September Visit – Training students on QA, Training HEI on IQA, Training secretaries on writing assessment reports and Review information system ANQA

Yerevan/The Hague, 28 September 2012[1]

Subproject 12SUB05
Training students on IQA and EQA, 11 September 2012
Subproject 12SUB14
Review information system ANQA, 11 September 2012
Subproject 12SUB03
Training HEI on IQA, Roundtable conference 12 September 2012 (day 3/3)
Subproject 12SUB05
Training of secretaries on writing assessment reports, 13 September 2012 (day 1/2)
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Report 12REP04
Report on visit and training, September 2012

LINE 1 – IQA / LINE 3 – ANQA

Subproject 12SUB01
Project Website

ALL LINES

A shift from accountability towards enhancement is becoming visible in terms of a shift from external to internal quality assurance. During the training sessions with HEI and ANQA there is more and more emphasis on the possibilities of using the self-evaluation report (SER) and peer review as instruments to improve rather than control the quality of education.
Comment ANQA: the issue of enhancement was always on ANQA's agenda.

The shift of ANQA from preparatory (international) projects towards operational office management is also visible. Concrete aspects/instruments of a normal working practice of a quality assurance agency are developed and implemented. The training that will be developed on writing SER by ANQA is a good example. The way the students were prepared for their training is another good practice. At this moment a network for quality assurance people from HEI is being developed.
Comment ANQA: The international projects are also aimed at QA, internal and external, and they are projects like ARQATA (may be with more investment is staff capacity building). Why would we classify them as the ones that are perriferial and not central to ANQA's development?

ANQA staff represents an appropriate mix of backgrounds and qualifications. Some staff members are fluent in English, others need to improve their language skills. At least a few of the staff members are well trained in the concepts of international and European quality assurance in HE as they participated in various international projects. Several staff members hold/held a position in HEI at least in one case with the responsibility for internal quality assurance. In the staff also earlier experience with external quality assurance in other countries is represented. Also the previous external quality assurance system is represented in the staff. A number of the staff members conducted the pilot projects and can draw from this experience in the development of the current practice.

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[1] Revised 24 October 2012 and including ANQA comments.

The framework with its criteria and standards is not fully 'owned' by all stakeholders. The criteria do not seem to comply with the reality of higher education in Armenia. All participants, HEI and ANQA, agree that there is a gap between the framework for institutional accreditation and the state of affairs in HEI at this moment. At present, the situation in HEI is not in line with those criteria yet. The criteria are defined to further enhancement by the institutions. The two HEI continuing in Line 2 of the ARQATA project recognize the difficulty to meet all criteria when undergoing the pilot institutional audits in March 2013.

Comment ANQA: As mentioned before, they are aimed at enhancement and obviously are not at minimum level. Anyway, they provide for a good background to think on and work at further development of the system, so crucial for Armenia at this stage.

OBSERVATIONS

Training HEI on IQA, Roundtable conference (12SUB03)

A panel of experts received draft SERs (on three of ten criteria) of eight HEI. These SERs have been reviewed by three experienced experts from the Netherlands (Leiden, Delft) and Flanders (Brussels). The experts have been asked to scrutinize the SERs, and to come up with general observations and three positive and three less positive aspects. The outcomes of this exercise have been discussed during a panel meeting in The Hague. In the review, two questions have been addressed:
 - Does the SER provide sufficient information at an appropriate level for the assessment committee?
 - What are the strong and weak points of the individual SERs?

The panel encountered some difficulties in fully understanding the draft SERs. Some texts were rather difficult to comprehend as a result of the poor translation into English. In addition, there is the difficulty to translate concepts form Armenian into English. Also the SERs tend to put too much emphasis on details and procedures. And lastly, evidence in the SERs is scarce.

As such, it was not really possible for the panel to give feedback on the individual level of each HEI. A way to improve the self-evaluation reports is to start from the general observations and recommendations of the panel as these are applicable to all draft SERs.

HEI should also keep in mind that their internal quality assurance systems are not fully operational yet. On the level of documentation there are bits and pieces of quality assurance but it is not a system.

The draft SERs and the various training sessions also made clear that many HEI think and write on a rather detailed level. Thinking and writing need to start at the concept level in order to result in a good SER. The text of the draft SERs is much too detailed, and a general conclusion on the basis of these details is often missing. As such, the sequence concept > details > is missing.
It should be demonstrated that findings result in quality enhancement decision making.

In order to improve the skills in writing SER, ANQA is developing an additional training as a follow-up on the ARQATA training.

Training students on QA (12SUB05)

The students were well prepared for their training on internal and external quality assurance. As to better prepare, ANQA had several meetings with the students about quality assurance and the role of students (according to ESG). Being so well prepared the students were certainly at an advantage, making it possible to discuss QA topics in depth. It also had a positive effect on their performance when doing the assignments. Students are, in contrary to some HEI, more able to work from the conceptual level to the detailed level, and to combine concept and details leading to conclusions on a conceptual level.

Most of the students are already involved in internal quality assurance matters at their HEI. They are more or less familiar with their role in both internal and external quality assurance. Even so, they are eager to participate in training sessions as they find their knowledge of the framework and the ANQA manual not sufficient yet. Further, they also raised the issue of their being informed on the recent developments at higher education level and what it is that the reforms promote, so that they are enabled to fully contribute to the process.

