



Report on Line 4: Quality Culture

Yerevan/The Hague, 11 December 2012

Institutions should [...] commit themselves explicitly to the development of a culture which recognises the importance of quality, and quality assurance, in their work.

Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area – February 2005

ANQA¹ and NVAO² are engaged in a World Bank project for technical assistance as stipulated in a contract between CfEP PIU³ and NVAO (27 April 2011). This project goes under the name of ARQATA: Armenia Quality Assurance Technical Assistance. According to this contract, this report deals with the outcomes of Line 4 of the project. This line is completed early November 2012.

This report relates the outcomes of the fourth of the five lines of the project: overall development of an Armenian quality culture. In the contract this line has basically been defined in terms of two study tours to Europe for representatives of Armenian higher education. Detailed programmes for both visits are to be found in annex.

This report on Line 4 includes:

1. An executive summary;
2. An overview of the activities;
3. Key findings;
4. Recommendations;
5. Evaluation of activities in Line 4.
 - Annex Part I on Line 4;
 - Annex Part II on evaluation.

1 ANQA = National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation

2 NVAO = Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie

3 CfEP PIU = Center for Education Projects Project Implementation Unit

1 Executive Summary

Although there exists a broad consensus about the importance of quality culture there remains a lot of debate about the meaning and content of the concept of quality culture, and the way a quality culture can be realized. There is still much work to be done.

Dries Berings, Hogeschool-Universiteit Brussel – Brussels, September 2012

The international study tours – one to the Netherlands and Flanders, the other to Switzerland – aimed at the further development of quality culture in Armenian higher education. Representatives of ANQA, universities, the ministry of Education and students were part of two delegations of six spending a week in the European Higher Educational Area.

Various meetings, presentations, workshops etc. enabled the delegations to get acquainted with the Dutch, Flemish and Swiss higher educational systems, and their good practice in quality assurance and quality culture. The visits provided ample opportunities to familiarize oneself with different approaches to quality assurance both internal and external, both at institutional and programme level, both from the point of view of institutions and students and also government. As such line 4 on quality culture is clearly intertwined with all other lines of the ARQATA project on internal and external quality assurance.

Two full days were spent at the Dutch-Flemish agency NVAO in The Hague, and the Swiss agency OAQ in Bern. At the onset primarily interesting for the representatives of ANQA, the sessions with both agencies proved to be very instructive and useful for all. The meetings were very practically oriented offering the Armenian delegates tools of quality assurance to be adapted to their own needs. They were also offered an insight view in the process of accreditation and the internal quality assurance of the agencies.

Both delegations also met with two European experts on quality culture: Jacques Lanarès at the University of Lausanne and Dries Berings at the Hogeschool-Universiteit Brussels. They discussed the concept of quality culture, and presented ways to foster quality culture within universities.

Based on the outcomes of the surveys and the personal feedback, the study tours have certainly contributed to the further development of quality culture in Armenian higher education all be it on a small scale. Despite the limited number of participants (twelve in total) and the limited time available (twice one week), the scope of the activities was suitable to the varied needs. Both delegations found the study tours informative and productive. And also the Flemish, Dutch and Swiss colleagues characterized the meetings with their Armenian counterparts as highly interesting.

Further actions to adapt a true quality culture lies with the universities and its academic leaders. These actions can be wide-ranging from starting to work with staff motivated and interested in change, to improving the dialogue with students, to creating a common understanding of shared values, of expectations and commitment. And to quote J. Lanarès on how to develop a quality culture: “There are at least two ways of seeing this. In some cases, the institution will introduce quality assurance. This will imply new values which will have to be integrated in the organisational culture. In other ones, the creation of quality assurance will start from the existing quality culture. Once finalised, quality assurance will in turn influence and modify the quality culture [...]. This second option may be preferable, considering that some continuity will facilitate change.”⁴

More information including all relevant documents can be found on the project website: www.anqa.am/arqata

⁴ Lanarès, J., March 2008, “Developing a Quality Culture”, in *EUA Bologna Handbook*.

