



NATIONAL CENTER FOR  
PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION  
QUALITY ASSURANCE FOUNDATION

**ANQA-2022/72**

**ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION**

09.15.2022 N 72

**ON ACCREDITATION OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES OF M. NALBANDYAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY OF SHIRAK FOUNDATION**

**General Information about the Institution**

Full name of the Institution: M. Nalbandyan State University of Shirak Foundation  
Official Address: 4 Paruyr Sevak Str., Gyumri, RA  
Previous Accreditation decision and date: Institutional accreditation for a period of 4 years:  
22.09.2016- 22.09.2020

Guided by the Order of State Accreditation of RA Educational Institutions Implementing Educational Programs approved by the decision 978-N of 30 June 2011 led by RA government, by the decision “Approving the Accreditation Standards of RA Professional Education” 959-N of 30 May 2011, by the process of Accreditation Committee of “National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation” (from now on ANQA) and by the Order of the Expert Group of ‘National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation’, on 15.09.2022 “National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation” discussed the issue of the Accreditation of Institutional Capacities of “M. Nalbandyan State University of Shirak” Foundation (from now on SUSH, University,, HEI).

**The main phases of the accreditation process were carried out within the following periods:**

<b>Submission of application:</b>	June 3, 2019
<b>Submission of the self-evaluation:</b>	December 17, 2021
<b>Site visit by the expert panel:</b>	March 15-18, 2022
<b>Submission of expert panel report:</b>	June 14, 2022
<b>Submission of the preliminary follow-up plan</b>	July 18, 2022

The examination of institutional capabilities of Professional Educational Institution (PEI) was carried out by the independent expert group formed in accordance with the requirements of the “Procedure for the formation of the expert group” of the “National Center for Quality Assurance of Professional Education” Foundation. The evaluation was carried out according to the 10 criteria of institutional accreditation approved by the decision N959-Ն of June 30, 2011 of the Government of the Republic of Armenia.

3 out of 10 institutional accreditation criteria: “Management and Administration”, “Professional education Programs” and “Research and Department”, were evaluated as insufficient.

The commission, after studying the self-analysis of the institutional capabilities presented by M. Nalbandyan State University of Shirak, the comments and recommendations of the college on the draft version of the report, the expert report, the action plan for eliminating the shortcomings mentioned in the report, listening to the conclusions of the three members chosen by the President of the Commission on the expert evaluation of the college, which were formed by the members of the expert group and as a result of the meetings with the representatives of the educational institution, as well as the observations and recommendations of the Commission members, fixed the following.

1. There are fundamental problems and risks in terms of the credible awarding of qualifications, but there are trends and examples of progress.

Educational programs at SUSH meet the requirements of NQF (national qualifications framework). The university has also involved employers and students in the process of developing the PEP (professional education program).

However, the University has some things to do in terms of revising the PEP, expanding the optional component of defining the outcomes, and forming applied and practical skills. Educational programs lack the outcomes aimed at the development of practical skills, in some PEPs, the correlation between the outcomes of the given profession and the outcomes mentioned in the course descriptors is not visible. In general, it is not clear which tasks, teaching and learning methods ensure the achievement of the given outcomes. Although there is an evaluation system, it is not clear how the outcome will be evaluated.

The University is provided with a teaching staff with a basic, relevant academic degrees and there are no risks from the point of view of stability, however, the number of employer-

teachers with practical skills is quite limited. The breakdown of the employer-university ties and sectoral collaborations do not contribute to the preparation of graduates in line with employer's requirements.

There are still no clear requirements for the professional qualifications of the academic staff set for the PEPs.

SUSh has the necessary resources to create a learning environment and effectively implement its mission and goals. The replenishment of resources was carried out by SUSh mainly by financial income of international programs. Budgeting the University's revenue and expenditure, the allocation of funds is generally not carried out according to strategic priorities.

The management system is at the stage of formation, there are development trends. Management and quality assurance systems are aimed at quality improvement, credible awarding of qualifications.

After the first accreditation, the University revised its mission, but it is ambitious and needs to be revised. The mission does not reflect the local problems that exist in the region.

There is a problem with the efficiency of the management system in SUSh. Management in the University is mostly situational and lacks result-oriented management. After the end of the period of 2015-2019 Strategic plan actions, the University does not have a newly developed Strategic plan.