Training secretaries on writing panel reports (12SUB05)
The objectives of the training are formulated as follows:

Related to the process of reporting, the panel coordinator/secretary should be able to:
– Explain the purpose of the report and its parts
– Coordinate the process of report production
– Gather and organize relevant information/data
– Report on the considerations of the experts
– Organize the information and considerations into a consistent and coherent argumentation to sustain the conclusions
– Contribute to: composing, editing and correcting the final report
– Participate in the discussion on the ANQAs conclusion

Various reports will be written: audit reports (at institutional level), assessment reports (at programme level), and advisory reports.

In preparation for the training, participants have been asked to read background material, to write a part of a draft audit report and to prepare a presentation introducing the ANQA template for the writing of an audit report.

The SER on which the draft audit report had to be based was from the Armenian practice, which caused some additional problems since this was not a 'best practice' example.

Eight staff members and the director of ANQA participated in the training.

After getting acquainted and the exchange of expectations the training started with a brainstorm on the question: 'What constitutes a good audit report?'.

Moderators shared concepts and perspectives on the quality and writing of a good audit report.
• *Functions of the report*
• *Contribution to the values and goals of external quality assurance*
• *Parts of the report*
• *Production of the report*
• *Aspects/indications of quality*

Next the participants developed a comprehensive list of criteria to assess the quality of the audit report.

In the presentation on the structure and the writing of the audit report the ANQA employee put emphasis on the method of analysing of the self-evaluation report and other findings, and introduced several indicators for compliance to be used in this analysis. This method is based on the strict prerequisite of closure of the quality management cycle as imperative condition for compliance.
The participants demonstrated a thorough analytical and methodological approach towards the SER from this perspective.

After identification of the differences and similarities of the draft audit report by the participants in the confrontation with a draft audit report prepared by the moderators, it was discussed how to meet and balance the several functions of the audit report. The audit report of the participants emphasised the analytical approach starting from the quality management cycle. This results in a text on the process of quality management which is rather abstract to the reader. It might even come to the point that the

institution might not recognize itself in the text of the audit report. It might be helpful to remain closer to the self evaluation report. Also the function of the audit report as a public account on the quality of the institution or programme requires that the text is readable by a wider audience. Additionally the audit report should also contain relevant affirmations.

The training day ended with rounding up the discussion of criteria for a good audit report. Although not finalized in a concluding document nearly all elements are in place to develop criteria to evaluate audit reports to advise the Accreditation Committee in the decision making process and for internal quality assurance purposes (e.g. peer reading). The director of ANQA expressed the intention to use the results of this training for this purpose.

Review information system ANQA (12SUB14)
For a brief description of ANQA's Accreditation Workflow Process System please refer to Annex 8.

Comment NVAO: it might be not clear enough from the previous version that the concepts used to develop the IT infrastructure by ANQA are valued very positively by the reviewer.

ANQA is in the process of design and development of an IT infrastructure to register applications and to support the assessment and decision-making process. It is the ambition to develop programmed workflows to structure tasks in this process of dealing with the application and to define specific responsibilities/roles. These workflows will be developed in SharePoint related software.

This project is now in the stage of piloting. The process of conducting the assessment process and the translation into well defined tasks for specific roles within the organisation preceded this pilot.
Comment ANQA: The stage of analyzing and describing is already over. Currently we are in the phase of piloting.

The work process has been divided into 11 phases, each phase includes several detailed steps.
In the discussion it appeared that 11 phases is rather similar to the workflows built into the Workflows the NVAO uses in its Document Management System. These are: registration, division of tasks (management), eligibility of application, preparing the dossier (including templates, etc.), panel composition, analysis, preparing site visit, site visit, report, finalizing report. Different is the decision of ANQA to develop separate workflows for decision making and the actual assessment process.

Subjects for discussion have been: the need for an open structure of the workflow. The dossier should not be closed to perform only one task at a time, but open to mutations and consultations by other staff members. Share Point includes appropriate features to structure this process. Also it is best to use 'broad tasks' and not to divide them into very detailed small tasks. There are many exceptions to the normal workflow. Do not attempt to build all exceptions into the workflow, the workflow will be unmanageable. In general the concept of the ANQA IT environment meets this requirement. In the case of the NVAO we used several 'loops' in the workflow, because the experience learns that time and again the steps have to be taken again.
Comment ANQA: Each accreditation process has special site for all participants communication including coordinator, expert panel members, trainers for experts, ANQA secretariat, Accreditation Committee members. Special policy for access authorization used.
Comment ANQA: We use workflow which only looking on change from one phase to another. Inside the phase coordinator and panel members and others who have access collaborate in unrestricted way inside of accreditation site. All of them have possibility of use templates for documents and communication appropriate for that special case by their own experience.

Keep is simple! Think of appropriate, relevant and structured metadata to 'tag' each document. The retrieval/search function of the system is most important. But also limit yourself. The system containing the dossiers is not a detailed database or register. Share Point environment has advance features for search in centralized repositories without any limitation like in Google.

In addition to this system for the support of the application and decision making process ANQA has implemented an Expert database and a digital platform for the exchange of documents and discussion

between expert. This Expert database is accessible by a portal for correction and updating of information.

The presentation of the plans makes clear that a robust design process is followed. Several versions of the design have been discussed with the employees of ANQA. It is planned to have a thorough testing phase after the realisation of a prototype. It is emphasised that testing is very important.

