

# **1. ANQA Activity Framework**

## **1.1. Mission and Strategies**

ANQA is a quality assurance agency independent of the RA Government and Tertiary Level Institutions.

ANQA strives to promote public trust, social cohesion, equity, responsibility and competitiveness through systematic enhancement of tertiary level education provisions.

It does so by

- being receptive to the needs of the national stakeholders through its mandatory institutional accreditation and voluntary programme accreditation
- complying with international standards for quality assurance
- ensuring visibility at international level thus contributing to a stronger positioning of the Armenian tertiary education within Europe
- valuing close cooperation with stakeholders in the process of developing a quality assurance system.

The following are ANQA strategic objectives:

- to determine and ensure compliance with appropriate standards of tertiary education;
- to promote and support continuous improvement in the quality and standards of tertiary education provisions, working in partnership and consultation with tertiary education stakeholders;
- to promote TLI's ownership of quality assurance;
- to ensure that clear and accurate information is made publicly available about the quality and standards of TLIs; and
- to apply international good practice in evaluation and reviews of TLIs' provisions.

## **1.2. ANQA Structure and Financing**

The ANQA organization is set up as a small and flexible organization, with highly qualified staff to perform the wide range of responsibilities.

The organization has the following elements:

- The Board of Trustees is the ultimately responsible organ for the ANQA organization. It appoints the director and evaluates his performance. The government appoints the members of the Board. It has to approve the strategic plan, the three-year action plan, the yearly work plan and an annual situation analysis and report, and it monitors the internal quality assurance of the ANQA-organization. The Board is not involved in daily activities of the ANQA organization, and does not take part in decision-making on individual cases in external quality assurance.
- Accreditation Committee: The Accreditation Committee (AC) is the highest quality assurance body within ANQA designed to function as the one responsible for

- taking the accreditation decision on institutional and program accreditation based on the evaluation report produced by the expert panel, and
- assuring quality of the accreditation procedure and methodology in the Agency.

Its composition and high acceptance by the main stakeholders in the tertiary education system as well as by Armenian society in general are crucial elements for the success of the Armenian accreditation system.

Accreditation Committee is an independent, collegial body, which carries out its responsibilities prescribed by the Statute on Formation and Functioning of Accreditation Committee submitted for adoption in 2013.

The Accreditation Committee is made up through a rigid recruitment procedure to ensure legitimacy of its functions. The Accreditation Committee makes decision through a voting system.

- An Advisory Board performs consultative functions to the Board and the director of ANQA. It consists of persons with authority in the Armenian higher education system. They consult ANQA in questions like:
  - The strategic plan
  - Defining of standards and procedures for institutional audits, accreditation, etc.
  - Procedures of choosing members for expert panels
  - Effective ways to involve stakeholders in the development of quality assurance in Armenian Higher Education

The Advisory Board does its consultation when asked by the director or the Board, or it can give unsolicited advice.

The Director has the overall leadership of ANQA. He is responsible for policy direction and for communication with stakeholders.

ANQA has three functional departments:

- Department of development and enhancement
- Department of management of external quality assurance processes
- Secretariat
- Supporting staff

### **1.3. ANQA Processes and Internal Quality Assurance**

Since its establishment ANQA has been working hard on adopting a model of its internal quality assurance that would drive its effective management. Many strategies have been adopted, put into practice to promote its effective and efficient functioning. Thus, starting 2011 a bottom-up approach to ANQA internal quality assurance has been opted for enabling establishment of a system that works and yields positive outcomes. The internal quality assurance of ANQA is in the process of development and ANQA is in its first phase of self-assessment under the auspices of the Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organization (NVAO).

ANQA has adopted a process- and outcome-based approach to its management and quality

assurance, thus, all the activities run by ANQA are broken down to 11 quality assurance processes. To manage the processes an organization tool in the form of a protocol elaborating on the targets, indicators, activity plans and quality assurance tools has been developed. Each protocol is developed for operations in a given year or two and is cyclically reviewed. Thus, the achievements of ANQA for the period of 2008-2013 will be analyzed from the perspectives of those processes, which evolve around:

- Leadership and management
- Financial management
- Institutional and programme accreditations
- Legal affairs
- Human Resources Management
- Accreditation committee,
- International affairs
- Internal quality assurance
- Secretariat
- Information technologies
- Resources

#### **1.4. International Affairs**

Since its inception, ANQA has taken aggressive steps to internationalize its activities and to succeed in ANQA's desire to achieve recognition by international organizations. The activities aimed at ANQA internationalization evolve around the following major processes:

- Active collaboration with other agencies from EU and former Soviet Union countries;
- Development of the external quality assurance drawing on the ESGs;
- Active participation in and contribution to quality dialogue through involvement in ENQA and INQAAHE activities;
- Pro-active participation in World Bank and European Union projects.

With regards to ANQA's participation in the quality dialogue an active participation in the QA events at European level was expressed through contributions in the form of articles submitted to the EQAF and INQAAHE conferences as well as participation in the ENQA and INQAAHE work groups. ANQA is currently an affiliate member of ENQA and is a full member of INQAAHE and is represented on the INQAAHE Board of Directors.

The targets for the last years have been:

1. ANQA capacity building at international level
  - a. Training of ANQA staff within international projects
2. Ensuring visibility of ANQA by collaborating with the international QA organizations and networks
  - a. Participation in ENQA annual events and work groups
  - b. Participation in INQAAHE annual events, work groups and Board activities
  - c. Participation in EOAR, ECA, EUA and other network activities
3. Development and management of International Projects  
WB projects (AROATA, Capacity building for HEIs, pilots)
  - a. Tempus projects (DIUS, PICOA, ARARAT, MAHATMA, HEN-GEAR, INARM, VERITAS, TNE OA, ALIGN, GOVERN, MATGEAR)
  - b. Twinning (2013-2014)
4. Establishing, maintaining and expanding the pool of international experts

5. Organizing biennial conferences and fora at national level
6. Preparing for ENQA proof and actual review.