

1. Consider the possibility of submitting thesis defence only as a final work at the Faculty of Pharmacy.
2. To clarify financial planning in the field of research and increase the number of researchers as a result, involving professionals having education in the field of biology.

3. To develop clear indicators for research development and periodically monitor research programs.
4. To increase proactive engagement of lecturers and students in research by developing and applying clear mechanisms.
5. To develop and implement effective mechanisms for linking research and the teaching process at YSMU making the visits of the invited lecturers more targeted, as well as to incorporate the principles of scientific method, methods of medical research, analytical and critical thinking, paper-based assessment and evidence-based medicine in the curricula.
6. Modernize existing infrastructures and create new scientific infrastructures that will allow to achieve the goals set in the strategic plan,

VII. INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

CRITERION: The TLI has necessary resources to create learning environment and to effectively support the implementation of its stated mission and objectives

Findings

7.1 The TLI has an appropriate learning environment for the implementation of academic programmes.

Objective 3 of the YSMU Strategic Plan states: "to provide students with the necessary educational environment to support the improvement of their educational process and social status", and objective 6 states "to improve the material-technical base of the university based on the quality assurance requirements of the educational-scientific programs". The study visit revealed that the material-technical base. Stimulation centers, improving the material-technical base and the capacities of the hospital clinics is in the center of YSMU's authorities' attention.

The university's administrative and academic buildings are located next to other higher educational institutions in a student environment.

The university has a territory of 88 226 square kilometers. Mainly the theoretical chairs and the Excellence Center in Dental Education are in the central area of YSMU. Clinical chairs are in 22 bases of republic importance, 2 clinical bases and 3 university polyclinics. YSMU's utilities and service infrastructures are in a good condition, work is also being done to modernize and re-equip clinical resources. Information on the work already carried out and planned for the latter is presented in detail in the 2018 report of the university vice-rector on clinical affairs.

As a result of the review of the university resource base, the expert group recorded the following: YSMU has a library which at the time of the study visit was filled with necessary books. However, as both Armenian and international students have stated, professional Armenian and foreign language literature is scarce, with a relatively small number of newly published key literature textbooks and textbooks in the reading hall (there was at most 1 copy of each textbook at the moment of the visit). Besides, foreign students make up about 25% of YSMU students, but only 18% of library resources is in a foreign language.

YSMU Library is subscribed to international professional Hinari and UpToDate electronic databases. During the meeting with the students most of them confirmed the lack of professional literature.

There is also an electronic library at YSMU equipped with computers which have literature in Armenian and in foreign languages on the subjects taught, according to the subjects of each year and faculty. The e-library can also be accessed from the official website of the university, which is also linked to the internal network.

The university has classrooms equipped with projectors and TVs, in particular at the Center for Excellence in Dental Education, where the material presented during lectures is displayed on the screens alongside students' practical work. In those classrooms, curriculum-schedules of classes and the classroom workloads are designed in advance, when setting the workload of the academic year.

There are laboratories, reading halls, computer-equipped exam rooms, 2 museums, gyms, a swimming pool, a cogeneration plant, first aid station, as well as public food courts in the area of the university. There is a dormitory and an educational-manufacturing base operating under YSMU. YSMU area is provided with WIFI and internet access.

7.2 . The TLI provides appropriate financial resources with necessary equipment and facilities as needed to achieve its mission and objectives.

YSMU funds mainly come from the organization of educational services (61.6% of 2018 budget estimate), medical services (32% of total inflow), and to some extent (1.7% in 2018) from scientific activity. According to the data of 2018 estimate, 31.2% of the income from teaching services comes from foreign students, 15.7% from the state budget. According to the same estimate, expenses of the acquisition of non-current assets are not significant - 9.6%, out of which the purchase of medical equipment related to clinical activity is 24.4%. Whereas, as already mentioned, income from clinical activities accounts for only 32% of income. Alternative financial flows provide income from dormitories and power plant activities.

Salary fund makes up about 59.2 % of YSMU expenses, and only 9% of expenses is directed towards material resources according to the estimate. Only 0,4% is directed to library expenses. Financial flows forming YSMU's income are varied.

7.3 The TLI has sound financial distribution policy and capacity to sustain and ensure the integrity and continuity of the academic programmes offered at the institution.

YSMU does not have an established policy for the allocation of financial resources, and the legal basis for financial activity is the RA Law on Accounting, the RA Law on the Budget System, university charter and other legal acts regulating the field.

The allocation of YSMU funds by expense articles is done according to an established financial estimate, which is approved by the board of trustees.

The allocation of YSMU financial resources by structural subdivisions or academic programs is not carried out and the peculiarities of the material-technical provision necessary for providing educational services to different faculties are not fully taken into account. Financial provision per student at YSMU is considered as a common criterion for students of all professions.

University stakeholders are not directly involved in the preparation of the financial estimate. In particular, the structural subdivisions submit only claims for material values annually.

7.4 The TLI's resource base supports the implementation of institution's academic programmes and TLI strategic plan, which promotes for sustainability and continuous quality enhancement.

The planning of the resources necessary for the implementation of the educational process and the education quality assurance by YSMU was mainly carried out as needed. It is only in recent years that large-scale work directed to increasing the essential expenses for educational services

(Establishment of excellence centers, acquisition of shares of Mikayelyan Surgery Center, etc.), improving the material-technical base of university hospitals (particularly the acquisition of electric knives, anesthetics, etc. in 2018,) has begun due to the need to improve and modernize the university's clinical base.

On the other hand, separate subdivisions do not carry out long-term plannings of their resources; for the purpose of organizing current activities requirements are formed to include them in the procurement plan at the beginning of the academic year during making the annual work plan.

The University Education Quality Assessment and Assurance Center solves the needs of students and lecturers regarding the resources needed for the quality assurance of teaching processes only in the form of surveys (at least once a year).

Reports based on the survey results are made, in which the topic, aim, format, group, number of participants as well as a brief analysis of the answers to each question is presented. The level of participation of foreign students in the surveys, as well as the overall satisfaction level of the students who participated in the surveys is low (about 54%).

7.5 The TLI has a sound policy and procedure to manage information and documentation.

The legal basis for the implementation of information and documentation processes at YSMU is “The Management Procedure of Yerevan State Medical University Foundation”, where the requirements procedures, and responsibilities for the creation, maintenance, archiving of documents are represented in detail. There is a bottom-up accountability of information transmission and up-bottom orders, decisions mechanism at YSMU.