2 Activities

OAQ and VSS-UNES-USU together drafted a project in order to empower students to participate both in the internal and external process. Students participate in the self-evaluation process and are part of the external expert panel.

Clau Dermont, executive VSS-UNES-USU – October 2012

Line 4 of the project focuses on quality culture. The aims of this line as stipulated in the contract are:

- 1 To get a better understanding of different European HE-systems;
- 2 To see best practices in European quality assurance;
- 3 To get to know different approaches and systems of quality assurance;
- 4 To develop competencies to more effectively contribute to the development of Armenian quality assurance.

Activities in Line 4 include:

- a) Study tour to the Netherlands and Flanders in September 2012 (12SUB07);
- b) Study tour to Switzerland in October-November 2012 (12SUB08).

The wishes and needs for the visits have been discussed with ANQA at various occasions. The programme design of both visits including the choice of countries to be visited was agreed upon during the March visit to Yerevan (12REP03).

The detailed programmes and the evaluation of both visits are to be found in annex.

Subproject 12SUB07 – International visit Netherlands & Flanders, 17-21 September 2012⁵

The objective of this first study tour was to get familiar with the Dutch and Flemish system of quality assurance in higher education, and to draw lessons from the various meetings and workshops for further use in Armenia.

The delegation consisted of six people: two ANQA staff members (one junior and one senior policy advisor), two representatives of the ministry of Education, one HEI coordinator of quality assurance and one student. Particularly the student participation in this subproject has been discussed at various occasions. NVAO wanted to include students in the study tours but no funding was available within the ARQATA contract. PIU could not provide any financial support either. In the end, NVAO covered the costs for the Armenian student as participation of students in all QA activities is essential and no additional funds seemed to be available from the Armenian side.

The programme included meetings with representatives of all stakeholders involved in both formal (meetings, workshops etc.) and informal (lunch and dinner) settings. The delegation visited various places in the Netherlands (The Hague, Leiden, Utrecht, Leiderdorp) and Flanders/Belgium (Brussels), offering a wide range of educational and QA practice. A recurrent theme has been: first internal, then external quality assurance.

The workshops at the NVAO office provided a very effective practical oriented training offering tools and insights in NVAO's daily working processes. Topics covered in the meetings: learning outcomes, student involvement, quality enhancement, composition of panels, initial programme accreditation, institutional audits, independent peer review and decision making, and micro-efficiency check.

The visits of HEI all had a different focus such as the advanced training of educational competences of professors and the governance structure of a HEI. The University College in Brussels gave a much appreciated workshop on 'Quality Culture as a substantial element of quality assurance in higher education.' And the Brussels IQA system was considered an impressive example of how to make good use of IT facilities to collect statistical data. In Utrecht and Leiden the delegation had the

⁵ As included in the Interim Report (12REP05)

opportunity to talk with representatives of curriculum committees as representative bodies of which both lecturers and students are members. They also met with representatives of a board of examiners. The visit to the Dutch and Flemish government focused on their role in QA in higher education.

The delegation was offered several opportunities to discuss criteria of the NVAO framework, and to make critical analyses of (parts of) assessment reports. The cases presented allowed participants to contemplate on the findings of the panel and the conclusions following appraisal. Also tools such as checklists and templates for reports were looked at.

The possibility of shadowing has been investigated but to no avail. In the end, it was not possible to include a shadowing activity in the study tour. It would have been an interesting learning experience though for one or two participants to observe an assessment procedure (programme level) while in the Netherlands or Flanders. Procedures in English, however, are rather scarce.

In preparation of the visit, participants received a detailed programme including links to interesting websites. During the evaluation session on the last day of the visit, participants worked on individual and general assignments. Participants were also invited to present the QA key factors from the perspective of HEI, ANQA and students. This exercise combined with lessons learned resulted in an interesting summary of the visit.