In the opinion of the observer the main functionalities of the digital system for the support of the application process is the archive and retrieval function and the structuring of the work processes. The archive should be up to the requirements by law and regulations. These are met by the IT structure that is developed by ANQA in the: workflows, the repositarium of documents and the templates for the documents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations on writing SER (Line 1)

Improve the participation in the internal quality assurance of the HEI by students and teachers and involve all stakeholders , including working field, in Internal quality assurance. No External Quality Assurance without Internal Quality Assurance.

Improve the text of criteria 1, 3 and 10 on basis of the general feedback. The text has to be improved from the level of the concept and not from the remarks on the level of the text. The text of the SER for the Institutional- and the programme accreditations have to meet the standards of the international experts.

It is a suggestion to write a SER on the level of a criterium not on level of the individual standards. Explicit substantiation of compliance at the level of each standard brings the SER on a far too detailed level. Also many redundancies occur in the text. As a result the text does not provide the necessary context, makes it very difficult to follow the general argumentation and the text is less readable as well. Make the pdca in each criterium visible by writing in facts and findings and conclusion. The 'foundations' and regulations and how the 'foundations' and regulations are established is part of an annex.
Comment ANQA: Is it theoretical reflection of institutions or do we have analysis of real SER? Major conclusion should be done in SWOT resume from findings in standards.
Comment NVAO: Finding the major findings in the SWOT is exactly the structure the experts struggled with. They preferred to find the conclusions in the text,

Recommendations on writing panel reports (Line 3)

From the evaluation and the initial expectations formulated by the participants on the learning objectives of this training, it appeared that the following aspects need attention:

Analysis of the SER and the findings, the verification process and the analysis of the self evaluation document. What constitutes sufficient evidence?

The method used for writing the text Advisory report per criterium and standards is rather one dimensionally aimed at closure of the quality management cycle (pdca). This is a very analytical way to write the report. The disadvantage is that the text becomes rather general and it is difficult for the HEI to recognise their institution in the text. The connection with the professional values and indicators of good teaching and learning might be lost.

The concept of 'confidence of the experts' could be explored further, in which situation can the panel have confidence in the future developments, based on concrete plans for improvement, and how to weight this is its conclusion?

The manual of ANQA contains a complex procedure of writing the audit report. First the experts have to fill in a format with their conclusions, after that the ANQA-coordinator makes on basis of the texts of the experts an advisory report. The timeline for writing this report is strict and short. This might appear to be not a practical approach.

Make a checklist for peer reading of draft audit reports as part of internal quality assurance.

Recommendations on further professionalization of ANQA (Line 3)

Continue the training of students. ANQA can continue the training of the students. It is important to recruit a number of students who will take part of the institutional- and programme accreditations. The student must be trained on this role. The basis is already there for further training. The emphasis of the training is on the framework, asking questions and the core concepts of teaching and learning. It is important to think about on open solicitation to recruit students and not only take students from student organisations.

Eventually leave the design process. Develop a plan for stepwise testing, capacity building and implementation. In this stage it might be actually more fruitful to learn from actually using (IQA) instruments, protocols and IT tools.

Reconsider the procedure of writing the advisory report. The format of writing the text is a good one but it is important not the write in a very abstract way. So it is important not to use the format very strict. The HEI will accept a report were they can read that it is about their institution.

Emphasise the positive aspects of this system of EQA to HEI. Mitigate the risk of resistance at the side of the HEI as a result of the mandatory character of the system and the feeling that the criteria cannot (yet) been met by the HEI.

The formation of a network of quality assurance people from HEI might be helpful to communicate with the HEI.

Recommendations on information system ANQA(Line 3)
– Prioritize the IT projects and make a realistic planning for the implementation
– Make the design of the IT project 'fit for purpose', balance gains an costs of automation
– Create room for a creative and tailor made processes of assessment ('open' workflows)
– Keep it simple
– Think not only of sequential steps but include many loops and shortcuts

**ANNEX 1   Brief report on meeting ANQA – NVAO (12COM04)
                   Yerevan,11 September 2012**

Meeting 12COM04
Visit 5 – NVAO, June/July 2012
                                                                               ALL LINES

As is the standard procedure, ANQA and NVAO meet at the occasion of every event.
Purpose:
–   to evaluate the final training HEI (12SUB03) and the 2-day training ANQA (12SUB05);
–   to discuss the project website (12SUB01);
–   to discuss the institutional audits and programme assessments (13SUB01-4);
–   to prepare the next events:
        o   the visit to Netherlands and Flanders (12SUB07)
        o   the Swiss visit (12SUB08)
        o   the national stakeholders' conference in October (12SUB09)

1. Evaluate the training HEI (12SUB03) and the 2-day training (12SUB05) ANQA in March.
There is no systematic feedback on the two activities because the online questionnaires are not filled
in by the participants.

To avoid this problem the questionnaires for the forthcoming activities (September visit) will be in
hardcopy.
Comment ANQA: OK.

For the upcoming events there will be send an e-mail to all the participants with a reminder to fill in the
questionnaire and with a link to Survey Monkey. It is very important to start a digital databank with
questionnaires and to have systematic feedback on all events and activities.
*Comment ANQA: To have reminder mechanism, close access to some parts of document for persons
who did not give feedback.*

2. Website
The information on the website is not up to date. The documents of the March visit are not on the
website. Also the programmes of the September visit and the Q-week in October are not yet
published. Also Evens and News need closer attention.