The University has introduced the "Mulberry" electronic document circulation system, which ensures operative communication with the public administration bodies.

There is an internal computer network at YSMU, which allows to objectively exchange information between different subdivisions. Works are being done to establish an e-university. The university's official website, Facebook page, the “Future Doctor” magazine, and partnering offices for international projects also contribute to the dissemination of information.

At the same time, the documentation process with foreign stakeholders (in particular, the process of providing official translations of university legal acts) is not regulated, and applications from students to the law clinic are immediately forwarded to the law clinic, bypassing the university's procedure order. Chairs (including clinical ones) lack a uniform way of documenting the process of mutual lecture hearing.

Some legal acts and other documents and procedures are posted on the official website of YSMU, but finding them in relevant sections of the site is time consuming.

Library resources are listed on the official website of the institution.

7.6 The TLI creates safe and secure environment through health and safety mechanisms that also consider special needs of students.

There is a 24-hour security service in the buildings under YSMU, but a part of the buildings is watched by cameras.

There is a fire system in the university, fire extinguishers are installed, evacuation schemes are hanging.

There is a first aid station operating at the university to provide medical care and assistance, foreign students' medical services are also organized with the support of the university and information

is posted on the official website as well. International students are provided with medical insurance assistance. In addition, they undergo mandatory fluorographic examination.

At the moment of the study visit, there were no special needs students studying at the university, however, the university is willing to provide individual approach to special needs students, but however, previously constructed buildings and infrastructure resources are not adapted for students with mobility problems to move with wheelchairs.

A civil protection plan has been developed to maintain a safe environment at YSMU. The curriculum of the University includes the subject “Civil Protection” as a compulsory course.

7.7 The TLI has mechanisms in place for the evaluation of the effectiveness, applicability and availability of resources given to the teaching staff and learners.

Surveys are considered mechanisms to determine the availability, applicability and effectiveness of the resources available to students. Although YSMU has conducted surveys among students to identify resource needs, there are still no improvement measures. According to the analysis of the survey results, the participants' satisfaction with the resource provision is at an average level (in 2017, the student satisfaction rate was 48.5%, in 2018 - 61.3%).

The meeting with students and lecturers revealed that the problems of availability and applicability of the resources they are provided with are discussed during meetings with the university authorities.

Considerations: The expert group finds that the material, financial and human resources of YSMU, their management, buildings and university hospitals in general are sufficient and create favourable conditions for the fulfilment of mission and strategic goals.

Taking as a basis the income and expense articles ratio of 2018, the intention to increase the number of foreign students and the fact that the bulk of the income is allocated to salaries, the expert group considers that financial resource allocation planning according to the SAP-s, introduction of a long-term resource planning system will promote effective implementation of the university's specialty academic programs, long-term competitiveness and full development of the students' practical skills (especially in terms of access to resources per student for foreign students).

It is positive that YSMU gives consideration to increasing the number of simulation centers in order to improve the students' practical skills. However, there is also a need for improvement in the workload planning of these centers and the number of academic personnel per student during the trainings organized in these centers. During the lecture hearings in the simulation centers, there was one lecturer for 12 students. Moreover, there is a requirement at the university to write down the number of the lecturers in the journal, but it was not written down during the hearings organized by the expert group.

It is positive that YSMU has sufficient and effective procedures for managing information and documentation processes and there is a clear tendency to improve and modernize those processes. It is also worth mentioning that the documentation process of the relationship with foreign students and international partners needs to be coordinated and functions need to be clarified according to subdivisions, which will significantly improve the quality of documentation process and administration.

It is positive that YSMU has done some specific work towards the implementation of the recommendations of the previous accreditation. Particularly, YSMU has started conducting regular

surveys and developing procedures on being provided with resource-base, however the planning, analysis and further control of improvement process need to be regulated.

The services directed to the security of learning environment, health and safety maintenance are effective. At the same time taking measures to create effective conditions for special needs students, particularly students with mobility problems can contribute to having special needs students.

Summary: Taking into account the fact that YSMU generally has the learning environment necessary for the implementation of the professional academic programs, the resource base gives the opportunity for the implementation of strategic plans as well as academic plans of specialities, simulation and excellence centres have been established, there are procedures for managing information and documentation processes, the services directed to the security of learning environment, health and safety maintenance are effective, the expert group considers that YSMU corresponds to the requirements of Criterion 7.

Conclusion: The expert group assesses the accordance of YSMU's institutional capacities to the requirements of CRITERION 7 satisfactory.

Recommendations.

1. To increase the amount of resources provided to the university fund.
2. Review the financial planning and resource allocation policies by introducing a long-term planning system of the resource security of the SAP-s and a fair system of reimbursement of expenses of each group of students.
3. Diversify mechanisms for evaluating the applicability, accessibility, and effectiveness of resources provided to students and lecturers by periodically analysing results and planning appropriate improvements.

VIII. SOCIETAL RESPONSIBILITY

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

Findings

8.1 The Institution has clear policy on accountability.

YSMU adopted a goal in the 2015-2020 strategic plan: "To ensure the university's accountability to the state and society"

The university has developed and introduced a unified approach to work planning, monitoring and accountability to regulate the accountability system; the institution has bottom-top and top-bottom accountability systems in place. The reports of the departments, deans and chairs are summarized in the annual reports of the vice-rectors and rector and are submitted to the Scientific Council of the university and the general meeting of trustees.

One of the mechanisms for accountability to external stakeholders is the reports submitted to the grant program offices of the Ministry of Education and Science of Armenia. The University publishes information on educational and other services through its own (website, social networks, official newspaper) as well as the republic's mass media (radio, television).

8.2. The Institution ensures transparency of its procedures and processes and makes them publicly available.

To make its procedures and processes accessible and transparent to the public, YSMU has established a corresponding subdivision, the public relations department, which is under the direct

supervision of the Chief of Staff. A sufficient number of platforms for the dissemination of university-related information is used: an official newspaper, a website, a Facebook page, periodicals, TV channels, radio. The university consistently analyzes and responds to information on online media rating of universities publishing about YSMU on news websites through max monitor program, and according to the data of March, 2019, YSMU was in the second place with the number of references in the websites, with the positive references in the first place. The latter relate to YSMU social responsibility activities (no information was provided in the framework of self-analysis). The university responds to negative publications by presenting its position and clarifications.

