

PROTOCOL- INSTITUTIONAL & PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION	
Quality area	Accreditation
Contributes to the realization of the ENQA requirements and review of the ANQA processes and procedures	ESG standard: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1
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Approved by	<i>ANQA management</i>
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Responsible for this area	Anushavan Makaryan
Document number	
Goals	
<p>Strategic goal</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ANQA verifies quality and quality improvement of tertiary level institutions functioning in RA through periodically implemented independent institutional and programme accreditation, as well as promotes the formation of professional education quality system in compliance with international standards and the development of quality culture. <p>Targets</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For accreditation of TLIs ANQA organizes well-grounded, independent and impartial expert assessment, the results of which will be acceptable for the RA professional education system and international experts. 2. The processes are organized and reports are produced according to Statute of Accreditation and approved schedule dates attached to the agreements. 3. Educational institutions are following the forms of ANQA application and the formats of institutional and programme accreditation. 4. The experts are following the ANQA's policy of institutional capacity and programme quality assessment, are guided by Accreditation procedure as well as by the forms of reporting and report writing. 5. The experts' electronic database allows accreditation process' coordinators to choose a necessary expert group in time and in compliance with submitted requirements. 6. The experts' capacities enable implementing assessments acceptable by the organization and in compliance with the accreditation criteria. 7. Changes carried out in Accreditation statute, ANQA procedures and formats are interrelated, difficulties and problems during the processes are taking into consideration. 8. Accreditation criteria, standards and ANQA's procedures are in line with the relevant international guidelines and documents. 9. There is an adequate information that will allow foreign estimators to implement quality assurance assessment of accreditation area. <p>Indicators for evaluating targets</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accreditation Committee, educational institutions and experts are satisfied with ANQA's expert reports' reliability and justification (targets 1, 4, 6). 2. The experts are satisfied with their independency level of acting and making decisions (target 1). 	

3. Educational institutions, local and international experts as well as ANQA staff are satisfied with the load distribution of accreditation process (targets 2,4).
4. Educational institutions are satisfied with the structure of ANQA formats and content of application and institutional and programme self-evaluations (target 3).
5. Experts and coordinators of accreditation processes are satisfied with the structure of ANQA formats and content of reports and report writing (target 4).
6. Coordinators of accreditation processes are satisfied with the structure and content of experts' electronic database and with the regulatory grounds of expert's selection (targets 5 and 6).
7. The experts are satisfied with the training results organized by ANQA (target 6).
8. Educational institutions, experts and ANQA staff are satisfied with the in time and appropriate changes carried out in the formats and procedures (target 7).
9. International experts recognize the accreditation criteria, standards and ANQA procedures coherency with the European relevant guidelines and documents (target 8).
10. External evaluators are satisfied with the available information on the accreditation process (target 9).
11. Educational institutions, experts and other participants are satisfied with the transparency and clarity of accreditation processes (targets 2, 5, 7).

Description of main activities

The accreditation process is conducted in several phases:

1. Application for accreditation

ANQA Secretariat implements the acceptance of the application and assessment considering its completeness and compliance with the accreditation and ANQA's relevant format, content, etc. In particular, the application must be properly formulated and signed, licenses issued by the competent institution must be valid, besides TLI has to complete ANQA's electronic questionnaire.

2. Preparation for accreditation

This phase consists of two sub phases: a) self-evaluation study, b) formation of accreditation schedule. First, the self-evaluation submitted by the institution and the package of attached documents are studied according to the terms of self-evaluation returning procedure set forth in Accreditation statute. The accreditation process' coordinator is determined, who assesses self-evaluation in compliance with the ANQA's developed unified format, whether it has content, technical, structural and other defects and whether the data reflected in the self-evaluation are reliable or not. According to a coordinator's offer, decision is made on self-evaluation acceptance or giving an additional time to the institution for its review. Whenever a self-evaluation is accepted, a schedule of accreditation is compiled and a contract with the institution is signed.