The forum is not operational. It remains unclear why: culture, relevance? NVAO will formulate
questions about the training for the forum.

NVAO will send the documents of the March and September training to ANQA as to update the
website. Important is the forthcoming event: the Q-week in October.

3. Institutional audits and programme assessments
When starting line 2 EQA we will continue with 2 HEI and 2 programmes. NVAO would like to suggest
continuing with the Yerevan State University and the Polytechnic at institutional level, and with the
Medical University at programme level. As NVAO understands, programme accreditation is only
compulsory for the Medical University; hence the suggestion to opt for two medical programmes. This
could be the programme general medicine and the master programme in public health, but any other
programme is of course possible.
Another possibility is to opt for the Yerevan State University and the Medical University at institutional
level, and two medical programmes. We then combine institutional and programme procedure for the
Medical University.

NVAO has good hopes that prof. dr. H. Hillen (Maastricht University) is available as chair for the programme assessment. He has been chair of the expert panel assessing all Dutch and Flemish medical programmes, and recently went to the Dutch Antilles for the assessment of 4 off shore medical schools. He is also willing to sit on the panel for the institutional audit. His final decision depends on the dates. This will be mid March but the exact dates are still to be decided upon. NVAO is still working on that with the envisaged involvement of Helmuth Konrad and the international expert Elisabeth Fiorili (according to the contract).

It would be helpful to know as soon as possible which HEI and programmes with continue in line 2 EQA. NVAO would also like to invite representatives of these HEI (1 or 2) as well as a student member of these HEI for the Swiss visit in October 2012.

Institutional audit:
1. Yerevan State University;
2. Yerevan State Medical University.

Programme assessment:
1. Biology programme, Yerevan State University;
2. General medical programme, Yerevan State Medical University.

For the institutional audits, each panel will consist of 4 members, including a student member:
1. Chair (suggested by NVAO)
2. Member (suggested by NVAO)
3. Member(suggested by ANQA)
4. Student member (suggested by ANQA)

The same applies for the panels assessing the programmes.

NVAO's audit panels must meet the following requirements:
- the panel is composed of at least four members, including one student;
- the panel commands administrative, educational and audit expertise, is acquainted with developments in the higher education sector at home and abroad, and is authoritative;
- one of the members with administrative expertise will act as chair;
- the panel is independent (its members have had no ties with the institution to be assessed over at least the past five years).

In this they meet the ANQA requirements as defined in the 'Guidelines And Criteria For Quality Assurance Experts'.

The audit panel is assisted by an ANQA process coordinator/secretary. They are also independent; they are not part of the panel. NVAO offers technical assistance both to the panel and ANQA.

ANQA experts will be a mix of experts from the American University and local experts. The experts from the American University are well respected in Armenia. It is also important to involve local experts for reasons of continuity.

All experts are trained in carrying out audits and assessments. So are the Armenian students, process coordinators and secretaries (cf. ARQATA subprojects).

Both NVAO and ANQA will contact experts and students. The composition of the panels will be finalized in October 2012.

4. International visits

Michèle Wera, project manager ARQATA, will take over the responsibility for line 4 now that Esther van den Heuvel has left the NVAO office. This will also be communicated with CfEP/PIU.

The programme for the Swiss visit (annex 3) is discussed and agreed upon.

Composition of delegation:
1. ANQA: Ruben Topchyan, director
2. ANQA: Susanna Karakhanyan, head of policy development and implementation unit
3. HEI: YSMU?
4. HEI: USU? (instead of Government / Ministry / CfEP)
5. Student: YSMU or YSU?
6. Government / Ministry / CfEP

Tickets need to be booked as soon as possible, preferably arrival Sunday and leaving Saturday.

5. Q-week

Monday 8 October 2012

National Stakeholders' Conference
− morning
  − speech K. Dittrich, chair NVAO. 30 minutes
  − speech P. Rullman, board member and vice-president for education, Delft University of Technology (30 minutes)

> NVAO will send the title of the speeches and presentations as soon as possible.

− afternoon: conference (Armenia) and official meetings (NVAO-team)

> Karl Dittrich and Paul Rullman will attend an ANQA-board meeting
> other activities still to discuss

Tuesday 9 October 2012

National Stakeholders' Conference
− morning: conference (Armenia) and visit Yerevan State University (NVAO delegation) & Polytechnic University (Delft delegation)

Comment ANQA: visit HEI 10.00 until 13.00; translator and transport provided by HEI; meetings with administration, professors, students, deans, and SER extended team

− afternoon (all participants of the conference)
  − presentation ARQATA (ANQA & NVAO) RT en MW, 10'
  − presentation outcomes pilot SER and discussion (NVAO, ANQA & HEI) IF & SK & ?, 60'

> speaker HEI still to be identified

- Training HEI in IQA Implementation, in concurrent sessions (2 hrs)
    - with students (I. Franssen);
    - with faculty (K. Dittrich);
    - with management (P. Rullman);
    - with QA coordinators (J. Brakels & M. Wera).