Long-term and short-term planning monitoring mechanisms do not function effectively, there are significant deviations between the long-term, medium-term and short-term plans and their actual performance, evaluations of the management system's efficiency, analyzes of the external environment are missing.

SUSh revised the organizational structure and redistributed functions. However, in the absence of a clearly developed strategic program, these changes are also situational.

Previous accreditation consultations in the field of management and administration are mostly unimplemented.

The process of quality assurance at SUSh is systematic, there is a documentary basis and the processes are aimed at spreading and improving the quality culture, and is able to highlight key issues. However, it is not clear to what extent the above-mentioned problems find appropriate solutions in the upper level of management.

Since 2018, the Quality Assurance Center at the University has been united and the “Scientific Policy, Quality Assurance and Management Center” has been established. As a result of the implemented changes, the principle of independence of quality assurance is threatened: the Center lacks sufficient independence to assess the quality of management and research.

In general, the management system is in the stage of formation, however, there are development trends. The quality assurance system supports the processes of improving the quality of education.

### **3. Internationalization and research/creative activities do not sufficiently support the credible awarding of qualifications.**

After the first accreditation, the University implemented certain reforms both for internationalization and for improving the quality of research works.

However, the University has not yet defined a strategy to express its interests and ambitions in the research field at the institutional level. Since 2014, the procedure for promoting scientific research and scientific methodological works of employees has been introduced and is in operation at the University. Some subjects have been introduced in the undergraduate and graduate education programs of the University to enhance research capacity, but students lack research skills.

External Cooperation and Public Relations Center operates at SUSh. Through this unit, the University has participated in more than 10 international cooperation programs.

A multi-level accountability mechanism is applied at SUSh, reports include a certain analytical component which were discussed also in public. In general, the University ensures the transparency and accessibility of procedures, processes among the public.

Pre-attestation training courses for teachers of public educational institutions of Shirak region have been carried out at SUSh, the continuous implementation of which is planned by the University.

The University has mechanisms for student recruitment, selection and admission. There is a “Procedure for identification, support and guidance of students at SUSh” and in accordance with it, a study of students’ educational needs is carried out.

Since 2018, an academic counseling service has been introduced at State University of Shirak, which is organized by the Academic Consultations Center-Library.

Career services for students are still not functioning effectively.

Students have lack of methodology to conduct research.

In general, internationalization and research/creative activities in the University have development trends and support the credible awarding of qualifications.

4. The shortcomings identified in the expert report are key from the point of view of the credible awarding of qualifications, but there are grounds for improvement.

5. The shortcoming elimination program, in fact, includes basic consultations given by experts.

The plan is realistic and will lead to qualitative improvements if implemented.

Based on the above, as a result of an open vote, the Accreditation Commission

**DECIDED:**

1. To grant conditional institutional accreditation to “M. Nalbandyan State University of Shirak” Foundation, for a period of two years.

2. After the publication of the decision on granting accreditation, within two months submit a revised plan for eliminating the shortcomings mentioned in the expert report and an appropriate schedule to the ANQA taking into account the priority of solving the existing problems in the fields of “Management and Administration”, “Professional Educational Programs” and “Research and Development”.

3. To pay special attention to:

- the promotion of internal and external stakeholders’ participation in the processes of assessment of the university’s mission, goals and objectives and educational needs;
- the need to have clear and measurable qualitative and quantitative indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of the implemented processes;
- the need to provide solutions to the problems raised;
- the involvement of young specialists with good practical experience into Teaching Staff;
- the application of data collection and analysis of results in the decision-making processes;
- the interconnection of research and educational processes, the acquisition of practical skills;
- the application of PREI (planning, realization, evaluation, improvement) cycle in all processes;

- the organization of teaching oriented at developing students' analytical, creative and critical skills;
4. To submit a written report on the results of the implemented actions, evaluating the improvements, innovations and achievements of the academic activities to the ANQA every 6 /six/ months, in line with the requirements of Clause 12, "The Order of State Accreditation of RA Educational Institutions Implementing Educational Programs".
  5. To instruct the ANQA to monitor the effectiveness of "M. Nalbandyan State University of Shirak" Foundation's activities according to focal progress indicators.

**Head of the Accreditation Committee**

**A. Saghyan**

September 23, 2022

Yerevan