Evaluation September visit:

- During the study tour, not all participants seemed equally interested in QA. Of some the general attitude and the insight in QA matters were somewhat disappointing. A more active involvement in the meetings – and less preoccupation with laptops and mobiles – is needed in order to grasp true meaning of quality culture as was the objective of the visit.
- All participants had a well enough understanding of English. If need be, colleagues provided the translation.
- On the positive side of student involvement: a student did participate in the study tour. On the less positive side: the student's profile did not really meet the criteria. A student from one of the eight HEIs in Line 1 or the two HEI in Line 2 would have been preferable.
- Logistics in Yerevan (tickets, visa etc.) proved to be challenging.
- The possibility of shadowing has been investigated but to no avail. In the end, it was not possible to include a shadowing activity in the study tour. It would have been an interesting learning experience though for one or two participants to observe an assessment procedure (programme level) while in the Netherlands or Flanders. Procedures in English, however, are rather scarce.
- A detailed survey amongst the six participants shows a positive appreciation both of the content and the organisation. The programme was found interesting, if slightly overfull, and only a few sessions scored 3 on a scale of 5. Some of these sessions were considered less relevant to the Armenian context (initial accreditation and macro-efficiency check). Each of the sessions focuses on different topics, albeit with some overlap. Negative comments referred to the 'hard' programme, the assignments and the lack of free time, even in the evenings.

Subproject 12SUB08 – International visit Switzerland, 29 October – 2 November 2012

The objective of this second study tour was to get familiar with the Swiss system of quality assurance in higher education, and to draw lessons from the various meetings and workshops for further use in Armenia.

The delegation consisted of six people: two ANQA management (director and deputy director), one HEI vice rector (YSU), one HEI senior specialist of quality assurance (YSMU), one panel chair (SEUA) and one student (YSU). Drawn from the experience with the previous visit, the participants have been carefully selected making sure that they are all actively engaged in quality assurance within the HEIs involved in the ARQATA project. This particularly applied to the student member. It was also agreed that a representative of the State Engineering University of Armenia (SEUA) was to be included in the delegation besides representatives of both HEIs continuing in Line 2: Yerevan State University (YSU) and Yerevan State Medical University (YSMU). No representatives of the ministry participated.

As for the programme, ANQA management put forward specific requests: emphasis on the governance of the quality assurance rather than implementation at university level; the actual functioning of accreditation committees; the internal quality assurance of the quality agency; the process of organizing reviews; the relationship between government and agency, accreditation committee and universities. In short, the policy making level and the governance of quality assurance were to be the focus of the visit. At the same time, some of the elements of the first study tour were integrated, such as meetings with the students, professional unions and the like.

The actual programme included meetings with representatives of all stakeholders involved in both formal (meetings, presentations etc.) and informal (lunch and dinner) settings. The delegation visited various places in Switzerland (Bern, Lausanne and Zurich), offering a wide range of educational and QA practice. A recurrent theme has been: institutional audits vs. programme assessment.

The first day in Bern, was spent on getting acquainted with the Swiss university system and the Swiss quality assurance system including examples and experiences as presented by the State Secretariat for Education and Research (SER), the Rector's Conference of the Swiss Universities (CRUS) and the Swiss University Conference (CUS).

The second day of the visit at the office of the Swiss Center of Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education (OAQ) provided a very instructive overview of the agency's tasks and goals, and the various activities and procedures. Some QA instruments were presented and the added value of international activities to QA was elaborated on. Also the organization of the on-site visits and the tasks of the expert panels were explained. At the end, the pros and cons of the Swiss system were discussed.

The last meeting in Bern was with the student union (VSS-UNES-USU) before travelling to Lausanne for the first meeting with a Swiss university. A rather interesting approach was the notion of students as quality experts. Students participate in the self-evaluation process and are part of the external expert panel. As such, Swiss students participate both in the internal and external process of quality assurance.

During the study tour, three Swiss HEIs presented their QA system: University of Lausanne (UNIL), Federal Polytechnic Lausanne (EPFL) and the University of Zürich (UZH).

At the University of Lausanne the delegation was invited to reflect on the double paradox of quality: (1) quality is supposed to be looked for but it is not really desired; (2) and quality mechanisms exist but they do not always increase the quality. Other issues raised: quality assurance as a pure bureaucratic exercise? With norms that kill creativity? And the answer is: quality assurance as an opportunity of reflection and change.