> ANQA observers will be present in all sessions
> ANQA will make a selection of the participants (with max 30 people per session)
- Participants must have a good understanding of English
- No translation is offered
- Roundtable with max 25 HEI staff + ANQA staff = max 30 x 4 sessions = 120 people
- Students = bachelors and masters (not PhD)
- Faculty = deans
- Management = board members, rector, vice-rectors etc.
- QA coordinators = people involved in QA

Wednesday 10 October 2012
(at ANQA office)

Training HEI in IQA Implementation – programme accreditation
(J. Brakels, I. Franssen & M. Wera)

Participants are HEI staff of Yerevan State University (biology) and Medical State University (general) involved in quality assurance on programme level.

> ANQA observers will be present
> ANQA will make a list of the participants (max 15 including ANQA observers)
- Participants must have a good understanding of English
- Max 6 people per HEI including student = 6 x 2 HEI/programme = ca. 10 HEI staff

ANQA-meeting
(K. Dittrich & M. Wera)

> ANQA and NVAO will make a list of topics to discuss

Thursday 11 October 2012
(at ANQA office)

Training HEI and ANQA on EQA (1/3) – organisation of an institutional audit
(J. Brakels and M. Wera)

Participants are HEI staff of Yerevan State University and Medical State University responsible for organizing the institutional audit.

> ANQA staff will participate
> ANQA will make a list of the participants (max 15 including ANQA staff)
- Participants must have a good understanding of English
- Max 6 people per HEI including student = 6 x 2 HEI = ca. 10 HEI staff

<u>E-train (1/2)</u>
(M. Frederiks, G. King, I. Franssen)

NVAO already has the list of participants.

> NVAO will provide a more detailed programme
> ANQA needs to decide which ANQA staff members will participate in the concurrent session
(Training HEI and ANQA on EQA (1/3) – organisation of an institutional audit)

Friday 12 October 2012
(at ANQA office)

<u>Training HEI and ANQA on EQA (2/3) – ESG</u>
(M. Frederiks)

> NVAO will provide a more detailed programme
> ANQA staff will participate
> ANQA will make a list of the participants (max 15 including ANQA staff)
– Participants must have a good understanding of English
– Max 6 people per HEI including student = 6 x 2 HEI = ca. 10 HEI staff

<u>E-train (2/2)</u>
(G. King)

NVAO already has the list of participants.

> NVAO will provide a more detailed programme
> ANQA needs to decide which ANQA staff members will participate in the concurrent session
(Training HEI and ANQA on EQA (2/3) – ESG)

Comment ANQA: ANQA provides a list of participants for all events

ANNEX 2 – International visit (12SUB07)

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Subproject 12SUB07
International visits, September 2012

LINE 4 – Quality Culture
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PROGRAMME: Study Tour in the Netherlands and Flanders, 17 September – 21 September 2012

Sunday 16 September: Travel to The Hague; no official programme

Monday 17 September: Presentations and workshops at the NVAO office, The Hague
09:00 – 10:30   General introduction to NVAO and visits, and assignments
10:45 – 12:15   Workshop institutional audit
12:15 – 13:00   Lunch with NVAO board
13:00 – 15:00   Workshop learning outcomes
15:15 – 16:00   Presentation of selection, training and role of student panel members
16:00 – 17:00   Workshop panel compositions
18:30 – 21:00   Meeting / Dinner with stakeholders: The Netherlands Association of Universities of
                        Applied Sciences (*HBO-raad*) and the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (*VSNU*)

Tuesday 18 September: Utrecht
10:00 – 12:00   Visit HEI 1: Utrecht University
12:15 – 16:15   Lunch and visit Assessment Agency: Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities (*QANU*)
16:15 – 18:00   Guided walk through the university city of Utrecht
18:00 – 20:30   Meeting / Dinner with stakeholders: students of the Dutch National Union of Students (*LSVb*)

Wednesday 19 September: Leiden and Brussels
09:00 – 12:00   Visit HEI 2: Leiden University
12:00 – 13:15   Guided walk through the university city of Leiden
13:15 – 15:45   Lunch (train) and travel to Brussels
16:00 – 19:00   Free time in Brussels
19:00 – 21:30   Meeting / Dinner with stakeholders: Department of Education (Flanders)

Thursday 20 September: Brussels
09:30 – 12:00   Visit HEI 3: University College/University of Brussels
13:00 – 15:00   Lunch and visit Flemish Council of Universities and University Colleges (*VLUHR*)
15:30 – 16:30   Visit Flemish Department of Education
17:30 – 19:30   Meeting / Dinner with stakeholders: students of the Flemish Student Association (*VVS*)
20:00 – 23:00   Travel to The Hague

Friday 21 September: Leiden and The Hague, and final day at the NVAO office
09:00 – 10:30   Visit HEI 4: Institution for Distance Education (*LOI*), Leiden
11:30 – 12:30   Visit Dutch Ministry of Education
12:30 – 14:00   Lunch at NVAO
14:00 – 15:15   Workshop on Initial Accreditation
15:30 – 16:15   Presentation of macro-efficiency check for new programmes (*CDHO*)
16:30 – 18:00   Assignments and evaluation of the study tour
18:00 – 20:30   Farewell dinner with NVAO, Katwijk

Saturday 22 September: No official programme

Sunday 23 September: Travel to Yerevan

ANNEX 3 – International visit (12SUB08)