However, the YSMU official website still does not provide a complete understanding of the key processes of the institution (no reports, academic personnel vacancies, subdivisions, departmental regulations, etc.), many of the pages have not been completed in Russian or English, and only public procurement reports are available to the public.

The university's official newsletter also publishes announcements on university reforms, conferences and other events. For foreign applicants, the University publishes information and advertising materials in foreign languages.

8.3. The Institution has sustainable feedback mechanisms for establishing contacts with society.

There are certain mechanisms for public feedback in YSMU: university-employer-graduate meetings, cooperation with public administration and other structures (Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Health and its Departments, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Schools, Banks, Associations, hospitals). The university-employer-graduate meetings organized by the university are aimed at identifying the issues for preparing the most competitive specialists in the labor market and providing suggestions and advice in this regard. The university has identified issues raised by international organizations as well as local partners, in particular dentists' associations, which are mainly concerned with passing international exams for foreign graduates, as well as the level of competence and skills. As a suggestion, employers attach importance to improving the university's material and technical base for enhancing internships, intensifying cooperation with government agencies, improving the institute of guest lecturers, improving teaching methods for student development, increasing internship duration, and so on.

YSMU also provides feedback to international rating agencies and partner institutions in other countries to provide benchmarking, monitoring and evaluation of educational programs. During the study visit it became clear, however, that the university-employer feedback is still not strong. As the participants of the study visit meetings mentioned, most employers are university graduates, and the motivation of these employers to engage in external quality assurance processes is low.

YSMU considers the Facebook page to be the most flexible way of public feedback, which is being updated actively.

The university has developed questionnaires to organize surveys among alumni and graduates to develop public feedback, but the results of the survey have not been reported to the expert group.

There is no opportunity to leave feedback or comments on the official YSMU website.

8.4 . The Institution has mechanisms that ensure knowledge /value/ transfer to the society.

YSMU has mechanisms for providing medical and consulting services and transferring knowledge to the public. YSMU carries out the function of transferring knowledge to both internal and external stakeholders. Hospital complexes within the university provide free consulting services

to stakeholders. There is a Soldier's Home Rehabilitation Center, which organizes free health-related rehabilitation services for the stakeholders.

Sending academic personnel to provincial hospitals, training of doctors and so on is considered a mechanism of transferring knowledge to the public at the university YSMU regularly organizes various scientific and social events to transfer values to the public.

Considerations: The expert group welcomes the fact that there is a system of accountability in YSMU, an up-bottom and bottom-up accountability in the institution, which is periodic in nature and is summarized in the Rector's annual report, which contributes to the development of a regulated and systematic accountability approach. The reports of the Rector and Vice-Rectors detail the problems encountered, while the reports of the divisions are mainly of the nature of recording facts and some statistics; there are no conclusions, suggestions for measures to address the identified shortcomings, no analytical approach, which may hinder the identification of weaknesses and further improvement and development.

Lack of annual report of the Rector on the official website of the University, low level of transparency of YSMU activities (financial, quality assurance), incomplete presentation of information in foreign languages may hamper the interest of external stakeholders about the University, reduce access to processes, public relations, formation and strengthening of relations with international partners.

The fact that YSMU is doing a great deal of work within the framework of social responsibility is positive, but the lack of information about it in institutional self-analysis may indicate the incomplete functioning of the university's self-assessment system.

It is positive that YSMU has platforms that support public relations, there are mechanisms in place, but the lack of opportunity to give a feedback on the official website of YSMU reduces the chances of responding to the needs of internal and, in particular, external stakeholders.

Summary: Taking into account the fact that YSMU has a system of accountability, there are platforms to make the processes accessible to the public, there are mechanisms for feedback, knowledge and value transfer to promote PR, YSMU is accountable to internal stakeholders and the state for its education and resources, and the expert group finds that YSMU meets the requirements of Criterion 8.

Conclusion: The expert group assesses the correspondence of institutional capacities of YSMU to the requirements of CRITERION 10 satisfactory.

Recommendations

1. To enhance the collaboration between quality assurance system and public relations managers.

IX. EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONALIZATION

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

Findings

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

From the expert meetings and study of the documents it became clear that YSMU views internationalization and development of external relations as a priority. In the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan, YSMU aims to ensure the university's internationalization process by creating an environment which will contribute to experience exchange. The university intends to strengthen links with leading international universities, review policy promoting international relations and make it an integral part of the overall activities of the university's subdivisions, develop international performance assessment indicators, activate international benchmarking, mobility of lecturers and students, and promote university participation in international programs, improve the website to disseminate information about exchange programs, and to increase the level of foreign language proficiency of lecturers and students.

On the basis of previous accreditation recommendations, the University has developed a timetable for external relations development and internationalization, however, there are no clearly measurable indicators for assessing the results of operations.

Benchmarking analysis of YSMU scientific activity was carried out in 2017-18 in collaboration with Shanghai Rating Consulting Organization. A comparative analysis was conducted with the universities of European, US, CIS universities, based on which some changes were made in the curricula.

9.2 The institution's external relations infrastructure ensures regulated process.

There are two subdivisions in the YSMU for coordinating internationalization processes and external relations: The Department of International Cooperation (8 staff) and the Department of Foreign Student Affairs (3 staff). The functions of the departments are mentioned in the reports of the heads of the department, according to which the functions of the department of International Cooperation include the formation of contractual relations of cooperation between the University and foreign higher educational institutions, the preparation of reports on implementation, the implementation of relevant document circulation, the dissemination of information on the university website, etc. The department of affairs with foreign students organizes intercultural events, fills documents for granting residence status to foreign students, etc. The study visit revealed a repetition of the functions of the staff of two departments, and there were no confirmed functions.

All the functions related to student teaching - educational-methodological, scientific, organizational, as well as daily work with chairs and students - are coordinated by the dean's office and preparatory department for foreign students. The contact with the parents of foreign students is also carried out by the aforementioned subdivisions. The work of the two departments is coordinated by the Vice-Rector for International Affairs, who delivers a report to the Scientific Council each year.