Jacques Lanarès and his team offered an insight in the evaluation of faculties and central units as part of the implementation of the quality assurance system. Topics covered were for example responsibilities, terms of reference, reflection, SWOT analysis, development of strategy. Also the evaluation at programme level was discussed in more detail. The in-depth and systematic analysis of a programme aims at stepping back from day to day activity, taking stock of the situation, reflecting on learning outcomes and the positioning of the programme (locally, nationally and internationally), identifying strengths and weaknesses, and setting out new priorities.

The Federal Polytechnic Lausanne introduced the concept of a 'smoke detector' as an early warning system in its internal quality assurance system. Wanting to improve quality of teaching the university offers personalized, voluntary services for teachers and reports confidentially to teachers. They also organize individual feedback meetings on evaluations, and arrange coaching and training.

After a more general introduction to the University of Zurich, its accreditation process and tools of quality management were presented. Next the Evaluation Office reflected on the dependencies of independent evaluations. A final session dealt with quality assurance in teaching and curriculum development.

Also in Zurich the delegation was met by Rolf Heusser, chairman of ECA, the European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education. In more than one way R. Heusser has been and still is involved in quality assurance activities in Armenia.

In preparation of the visit, participants received a detailed programme including links to interesting websites. At least one Swiss university suggested reading the abstracts of the HEI's quality processes, to be found on the website.

Evaluation Swiss visit:

- Following the evaluation of the first visit a slightly less demanding programme was offered allowing participants more spare time. Even so, participants still felt the programme was quite full.
- Participants were all representatives of HEIs directly involved in the ARQATA project. This common basis resulted in a good understanding of the objectives of the study tour: "We came to learn about quality culture, not the mechanism" (R. Topchyan). Even so HEI representatives missed the opportunity of meeting with their peers in the respective disciplines.
- It must be clear that Swiss HEIs consider themselves as 'elite' institutions of higher education not only in Switzerland but also internationally. Swiss HEIs invest largely in education and in financial terms they are by no means comparable to Armenian HEIs. Swiss quality management and the tools used are state-of-the-art made possible by vast investments.
- The survey shows a very positive outcome. Especially the day spent at the OAQ office in Bern proved to be a success.

3 Evaluation of Line 4

A very productive and pleasant study tour. The Armenian team came back full of new impressions. – It would have been appreciated having a little bit more free time in the evenings. – Very hard programme with a lot of news in a very short period of time, and limited free time.

Survey visit to the Netherland and Flanders – September 2012

To the regret of all concerned, the implementation of the project was delayed twice: at the start of the project due to controversies about the implementation plan; after the re-launch of the project due to the option of an extra institutional audit. The second delay resulted in the first study tour scheduled for June to be postponed to September 2012.

As mentioned before, both visits have been organised in good rapport with and in close collaboration with all stakeholders both in Europe and Armenia: universities, students, government and quality assurance agencies. The visits also had a positive effect on the team building not only within HEIs and ANQA, but also between HEIs and ANQA. Furthermore, the visits were beneficial to understanding and highlighting the roles of different stakeholder groups.

It is essential though that all stakeholders continue encouraging a quality culture making full use of lessons learned through ARQATA in general and the study tours in particular. Products and tools presented and discussed on various occasions must be made fit for purpose. This can only be done by investing largely in terms of time (and money). If not, the impact of ARQATA will fade away. Based on the results of the surveys of the visits and the individual feedback, participants are positive about the organisation and the meetings. Negative comments mainly relate to the lack of free time, even during the Swiss visit.

Further actions to adapt a true quality culture lies with the universities and its academic leaders. These actions can be wide-ranging from starting to work with staff motivated and interested in change, to improving the dialogue with students, to creating a common understanding of shared values, of expectations and commitment.