Subproject 12SUB08
International visits, October 2012

LINE 4 – Quality Culture

DRAFT   PROGRAMME: Study Tour in Switzerland, 29 October – 2 November 2012

Sunday 28 October: Zurich & Bern
− Travel to Bern via Zurich; no official programme

Monday 29 October: Bern
− S1 – State Secretariat for Education and Research (SER)
− S2 – Rector's Conference of Swiss Universities (CRUS) & Swiss University Conference (CUS)
− Meeting / Dinner with stakeholders

Tuesday 30 October: Bern
− S3 – Swiss Center of Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education (OAQ)
− Lunch with stakeholders (OAQ)

Wednesday 31 October: Bern & Lausanne
− S4 – Student Union (VSS-UNES-USU)
− Travel to Lausanne
− S5 – Visit HEI 1: University of Lausanne
− Meeting / Dinner with stakeholders

Thursday 1 November: Lausanne & Zurich
− S6 – Visit HEI 2: Federal Polytechnic Lausanne
− Travel to Zürich
− S7 – Meeting with Rolf Heusser, former OAQ

Friday 2 November: Zurich
− S8 – Visit HEI 3: University of Zürich
− Farewell lunch
− Travel home

ANNEX 4 – Programme Training ANQA students on QA (12SUB05)

Subproject 12SUB05
Training students in their role on QA

LINE 1 – IQA / Line 3 – ANQA

Date
Tuesday 11 September 2012, 13.30 until 18.00

Moderators
Irma Franssen & Frank Wamelink

Participants (max. 20 participants)
- 15 students
- ANQA observers

Location
Yerevan State University

Programme
13.30 until 14.00
Document 1
Presentation
- Role student in IQA and EQA HEI
- Role student in panel institutional accreditation and programma accreditation

14.00-14.30
Document 2
ANQA accredition manual

14.30-15.30
Document 3
Reading SER
Assignment 1: Analytical skills

15.30-16.30
Document 4
Presentation
Asking questions (tool asking questions)

16.30- 18.00
Document 5
Assignment 2: asking questions and analytical skills
Role playing game panel discussion

ANNEX 5 – Programme Training HEI on IQA (day 2/3) (12SUB03)

Subproject 12SUB03
Training HEI on IQA (day 3/3)

LINE 1 – IQA / Line 3 – ANQA

On 12 September 2012, day 3 of the 3-day training session on all aspects of IQA will take place. This training will have the form of a roundtable conference. The self-evaluation reports (SER) have been analyzed by an expert panel (desk research). Two members of the NVAO will discuss these outcomes in more detail, and conduct a final training presenting good and perhaps not-so-good practices, and tools for writing a SER. During this last session, HEI will also reflect on the SER written by their colleagues. This training will therefore focus primarily on lessons learned, and provide additional tips and tricks. Again ANQA staff members attend this training as observers to continue the process of professionalization.

Date & Location
Wednesday 12 September 2012, 9.00 until 17.00, at Yerevan State University

Moderators
Irma Franssen & Frank Wamelink

Participants (max. 20 participants)
8 HEI with three participants per HEI & ANQA observers

Programme
9.00- 10.00
Feedback on SER general (document: Armenia review SER)
Presenting good practices and not so good practices.

10.00-11.00
Document 1
Assignment 1: Discussing in groups on text SER

11.00-11.30
Plenary session on assignment 1.

11.30-12.30
Document 2
Presentation: Tool/instrument how to ask the right questions by evaluation/assessment SER.
(Role ANQA staff in writing and finishing tool).

12.30-13.30
Lunch.

13.30-15.00
Document 3
Assignment 2: Role-playing game with tool/instrument asking questions.

15.00-16.00
Plenary session on assignment 2.

16.30-17.00
Input HEI (two institutional accreditations and two programme accreditations) on sessions on October (day 1-2/3) and November (day 3/3) 2012.

ANNEX 6 – Feedback on SERs by the expert committee

Review Self-Evaluation Reports (SERs) Armenia Tertiary Level Institutes (TLI)

NVAO received SERs and summaries of SERs by the following institutions:

1   Armenian State Agrarian University (ASAU)
2   Yerevan State Linguistic University after Bryusov (YSLU)
3   Northern University
4   State Engineering University of Armenia (SEUA)
5   Yerevan Gladzor University
6   Yerevan State Conservatory after Komitas (YKSC)
7   Yerevan State Medical University (YSMU)
8   Yerevan State University (YSU)

These SERs have been reviewed by three experienced experts on institutional audits from the Netherlands and Flanders. In addition two NVAO policy advisors also reviewed the SERs.

External experts

1   Klaas van Veen, associate professor ICLON Leiden University;
2   Jenny Brakels, senior policy advisor Delft University of Technology;
3   Paul Garré, director quality and education at Hogeschool-Universteit Brussel.

NVAO

1   Irma Franssen, senior policy advisor;
2   Frank Wamelink, senior policy advisor.

The experts have been asked to study the SERs (each SER by one expert) and to come up with general observations and three weak and three strong points on each SER. The results have been discussed during one session. The feedback on the SER given below is a report of this discussion.

Questions

Two questions have been answered in the review:

1. Does the SER provide sufficient information at an appropriate level for a committee to start its assessment?

2. What are the strong and weak points of the individual self evaluation reports? Report in September.

Ad 1. General remarks on the quality of the SERs

The first question resulted in several general remarks.