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

To exchange experience, YSMU has expanded its cooperation with foreign and Armenian universities, health and scientific organizations, student and professional health associations. The meetings of the expert group revealed that in recent years there has been an increase in cooperation with graduates pursuing professional activities abroad, which has also contributed to the creation of the Graduates Club.

After the previous accreditation, the participation of lecturers and students in exchange programs has increased at YSMU, but during the study visit it was revealed that students could not go

to foreign universities in 6 years through mobility programs because the curricula are not flexible enough and do not allow greater student involvement.

The expert meetings and studies revealed that the participation of lecturers and students in exchange programs is mainly a result of individual initiatives, which is also conditioned by the fact that no funding is made for internationalization and the curricula lack 'mobility windows'.

In 2018, the university has signed contracts with twenty international medical universities, but there is no clear plan and quality indicators attached to the contracts.

Recently, agreements with YSMU with Oxford Academy of Education and Development and Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg have not been implemented, and the main reasons for their failure were financial problems.

9.4 The TLI ensures internal stakeholders' appropriate level of a foreign language to enhance productivity of internationalization.

The Strategic Plan of YSMU emphasizes the development of mechanisms aimed at raising the level of foreign language proficiency of internal stakeholders. And the university, taking into account the recommendations from previous accreditation, is trying to create new opportunities for improving the foreign language level of its internal stakeholders. With the university's efforts, foreign language courses are organized for students and lecturers. In addition to the courses held inside the university, YSMU is organizing courses in cooperation with Yerevan State University, Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences, American and French Universities of Armenia, US Embassy in Armenia. Since 2015, around 360 students and lecturers have participated in free English, French and German courses within these partnerships. The meetings of the expert group revealed that the level of proficiency of young lecturers in foreign languages is particularly high. Also, taking into account the expected increase in the number of foreign students, YSMU has increased the amount of English language courses for teachers.

The study visit revealed that foreign language proficiency is still a problem for local students. Also, the self-analysis does not include data on the percentage of administrative personnel who speak foreign languages.

Considerations. The expert group welcomes the efforts of YSMU towards internationalization of the university and development of external relations. As a priority, YSMU's internationalization and external relations development is included in the university's strategic plan of development. Based on previous accreditation recommendations, YSMU has developed a timetable for external relations development and internationalization activities, but the lack of clear indicators for evaluating the results jeopardizes its monitoring and continuous and targeted development of the field. It is positive that based on previous accreditation recommendations YSMU has carried out international benchmarking of SAP-s, resulting in changes in the curricula, which will help to increase student mobility.

After the previous accreditation, contracts with a number of foreign educational institutions have been signed at YSMU and the mobility of students and lecturers through exchange programs has increased. But the lack of mobility window in the educational curricula hinders the participation of a greater number of students in exchange programs.

The creation of YSMU Graduates Clubs in different countries is also positive, which also contributes to the growth of the university's attractiveness and the development of internationalization. YSMU also actively collaborates with a number of local universities, the RA

Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Defense to develop the field. However, there is little cooperation with local research institutes, which will contribute to the improvement of research activities and the formation of new links through orange.

There are several subdivisions and officials responsible for coordinating external relations and internationalization works, whose work contributes to the development of the internationalization field and the effective resolution of the issues existing in the field. However, the clarification of the functions of departments will contribute to more systematic work.

The expert group assesses positively that taking into account the recommendations of experts from the previous accreditation process, steps have been taken to increase the students' and lecturers' language proficiency. However, currently there is a need to deepen the students' knowledge of English, which will promote mobility, more active student participation in exchange programs, and will increase their opportunities to use foreign language literature.

Summary: Taking into account that YSMU attaches great importance to the development of external relations and the strengthening of international relations and has developed a relevant strategy and action plan for this purpose, there are relevant subdivisions providing the necessary processes in the field of international relations and internationalization, the university cooperates both with local and foreign universities and other institutions, the participation of students and lecturers in exchange programs has increased, the level of foreign language proficiency of students and lecturers has improved since the previous accreditation, as well as steps being taken to increase the level of English language proficiency of internal stakeholders, the expert group finds that YSMU meets the requirements of criterion 9.

Conclusion; The expert group assesses the correspondence of the institutional capacity of YSMU to the requirements of STANDARD 9 **satisfactory**.

Recommendations:

1. Expand external links and develop clearly measurable indicators to assess the achievement of the goals set in the field.
2. Activate exchange programs and encourage students and faculty to participate in these programs through clear mechanisms and financial allocations.
3. Expand the involvement of renowned scholars and professors of Armenia for experience exchange purposes.
4. Continue to improve the level of the foreign language skills of the students, lecturers, as well as the administrative personnel.

X. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

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

Findings

10.1 The TLI has internal quality assurance policies and procedures.

By the Decree of YSMU Rector dated October 31, 2011 on appointing the staff of the Education Quality Assessment and Assurance Center, the Quality Assurance System was introduced in YSMU. In 2013 Education Quality Assurance Guidebook of the University was published, which has not been amended up to date.

According to the self-assessment within the framework of the quality assurance “YSMU has claimed to have quality assurance education system based on the performance assessment indicators and containing the whole cycle of the processes, aimed at gradual and continuous improvement of all processes”. In 2015-2020 Strategic Plan YSMU also emphasizes the continuous improvement of Quality Assurance System of Education, the frequency of self-assessment of different subdivisions of the University, the comprehensive involvement of the quality assurance processes in the educational, scientific and financial activities of the University.

The Regulation of the Education Quality Assessment and Assurance Center of the university subdivision in charge of quality management system at YSMU was approved by YSMU Scientific Council in 2018, which defines the purpose, main activities, reports, etc. A number of YSMU procedures (procedure of the development of Self-assessment report, procedure of the evaluation of Self-assessment indicator, procedure of the activity assessment based on the KPI, etc.), developed in 2012, have not been amended based on the previous accreditation results, while no systematic quality assurance policy, meeting the current requirements and objectives of the SP, has been developed.⁵

In the field of quality assurance YSMU has some tools and mechanisms. For example, the analysis of the electronic survey “Lecturer through the eyes of students” provides a great deal of information, however, foreign students have begun to take part in the survey only in the second semester of the 2016-2017 academic year.