3. Expert panel composition

This phase is divided into two sub phases: a) expert panel selection, site-visit preparation, site-visit, outline of conclusions b) development of final report's draft, final report preparation. Panel selection is carried out in accordance with the requirements of expert panel composition procedure among ANQA's experts' electronic database. The database is formed by considering the requirements to experts. The confirmation of the expert panel, desk review and planning of site-visit are carried out in compliance with and in terms set forth in the Accreditation statute and in

Accreditation manual. The formats developed by ANQA on experts' independence and the absence of conflicts, individual reports, draft of reports and final reports are applied.

4. Decision making

During this phase, the Accreditation Committee's decision is prepared (accreditation package preparation, decision drafting). The expert panel's final report is published on ANQA's website and sent to the institution so it can be prepared for the discussions during Accreditation Committee's session. All the objections and comments are discussed before decision making. During the decision making the Accreditation Committee is guided by the procedures described in the Accreditation statute and by the procedure on ANQA Accreditation Committee formation and operation. The Committee's decision can be as follows: the institution is accredited, the institution is conditionally accredited, the institution does not accredited.

5. Publication

TLI get informed about the Accreditation Committee's decision on accreditation during the session. The institution may appeal the decision in court. In case of a positive decision on accreditation ANQA granted the institution appropriate certificate and insets, makes the registration in the relevant register. The information on the results of accreditation process is published on ANQA's website.

Providing information

Except the implementation of above-mentioned phases required for each accreditation, ANQA is responsible for providing information to stakeholders (TLIs, superior organizations, students) on the processes of evaluation procedures and new formats' development.

ANQA's accreditation procedures and formats study based on Accreditation package

- **Technical requirements:** study whether the application form is properly formulated and signed, whether the licenses on TLI's functioning and on academic programs' implementation permittance issued by the competent institution are valid, whether the samples of self-evaluation are presented in relevant format, numbers, versions and languages, whether the annexes of self-evaluation, CVs, agreements and other constituent documents of the package are available.
- **Official claims:** pay attention to whether the expert panel is composed in a relevant form, whether the accreditation schedule is realistic and agreed upon with the participants. The accreditation coordinator is responsible for this process who operates by consulting with the process' coordinator responsible for the package.
- **Content claims:** pay attention to the judgments and groundings of evaluation reports, to the consistent preservation of rules and ethics of accreditation procedures and various meetings. The accreditation coordinator is responsible for this process who operates by consulting with the process' coordinator responsible for the package.

To study:

in terms of content:

- experts' reports,
- the arguments and judgments of the institution on draft version of experts' report,

- guiding books published by ANQA,
- experts' database and its capabilities;

in terms of domestic relations:

- the workload of ANQA schedule on TILs accreditation process,
- expert panels composition procedure,
- inner working order and discussion formats of expert panels,
- the mechanisms of accreditation processes' coordinators cooperation;

in terms of external relations (with educational institutions and other participants):

- application forms,
- self-evaluation formats of institutional and academic programme accreditation,
- contracts signed between ANQA and TILs under accreditation,
- following the procedures set forth in Accreditation statute and in Accreditation manual,
- The contracts signed with experts, coordinators, support staff and other documents,
- ANQA webpage.

Evaluation

Round tables/discussions

1. 2 times per year meetings devoted to accreditation decisions are held with the Accreditation Committee's chairperson, secretary, ANQA director, TIL's top management and QA staff. The results of the discussions and recommendations are fixed in protocols, and in case of the ANQA Board of Trustees' approval they can be found in ANQA forms, published on the website and guidelines.

The agenda of meetings may include:

- *Discussions on self-evaluation and accreditation procedures,*
- *Issues of the accreditation system improvement,*
- *Independence and justification of decision making,*
- *Accreditation load distribution,*
- *Discussions on evaluation procedures and framework changes,*
- *Discussion procedures of possible objections and appeals.*

2. *Separate discussions are held with:*

- ✓ TILs' administration,
- ✓ Expert panel,
- ✓ Coordinators of accreditation processes,
- ✓ The officers of internal quality assurance bodies,
- ✓ The trainers involved in the trainings organized by ANQA,
- ✓ International experts.

- 1) Once in a year a meeting is held with TILs that have undergone accreditation processes. The officer of quality assurance is responsible for the meeting .
- 2) Meetings with expert panel take place at the end of each accreditation process. The coordinator of that accreditation process is responsible for the meeting.