The main points are:

-   Some SERs definitely need a revision on English
-   Lack of a self critical approach/attitude
-   Emphasis too much on vision, plans and future policy

- Affirmation of compliance is not substantiated by facts
- Formulate clear an realistic priorities
- Give more context on the institution and the process of writing of the SER

These points are elaborated below:

- The committee members want to emphasise that the SERs demonstrated a great willingness and drive to develop an appropriate internal quality assurance system.

- If it is the intention to include external experts, from abroad, these experts will need more information on the institution. There is however no need for extensive information on the institution. A factsheet and organisational chart will be sufficient.

- Provide the external experts also with clear definitions of the central concept in QA. Formulate clear and realistic priorities.

- Most of the SERs show that there is still lot of work to be done to implement the internal quality assurance system and to build acceptance and participation.

- The experts doubt if the time span for implementation of the quality assurance system will be sufficient.

- Development of a sustainable quality assurance system will take a considerable amount of time.

- A number of the SERs need revision on the English language. Argumentation is obscured by poor English, words and concepts seem to be inappropriately used, the intention of the author of the document is at moments very difficult to grasp.

- The most important data must be part of the text of the SERs.

- The emphasis is too much on vision and future plans. Factual information on the realisation is lacking. Peers will not be able to establish if the TLI complies with the standard.

- It might be helpful to start writing from what is in place.

- The argumentation should be concise and to the point. The SER should demonstrate efficiency and effectiveness of the internal quality assurance. This starts with clarity of the objectives and a self critical analysis of their achievement, based on a condensed presentation of the analysis of results.

- Some of the SWOTs show the appropriate self-critical attitude and are a good example of how to reflect on the criteria. In some cases the SWOT clarifies the text. Sometimes it could be helpful to start with the SWOT, since it provides the sort of information that a committee member will be looking for.

- The tone of the SERs could be more sober emphasising matter-of-fact information.

- Present: what is in place, what is still needed, what has to be done and when that will be achieved.

- Be clear about what is lacking in relation to the standards. Committee members will consider it as an indication of an inappropriate quality assurance system if weaknesses seem to be hidden or not addressed. A good internal quality assurance starts with a self-critical attitude.

- Avoid verbose rhetoric, it will give the committee members the impression that the actual facts are not addressed. This will jeopardise a positive assessment by the committee of experts. Quality cannot be demonstrated by policy documents only!

- A good SER will direct the committee members in their assessment. Be clear on what the TLI intends to achieve, what are the goals? Demonstrate that these goals are in line with expectations of external stakeholders, the national qualification framework and other relevant standards. Do not forget to be clear about the specific context and difficulties that might arise

from this context. Demonstrate that the institution is fit for purpose by the presentation of analysed and to the point results.

- Internal quality assurance systems, as presented in the SERs, seem to lack general support and participation of staff and students (and other stakeholders) within the institutions. This makes the internal quality assurance rather theoretical and technocratic. Quality culture also touches on shared values and concepts.

- In these situations the complexity of the instruments might hinder participation. Simple and straightforward principles and feedback mechanisms might help to increase the participation.

- The SER should be the result of an internal dialog on quality.

- Be realistic on what can be achieved within a certain period of time.

- Although most of the institutions established specific units dedicated to the internal quality assurance, the stage of development of internal feedback mechanisms differs widely. In some institutions the systematic and periodic evaluation of results is still lacking or meagre or just starting. These institutions will have serious problems to prove that the quality assurance is fully cyclical (PDCA).

- Units for quality assurance seem to be rather understaffed in some cases.

- Although it is important to define and describe working processes as a part of quality assurance, in some SERs the emphasis is too much on the presentation of a plethora of policy documents on all sorts of aspects. Any convincing arguments on a successful implementation are lacking.

- Pilots are not yet proof of a sustainable quality assurance system.

- Institutions do not demonstrate that they are in compliance with the appropriate level of the National Qualification Framework. Especially the requirements for the achievement of the master level (level 7) seemed to be not in place by several institutions.

- Some new concepts are avowed/affirmed: like student centred learning and intended learning outcomes, there is however very little indication that these concepts are assimilated in the design and development of the educational programmes and the delivery of teaching. Taking aboard of these concepts is important for the modernisation of education.

- There is little information on professional development and research and other academic activities of the teaching staff.

- If the concept of intended learning outcomes is adopted then there should also be a method to establish if they are achieved.

Additional remarks

- The reviewers found some of the standards not very clear. The assessment framework also results in redundant argumentation.

- Examples are: 1.3 which seems to be very similar to criterion 10: Internal Quality assurance. "Achievement" might be replaced by "appropriateness" (in relation to recent developments in the context of the institution). 10.6 could be reformulated to match the intention of the ESG better: Institutions should provide up to date, impartial and objective information of their programmes.

- It is unclear to what extend the institutions implemented the two cycles: bachelor and master system. ECTS are adopted, but institutions are not clear on how to position a master programme.

- In the text tin the SERs the perspective of the institution and the perspective of the programme mix.

ANNEX 7 – Programme Training ANQA staff (12SUB05 & 12SUB06)

Subproject 12SUB05

Training secretaries / coordinators ANQA on writing panel reports

LINE 1 – IQA / Line 3 – ANQA

On 13 September 2012, a condensed and intensive training session for ANQA secretaries on writing assessment reports will take place. The training will present tools for ANQA coordinators c.q. secretaries to write the panel report with reference to the Armenian procedures as outlined in the ANQA Accreditation Manual. The training will be used as input for the ANQA Handbook (12SUB07). In 2013, a similar workshop is planned for. ANQA staff will then be trained in guiding experts.