The university implements research on final attestation, assessment on residual knowledge the summaries of which contain numerical data, however, no qualitative analysis or further planning for the identified issues are organized. The YSMU Quality Assessment and Assurance Center sends off the survey results to the different subdivisions of the university, but no discussions with specific target groups (especially with students) on these results ever takes place.⁶

The procedure aimed at developing self-assessment and quality improvement measures based on the key performance indicators of the University performance and status is approved by the Decree N 04 of YSMU Rectorate session dated September 27, 2012, which sets out the development of annual action plan aimed at the quality improvement and the end-of-year self-assessment analysis, however, these analyses are not available.

During the visit, the experts were presented with a seven-page sheet listing the indicators "Key Performance Indicators for the evaluation of YSMU performance", which is not approved by any document and no information based on it is presented.

According to the Regulation, approved in 2018, the Education Quality Assessment and Assurance Center concludes its activities only by its annual report. It should also be noted that no efficiency assessments of the activities of different university subdivisions are conducted. No self-assessment was carried out, which is indicated in the expert report of the previous accreditation process.

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

Requirements for professional qualifications of the Head of the Education Quality Assessment and Assurance Center are stipulated in Regulations of the Center, approved in 2018. The description

⁵ The text was rewritten following the discussion on the comments and remarks provided by the HEI.

⁶ The text was rewritten following the discussion on the comments and remarks provided by the HEI.

of the duties of the Deputy Chief and Senior Specialists are also stated in the Regulation, however, the official job descriptions have not been developed, yet.

In accordance with the Education Quality Assessment and YSMU Regulation, the Center is responsible for the development of procedural and standard documents for quality assurance of education, development and introduction of tools and toolboxes for internal quality assurance of education, however, only the surveys, benchmarking and reports serve as QA mechanisms at YSMU. According to the Regulation (Sub-clauses C. and D. of the Clause 4): “The Policy of the Center is aimed at providing a quality education system based on learning outcomes, ensuring the stakeholders’ satisfaction”. The issues stated by these formulations cannot be resolved by the Center. Furthermore, the same Regulation (clause 11) stipulates that among the functions of the Center is the “coordination of the activities of other university subdivisions aimed at the education quality assurance”. However, according to the Regulation, the subdivisions are not subject to the Education Quality Assessment and Assurance Center.

Aiming to manage internal quality assurance processes the Center was allocated with human, material and financial resources. The Center had five employees at the time of the visit. During the visit of the expert panel, the intensification of cooperation of the Center with the teaching and methodological committees was planned. Faculty committees were created to meet the objectives of the quality assurance sector, however, no bases proving their activities were provided.

The activities of the QA Center are financed by the University funds. The university budget does not ensure the funding of the Center, while no separate financial allocations for QA activities are stipulated in YSMU financial planning documents. During the visit of the expert panel, Education Quality Assessment and Assurance Center expressed their satisfaction with the allocated resources.

The material resources of YSMU Quality Assessment and Assurance Center were obtained within the framework of grant programs.

10.3 The internal and external stakeholders are involved in quality assurance processes.

The Regulation of the Education Quality Assessment and Assurance Center emphasizes the importance of the involvement of external and internal stakeholders in QA processes.

The internal stakeholders get involved in QA processes by participating in surveys, while the levels of the involvement of external stakeholders, international stakeholders and employers in particular, is quite low.⁷ The YSMU teaching-methodological unit and separate specialized teaching and methodological councils discuss the issues of improving the academic programmes, however, it should be noted that the cooperation between the Quality Assessment and Assurance Center and teaching-methodological committees is not clear-cut (their functions in the quality assurance activities are not indicated).

During the meetings with the expert panel, the staff of Education Quality Assessment and Assurance Center pointed out the key issues that were subject to continuous improvement: full mapping of QA processes, maximizing employers’ engagement, developing branch network for the quality assurance system up to the Chair level, etc.

10.4 The internal quality assurance system is periodically reviewed.

For the purpose of improving the quality assurance activities and continuous development, the Action plan of YSMU 2015-2020 SP envisages: “Expanding the quality assurance system of education,

⁷ The text was rewritten following the discussion on the comments and remarks provided by the HEI.

publishing guidelines on quality activities and processes, improving the assessment effectiveness of the needs of the university subdivisions”. YSMU Education Quality Assurance System guidebook, published in 2013, has not been amended and republished given the previous accreditation results, despite being stipulated in the Action plan of the SP.

During the visit of the expert panel, it became clear that the internal quality assurance processes are at different levels of Plan-Implement-Evaluate-Improve (PIEI) cycle.

In particular, the student assessment system has been improved, multi-component grading system and academic staff qualification grading system have been introduced.

Some legal normative documents have been developed and implemented, such as: 2015-2020 SP, Regulation of Education Quality Assessment and Assurance Center, Career Center Regulation, some official job descriptions have been developed, documents regulating the improvement of document circulation, internationalization, activities aimed at improving university rating, as well as some structural changes.

The documents were mainly developed in 2018.

For the transparency of QA activities and dissemination of the results, implementation of analyses, feedback, effective assessment of financial planning, QA mechanisms, the planning have partially been implemented.

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

Through self-assessment, YSMU has tried to provide bases for the external evaluation processes of quality assurance. For this purpose, data were collected, surveys were conducted, self-assessment was carried out in accordance with the accreditation format, a report on the implementation of activities rectifying the shortcomings stated in the previous accreditation expert report was submitted to ANQA. At the same time, the expert analysis revealed that the collected data are incomplete and do not cover all areas that the university caters.⁸ No meetings and focus group discussions with different stakeholders of the university are organized.

10.6 The internal quality assurance system ensures the transparency of the processes unfolding in the TLI through providing information on the quality of the processes to the internal and external stakeholders.

YSMU website and official Facebook page serve as a platform for providing information on the quality of the university processes.

YSMU has undertaken measures for ensuring transparency and accountability of information on the quality of university activities, however awareness of both the external and internal stakeholders about the quality of different areas of the university is low; the analyses, survey results are not discussed with the participants.

The transparency of accountability is on weak bases (only the reports of purchases of 2018 are available), particularly one of the main components of the transparency system - Rector's annual report, is missing. Information on the Education Quality Assessment and Assurance Center has not been updated either on the official website of YSMU.