3) Meetings with coordinators of accreditation process take place at the end of each accreditation process. The quality assurance officer of accreditation area is responsible for the meeting. During these meetings the evaluation of accreditation processes, experts' database and ANQA procedures are stressed.

Performance indicators

- Schedule of meetings
- Agenda / officers
- Minutes of meetings

4) Once in a year a meeting takes place with the heads of internal quality assurance bodies, the representatives from the institutions that have undergone accreditation process are participating. The officer of accreditation area's QA is responsible for the meeting.

5) A meeting with training participants takes place at the end of the trainings organized by ANQA. The officer of accreditation area's QA is responsible for the meeting.

6) Meetings with international experts take place at the end of each accreditation process. The coordinator of accreditation is responsible for the meetings.

During these meetings the evaluation of accreditation processes and ANQA procedures are stressed.

During the administrative consultation to TLI's self-evaluation working groups the criteria and standards included in self-evaluation format are clarified, attention is paid to the evaluation of procedures and quality assurance processes.

Performance indicators

- Schedule of meetings
- Agenda / officers
- Minutes of meetings

Once in every 6 months the Director of the foundation submits a report to the President of ANQA Board of Trustees on the meeting with the Director of ANQA, the heads of TLIs and QA officers, and reports on whether the decisions were made in compliance with accreditation procedures or not.

Audit

Each year an audit of a certain amount of accreditation processes is implemented /about 25% of graduates/. During these audits the attention is paid to the technical /procedures maintenance, distribution of accreditation load etc./ and to the quality of documents' content / veracity of reports and justification of decision-making, institutions' observations and objections/.

Random evaluation

In case of special necessity, according to Accreditation Committee's application /or other relevant external parties/ or to the relevant accreditation evaluation plan, the evaluation of accreditation procedures is implemented according to schedule, subjects, educational institution, implemented academic programme/for example master programme/professional orientation/ etc.

The coordinator of quality assurance area produces a summary report on entire evaluation results so to include it in annual report.

Accountability

The chain of internal quality assurance area's officers is formed as follows: Ruben Topchyan – Anushavan Makaryan– Ani Mkrtchyan quality coordinator.
The quality coordinators mentioned in the chain are responsible for the internal quality assurance.

Quality coordinators by areas:

Institutional and academic programme accreditation of HEIs: Varduhi Gyulazyan

Institutional and academic programme accreditation of VETs: Lilit Pipoyan

Questionnaire-databases, experts: Varduhi gyulazyan

Trainings: Anushavan Makaryan, Ruben Topchyan, process coordinators

Reporting

The results of the current round tables and meetings are presented by the area coordinators during staff meetings where the discussion and improvement suggestions of existing problems are made.

The results of evaluations and inspections are sent to the general manager of accreditation area's quality assurance and to the accreditation area's quality team. The results are summarized and included in the annual report of accreditation area's quality. It is produced by accreditation area's quality team and discussed in the ANQA quality assurance team. The results presentation and the discussion of possible improvement measures are carried out during staff meetings.

Improvements

Based on the external and internal assessments results and on defined goals the improvement activities will be offered by the quality assurance working group (possible adjustments of targets). They'll be included in the annual quality assurance report.

There will also be a brief review on proposed improvements measures concerning each quality area. The quality assurance working group initially highlights and prioritizes the improvement actions. The ANQA annual report and priorities will be discussed during the meetings of ANQA working group and the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees/working group will decide what improvements to implement and which targets to change. The decisions on improvement actions will be fixed in the annual working plan in the future.

Interim changes of working methods or procedures that may be a consequence of the current practices and evaluation results' discussions, are directly included in relevant documents. This group of documents will form quality assurance inner manual in the future, which will guide the quality assurance team.

Documents*Internal*

- Pilot accreditation packages
- Experts' requirements
- Expert panel composition procedure
- Experts' package of the accreditation process
- Coordinators' package of the accreditation process
- Reporting forms
- Training materials

- Questionnaires

External

- ANQA IQA policy
- Statute on state accreditation of tertiary level institutions and academic programmes in the Republic of Armenia
- National qualifications framework
- Institutional accreditation criteria
- Academic programme accreditation criteria
- Application form
- Self-evaluation format of institutional capacities
- Self-evaluation format of academic programme capacities
- Accreditation manual
- ANQA website.