Date
13 September 2012, 9.00 until 17.00

Moderators
Irma Franssen & Frank Wamelink

Participants
15 ANQA coordinators and secretaries HEI

Location
ANQA

Preparations
- Reading assignment: Read chapter 5: Decision-making and reporting by the agency, from the 2nd Module [Conducting the process of external quality assurance](http://www.iiep.unesco.org/capacity-development/training/training-materials/external-quality-assurance.html) of the UNESCO Training materials: http://www.iiep.unesco.org/capacity-development/training/training-materials/external-quality-assurance.html (You might want to read the whole module).
- Writing assignment: prepare a text for the audit report on Criterion 10. Internal Quality Assurance (see separate description of the assignment and materials needed). Send in the text ten days prior to the workshop.
- One of the ANQA coordinators prepares the presentation of the (Concept) Template for the Institutional Quality Audit Reports (Contents, brief instruction on the content of each part). The (Concept) Template is circulated one week prior to the workshop among all participants. To be organized by ANQA
- Review of the concept Template and prepare contribution to discussion on the template.

Deliverables (tools)
- Capacity building (training ANQA coordinators)
- (tool)Template for ANQA HEI Quality Audit Report
- (tool) Criteria to assess the Audit Report itself
- (tool) Presentation on important aspects of Audit Reports.

Programme
9.00 - 9.10
Welcome and introduction to the purpose of this day

9.10 - 9.30
Explorative discussion: What makes a Good Audit report?

9.30- 10.30
Presentation by moderators: Reporting on Institutional Audits, introduction.
The presentation provides an overview of important aspects of reporting quality audits as presented in the (international) literature.

10.30-12.00
Assignment 1: group discussion
Develop a concise and complete list of Criteria to assess Audit reports
- Discussion in small groups
- Plenary discussion on results and
- Drawing conclusions

13.00- 13.30
Presentation: Introduction to the (Concept of the) ANQA Template for the Institutional Quality Audit Report. Presentation of the contents of the audit report, discussion of the purpose of each of the parts, substantiating conclusions, convincing argumentation, transparent reporting on procedures and method, etc.
To be prepared by ANQA coordinators

13.30-14.30
Discussion of the concept template.
Two ANQA Coordinators draw conclusions on modifications to be made to the template and next steps needed towards a final template.

14.45- 15.30
Assignment 2: discussion on the writing assignment
- Comments by participants
- Comments by moderators
- Relevant instructions

15.45 -16.45
Assignment 3: Group discussion on criteria to assess the Audit Report
- Small groups: discussing the lessons learned and the modifications needed to the Criteria for a Good Audit Report List.
- Plenary: making up the final list of criteria.

16.45 - 17.00
Final questions, evaluation and next steps needed.

ANNEX 8 – Brief Description of ANQA's Accreditation Workflow Process System (12SUB14)

Accreditation workflow process is presented into 11 phases:
- Receiving application from institutions
- Coordinator's appointment
- Receiving self-assessment report from institutions
- Expert selection and approval from institutions
- Signing a contract with experts
- Coordinator's individual domain
  - Desk review
  - Site visit
  - Expert report
- ANQA final report
- Organization of the accreditation committee meeting and voting

Accreditation workflow process system is based on SharePoint platform.

First 10 phases are "Accreditation main processes" and the 11th phase is "Decision-making process by Accreditation Committee (Directorate)" which is in the initial development process until the accreditation board charter is approved by the Board of Trustees.

Each phase is divided into steps in which the processes are described in details. Every phase has its name, goal, process owner, organizational involvement, process participants, outcomes and documents (templates). Each step has the following framework: formal definition of the goal, process metadata which has its' specification in another documentation, process owner/performer and his rights in this step (e.g. create, modify, delete, etc.). There are flow charts with preconditions and actions of the steps. The actions are developed as workflow tasks between participants of the process. The template located in the system are used for creating each task. The conditions include necessary exceptions. So this approach is used to describe each step of the workflow system. As to the metadata of the process, there is one more part of the system where all the metadata is specified according to SharePoint platform field requirements; registers and libraries where databases for the accreditation process must be collected (like Institutions Register, Programs Register, Accredited Institutions Register, Accredited Program Register, Incoming Documentation Register, Outgoing Documentation Register, etc.). This structure include the description, definition, example, required field, notes and source of the data.

The coordinator's and experts' cooperation during the process starts from "Coordinator's individual domain" phase. The system provides "Coordinator's individual domain" which is opened when the coordinator and experts cooperation starts. In the individual domain the coordinator and the experts of the process can add, share or exchange the documentation, send tasks to each other, use templates which are located in the domain. Thus, the domain provides collaboration between the experts and the coordinator. The domain follows the changes and keeps the information about transactions. The system automatically changes the state of the process after each phase ends. It is visible how the coordinator and the experts manage their own work only using the basic features (tools, templates etc.) of the domain.

To sum up, the collaboration system is flexible for coordination. So it is feasible to manage.

ANQA, Yana Gorchakova
 Yerevan, 28 September 2012