⁸ The text was rewritten following the discussion on the comments and remarks provided by the HEI.

Some procedures of QA processes are available for the stakeholders (Charter, Regulations) in the YSMU official website, however, complete information is not available: no action plans, reports of the Rector, Vice-rector, information on current activities.

Considerations: Based on the previous accreditation consultations, in its 2015-2020 SP YSMU set out an objective to ensure the increase of the efficiency of the process of quality assurance culture formation and in 2018 developed Quality Assessment and Assurance Center Regulation defining the functions, tasks, duties of the Head of the Center and staff. However, the ambitious formulations of the functions of the Center and inconsistency with the actual quality assurance processes, harshly undermine the role and the importance of the system for the stakeholders, impeding the implementation of the strategic objectives in the field of quality assurance. It is important to emphasize that up to date no application of the documented basis of quality assurance has been registered (self-assessment, evaluation of the effectiveness of different processes, analysis based on KPI, quality assessment and analysis of all Academic programmes of YSMU), no effective quality assurance policy covering all areas of university processes is found, which impedes the identification of the current issues and continuous improvement, as well as the formation of quality culture prerequisites.

The lack of the official job descriptions for the Head and the staff of the Education Quality Assessment and Assurance Center can lead to uncertainty of their rights and obligations within the scope of their activities. In addition, the activities of Education Quality Assessment and Assurance Center, under the inactive cooperation with all university subdivisions, may not fully contribute to the implementation of YSMU mission and SP, improvement of education quality, increase of the university competitiveness. The lack of the impact assessment of the quality progress indicators, self-assessment indicators, and mechanisms can also impede the evaluation of effectiveness of QA processes.

It is positive that the university allocates human, material resources to manage internal quality assurance processes and YSMU Quality Assurance and Assessment Center has motivated employees, however, taking into account the extent of the university activities and processes, the non-homogeneous stakeholders, the sufficiency of the number of human resources for the Center is not evaluated which can jeopardize the full implementation of quality assurance processes (increased engagement of the activities for the part). In addition, failure to implement the necessary planning for the financial assurance of quality implementation process can also impede the continuous improvement of the QA processes from the point of view of their further long-term development.

YSMU internal stakeholders are limited, but at the same time involved in QA processes, however, the insufficient involvement of external stakeholders is a concern. The University has not yet assessed and analysed its level of awareness of QA processes and the factors impacting on it, which can impede the continuous quality development.

The internal quality assurance system is still at the development phase, while a number of processes are still in the planning and implementation phase, very few assessments of the effectiveness of different university processes and improvements based on the latter have been implemented which impede the formation of quality culture and the accumulation and dissemination of best practices, as well as slows down the continuous improvement of all the university processes.

YSMU QA system attempts to provide bases for external QA assessment processes through self-assessment, however, the institution has not yet clarified the amount of collected and analysed data sufficient for the implementation of internal and external substantive assessments. The increase of the respondents for the purpose of data collection and the engagement of external stakeholders in these

processes as well as the involvement of more targeted questionnaires, organization of various meetings with the stakeholders, development and application of quality assessment indicators can contribute to the collection of more reliable and objective data and solid managerial decision making process.

YSMU takes actions to ensure the publicity of its activities, but the information provided by the internal quality assurance system on the official website of the University does not ensure full transparency and accountability for the stakeholders, which may be an obstacle from the point of view of their awareness and confidence-building.

Summary: Given the fact that for the purpose of regulating the YSMU quality assurance processes no documented systematic basis is available: the policy, revised QA manual, involvement of internal and external stakeholders in QA processes are limited; internal quality assurance processes at YSMU are mainly at the planning and partial implementation phase; no assessments of the process efficiency are carried out; survey results are not discussed with the participants for further improvement; the collected data do not serve as a basis for the managerial decision-making, the university still has a lot to do in terms of creating quality culture prerequisites and accumulating and disseminating best practices.

Conclusion: The expert panel qualifies the compliance of YSMU institutional capacity with the requirements of CRITERION 10 as **unsatisfactory**.

Recommendations:

1. Develop a complex quality assurance policy and regulate processes, diversify quality assurance mechanisms and tools covering all areas of the university activities.
2. Develop and apply quality assessment indicators for all YSMU processes and periodically analyse the effectiveness of the processes contributing to the identification and dissemination of best practices.
3. Develop mechanisms for increasing the stakeholders' motivation to participate in quality assurance processes by enhancing their proactive engagement in quality assurance processes.
4. Review the resource allocation and planning system for quality assurance processes.
5. Introduce new practice of discussing the results and issues of different analyses with the stakeholder as a mechanism contributing to the dissemination of the quality culture.
6. Improve YSMU website to ensure the transparency of the University activities and provide comprehensive information on the quality of processes.
7. Ensure implementation of the PIEI cycle in all YSMU processes.

ASSESSMENTS BY ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

STANDARD	CONCLUSION
1. Mission and Goals	satisfactory
2. Governance and Administration	satisfactory
3. Academic Programmes	satisfactory
4. Students	satisfactory
5. Teaching and Support Staff	satisfactory
6. Research and Development	satisfactory
7. Infrastructure and Resources	satisfactory
8. Societal Responsibility	satisfactory
9. External Relations and Internationalization	satisfactory
10. Internal quality assurance system	unsatisfactory

October 4, 2019

Mariam Momjyan

Head of the Expert Panel

APPENDIX 1. RESUMES OF THE EXPERT PANEL MEMBERS

Mariam Momjyan- In 2004, Mariam graduated from Yerevan State Institute of Economics, Department of General Economics, specializing in Enterprise Economics and Management. Until 2008, she was a part-time PhD student at the Department of Microeconomics and Entrepreneurship of the Armenian State University of Economics, receiving in the same year a PhD degree in Economics. In 2012, she received the title of Associate Professor. In 2009-2013, she has been lecturing at the Armenian State University of Economics, at the Armenian-Russian (Slavonic) University since September 2013 and at Yerevan State University from September 2014 until now. She has authored several articles and co-authored 1 textbook. Since 2018 until the present, she is the Deputy Head of the Tariff Policy Department of the RA Public Services Regulatory Commission.

Karen Trchunyan - In 2011, Karen graduated from the Faculty of Biology of Yerevan State University. In 2011-2014, he has studied at the YSU Postgraduate department, receiving in 2013 his degree of a Candidate in Biological Sciences. Later in 2017, Karen received a Doctoral degree in Biological Sciences. Since 2015, he has been an Assistant at the Chair of Biochemistry, Microbiology and Biotechnology of YSU, and an Associate Professor since 2019. Since 2015, Karen is the Deputy Director of the Research Institute of Biology of the YSU Faculty of Biology, as well as a researcher of the Laboratory of Meteorology, Bioenergy and Biotechnology of the Institute of Biology. He is authored more than 70 scientific works.

Farida Nurmanbetova-In 1986, Farida graduated from the Almaty State Medical Institute in Kazakhstan. In 1998, she became a Candidate of Medical Sciences, in 2006 receiving her Doctoral degree in the same field. She is now a consultant of the World Federation of Medical Education (WFME) and a consultant at the Kazakh-Russian Medical University.

Archit Pandit- Archit is the clinical administrator and chief counselor of the Max Institute for Cancer Care in India.

Iveta Arzumanyan- Iveta is a 3-rd year undergraduate student at the Department of Milk, Dairy, Natal and Functional Food Technology of the Faculty of Food Technologies at the National Agrarian University of Armenia. In 2018, she has participated in the training of student experts of ANQA Student Voice Project.

APPENDIX 2. SCHEDULE OF EXPERT VISIT

20.05 - 23.05. 2019

20.05.2019		<i>Start</i>	<i>Finish</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1.	Meeting with YSMU Rector	09:30	10:10	40 min.
2.	Meeting with YSMU Vice-Rector	10:20	11:20	60 min.
3.	Meeting with the members of the self-assessment working group	11:30	12:10	40 min.
4.	Meeting with the Faculty Deans including Military Medical and Foreign Language Training	12:20	13:10	40 min.
5.	Lunch, expert panel discussions	13:20	14:20	60 min.
6.	Meeting with the clinical residents	14:30	15:10	40 min.
7.	Meeting with representatives of YSMU employers	15:20	16:20	60 min.
8.	Meeting with representatives of YSMU graduates	16:30	17:30	60 min.
9.	Closed-door expert panel meeting and document analysis	17:40	18:40	60 min.

21.05.2019		<i>Start</i>	<i>Finish</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1.	Meeting with members of the Board of Trustees	09:30	10:10	40 min.
2.	Meeting with the internship organizers	10:20	11:00	40 min.
3.	Meeting with the representatives of Heads of Chairs (10-12 people)	11:10	12:10	60 min.
4.	Meeting with academic staff (10-12 people)	12:20	13:20	60 min.
5.	Lunch, expert panel discussions	13:20	14:20	60 min.
6.	Visits to Deans' offices and Chairs / Document analysis/	14:30	16:00	90 min.
7.	Closed-door expert panel meeting and study of documents	16:10	18:10	120 min.

22.05.2019		<i>Start</i>	<i>Finish</i>	<i>Duration</i>
-------------------	--	--------------	---------------	-----------------

1.	Meeting with the Student Council, Student Scientific Society and Legal Clinic representatives, Student Representative of the Mandate Committee	9:30	10:10	40 min.
2.	Meeting with student representatives (10-15 people)	10:20	11:20	60 min.
3.	Meeting with international student representatives (10-15 people)	11:30	12:10	40 min.
4.	Meeting with the staff of the Education Quality Assessment and Assurance Center	12:20	13:20	60 min.
5.	Lunch, expert panel discussions	13:30	14:30	60 min.
6.	Meetings at YSMU Units (Career Center, Scientific Research Center, Science Department, Department of Clinical Management, Department of International Cooperation, Department of Foreign Students' Preparatory Education, Public Relations Department, Military-Medical Scientific Education Center)	14:40	15:50	100 min.
7.	Meeting with the Heads of the Education-Methodological Councils	16:00	16:40	40 min.
8.	Closed-door expert panel meeting and study of documents	16:50	19:00	130 min.

	23.05.2019	<i>Start</i>	<i>Finish</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1.	Resource analysis (classrooms, laboratories, cabinets, library, gym, medical point, buffet), visit to clinics, internship analysis	9:00	11:20	140 min.
2.	Meeting with the members selected by the expert panel	11:30	12:10	40 min.
3.	Open-door expert panel meeting	12:20	12:50	30 min.
4.	Lunch, expert panel discussions	13:00	14:00	60 min.
5.	Closed-door expert panel meeting and study of documents	14:10	16:50	160 min.
6.	Final meeting with YSMU managerial staff	17:00	17:30	30 min.

APPENDIX 3. LIST OF STUDIED DOCUMENTS

N	Name of the Document	Criterion
1.	"Program Speech" of University Rector at YSMU Board of Trustees Meeting (Protocol No. 9), dated December 24, 2016	1
2.	Rector's Reports for the last 3 years	1
3.	Study of the labor market demands	1
4.	Chair Reports for the last 3 years	1
5.	Deans' Reports at the Faculty Councils for the Last 3 Years:	1
6.	Reports, analyzes, and further action plans carried out among the internal and external stakeholders	1
7.	SP Action plan	1
8.	Vice-Rectors' Reports for the last 3 years	1
9.	Reports of courses and university methodological Councils	1
10.	Work Plans of Departments and Committees for the last 3 years	1
11.	Official Job Descriptions	2
12.	Complex analysis of internal and external factors of university activities	2
13.	Complex SWOT analysis of educational, scientific activities of the university, as well as provided medical support and services.	2
14.	Examples of "Future Doctor" official paper	2
15	Key Performance Indicators (KPI) of University Performance	2
15.	Protocols of EMC related to the changes of formats of curricula, course guides, teaching and assessment methods	3
16.	Surveys and survey results conducted by the Education Quality Assessment and Assurance Center among students, graduates and employers aimed at selecting effective teaching methods, protocols of focus-group meetings.	3
17.	Materials of the Education-Methodological Conference	3
18.	The selection of the equipment for the centers was conditioned by the list of the most problematic and necessary practical skills identified in the questionnaire surveys conducted among graduates and employers and adjusted at meetings with the professional community (see survey results).	3
19.	Descriptions of the multi-component grading systems approved by the Decreed of the University's Educational-Methodological Council (EMC Decrees).	3
20.	Professional training of the personnel responsible for the preparation of tests (see relevant timetable).	3
21.	The Quality Assessment and Assurance Center of the University carries out surveys (for each semester) on Assessment system and if necessary the survey results and focus-group meeting protocols.	3
22.	Based on the results of the evaluation of the pilot multi-component assessment systems, the EMC adopts a Decree on revising, succeeding or cancelling based on PIEI principles (see EMC Decrees).	3
23.	Student assessment of University assessment reforms and their results.	3

24.	Roadmap for monitoring, assessing the effectiveness and improving the academic programmes.	3
25.	Protocols of “Legal Clinic” and “Disciplinary Committee” for the last 3 years	4
26.	Analysis of survey results on the volume, form and acquired knowledge of practical skills taught at the Faculty.	4
27.	Protocols of “Mandate Committee” for last 3 years	4
28.	Protocols of “Legal Clinic” for the last 3 years	4
29.	Protocols of “Disciplinary Committee” for the last 3 years	4
30.	Protocols of Appeals Commission for the last 3 years	4
31.	Protocols of Lecturer Training Workshops	5
32.	Benchmarking-analysis results on 3 levels: 1 institutional and 2 professionals (Human Biological Sciences, Clinical Medicine).	6
33.	List of the Heads of the Chair who have articles published in journals with 3-year high impact factors.	6
34.	Accountability Procedure	8
35.	Internal Quality Assurance Manual	10
36.	System for exam quality assessment formulas	10
37.	Research tools, analysis results and planned activities	10

APPENDIX 4. ANALYSIS OF THE RESOURCES

1. Gynecological Department of “Armenia” Republican Medical Center (Exam observation)
2. Mikayelyan Institute of Surgery (Simulation Center, Cycle Exam observation, observation of students' participation in surgery)
3. Classrooms
4. Deans' offices Faculty of General Medicine, Faculty of Public Health, Faculty of Dentistry, Faculty of Pharmacy, Faculty of Military Medicine, Dean's Office of International Students)
5. Chairs
6. Departments (Public Relations Department, International Cooperation Department, Department of Foreign Students' Preparatory Education)
7. Center of Excellence in Dental Training
8. Laboratories
9. Computer Classrooms
10. Museum
11. Canteen
12. Library
13. Electronic Library
14. Reading Hall

APPENDIX 5. THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE HEI

Հաստատվել է
 ԿՊԲԸ Հոգաբարձրանուկների
 սահմանադրության 21.01.2017 թվականի
 փոփոխության 10-րդ հոդվածով
 Կառավարության Ա.Գ. Աշոտյան

ԵՊԲԸ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԿՊԲԸ

ԳԻՏԱԿԱՆ ԽՈՐՀՈՒՐԴ

ՌԵԿՏՈՐ

ՌԵԿՏՈՐԱՏ

ԲԱՐՁՐԱԳՈՒՅՆ ԿՐԹՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ
ՊՐՈՌԵԿՏՈՐ
 ՈՒՍՈՒՄՆԱԿԱՆ ԱՇԽԱՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՎԱՐՋՆՈՒՅՆ ԿՐԹՈՒԹՅԱՆ
 -Ուսումնական ծրագրերի կազմակերպում
 -Ընդհանուր բժշկական ֆակուլտետ
 -Ստոմատոլոգիական ֆակուլտետ
 -Դեղագիտական ֆակուլտետ
 -Հանրային առողջապահության ֆակուլտետ
 -Օտարալեզու ուսուցման դեպարտամենտ
 -Ռադիոտեխնիկական

ՀԵՏԲՈՒՅԱԿԱՆ ԿՐԹՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ
ՊՐՈՌԵԿՏՈՐ
 ՀԵՏԲՈՒՅԱԿԱՆ ԵՎ ՇԱՐՈՒՆԱԿԱԿԱՆ ԿՐԹՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԳՅՈՎ
 -Հետբուհական ուսումնական բաժին
 -Հետբուհական և շարունակական կրթության ֆակուլտետ

ԳԻՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ
ՊՐՈՌԵԿՏՈՐ
 ԳԻՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԳՅՈՎ
 -Գիտությունների վարչություն
 -Գիտատեղադրության կենտրոն
 -Խմբագրություն

ԱՌՈՂՋԱՊԱՅՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ
ՊՐՈՌԵԿՏՈՐ
 ԿԼԻՆԻԿԱԿԱՆ ԱՇԽԱՏԱՆՔՆԵՐԻ ԳՅՈՎ
 -Կլինիկական աշխատանքների կազմակերպման վարչություն
 -Հերացի թիվ 1 հիվանդանոցային համալիր
 -Մուրացան հիվանդանոցային

ՏՆՏԵՍՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ
ՊՐՈՌԵԿՏՈՐ
 ՖԻՆԱՆՍԱՏՆՏԵՍԱԿԱՆ ԱՇԽԱՏԱՆՔՆԵՐԻ ԳՅՈՎ
 -Էկոնոմիկայի բաժին
 -Ինֆորմացիոն և հաղորդակցության տեխնոլոգիաների բաժին

-Աշխատակազմ
 -Հաշվապահական բաժին
 -Կրթության որակի գնահատման և ապահովման կենտրոն
 -Իրավաբանական բաժին
 -Ռադիոտեխնիկական կրթության կենտրոն
 -Հերացի ավագ դպրոց
 -Քուլտուրա
 -Ընդհանուր բաժին

ԱՐՏԱՔԻՆ ԿԱՊԵՐ
ՊՐՈՌԵԿՏՈՐ
 ՄԻՋԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ ԳՈՐԾՈՒՆԵՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԵՎ ԱՐՏԱՔԻՆ ԿԱՊԵՐԻ ԳՅՈՎ
 -Միջազգային համագործակցության բաժին
 -Օտարերկրացի ուսանողների հետ տարվող աշխատանքների բաժին

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

LQA- Lecturer Qualification Assessment

“LTES” Research- “Lecturer through the eyes of students” research

YSMU – “Yerevan State Medical University after Mkhitar Heratsi” Foundation

AP- Academic Program

PEI – Professional Educational Institution

QA – Quality assurance

ANQA – “National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance” Foundation

NQF – National Qualifications Framework

SP- Strategic Plan

SSS- Student Scientific Society