As mentioned in the Interim Report (12REP05), creating a quality culture involving all relevant stakeholders needs time. And yes, building a quality culture is an on-going process. Developing a quality culture involves developing a positive attitude and a genuine interest in quality and quality assurance. Individual stakeholders are expected to join in actively and to contribute to an open dialogue. Indeed, quality culture is so much more than following quality assurance procedures.

ANNEXES

PART I **(project)**

ANNEX I.1 Activities⁶

VISIT	ACTIVITY	DATE
1	Introduction	June 2011
2	Re-launch project	2-4 February 2012
3	Seminar on IQA Training HEI on IQA (day 1/3)	29 February – 3 March 2012
4	Workshop ANQA on Professionalization (days 1-2/3) Workshop ANQA on Handbook QA (day 1/2) Training HEI on IQA (day 2/3)	21-23 March 2012
5	Training ANQA staff Training HEI on IQA (day 3/3)	11-13 September 2012
	Study tour (Netherlands & Flanders)	17 – 21 September 2012
6	National Conference on IQA Training HEI in IQA Implementation Training HEI and ANQA on EQA (day 1-2/3) Train the Trainer (E-train Project)	8-12 October 2012
	Study tour (Switzerland)	29 October – 2 November 2012
7	Training HEI and ANQA on EQA (day 3/3) Workshop ANQA on external review	18-20 December 2012
8	Pilots 4 HEI (2 institutional audits & 2 programme assessments) Final preparation ANQA for external review Review Information System	9 - 22 June 2013
9	Roundtable Conference on EQA	June 2013
10	Proof ENQA review	September 2013
11	National Conference on QA	December 2013

⁶ As justified in Amendment 4 (draft November 2012).

ANNEX I.2 Time & Activity Line

Separate attachment (dated 11 December 2012).

ANNEX I.3 Overview of Activities⁷

Meeting 11COM01

Visit NVAO, June 2011

Meeting 12COM01

Visit NVAO, 1-5 February 2012

Meeting 12COM02

Visit NVAO, 29 February – 3 March 2012

Meeting 12COM03

Visit NVAO, 22 & 23 March 2012

Meeting 12COM04

Visit NVAO, June/July > 11 September 2012

Meeting 12COM05

Visit NVAO, 8-12 October 2012

Meeting 12COM06

Visit NVAO, Nov/Dec > 18-21 Dec 2012

Report 11REP01

Inception Report, 28 July 2011

Report 12REP01

Implementation Plan, March 2012 (draft)

Report 12REP02

Implementation Plan, March 2012

Report 12REP03

Report on visit, April 2012

Report 12REP04

Report on visit, July > September 2012

Report 12REP05

Interim Report, July > September 2012 (draft)

Report 12REP05

Interim Report, July > October 2012

Report 12REP06

Report on visit, October 2012

Report 12REP07

Report on Line 1: IQA, October 2012

Report 12REP07

Presentation Report on Line 1: IQA, December 2012

Report 12REP08

Report on Line 4: international visits, December 2012

Report 13REP01

Report on visit, January 2013

Amendment 12AME02

Amendment 2, 10 January 2012

Amendment 12AME03

Amendment 3, April > June 2012

Amendment 12AME04

Amendment 4, December 2012

⁷ Activities directly related to Line 4 are highlighted.

Subproject 12SUB01

Website

Subproject 12SUB02

Seminar stakeholders and ANQA on IQA, 1 & 2 March 2012

Subproject 12SUB03

Training HEI on IQA, 3 March 2012 (day 1/3)

Subproject 12SUB03

Training HEI on IQA, 22 March 2012 (day 2/3)

Subproject 12SUB03

Training HEI on IQA, June/July > 11 – 13 September 2012 (day 3/3)

Subproject 12SUB04

Workshop HEI on Handbook QA, 23 March 2012

Subproject 12SUB05

Training ANQA staff, 22 & 23 March 2012

Subproject 12SUB05

Training ANQA staff, June/July > 11 – 13 September 2012

Subproject 12SUB05

Training ANQA staff, 8-12 October 2012

Subproject 12SUB06

Handbooks & Training Material

Subproject 12SUB07

International visit, June > 17 – 21 September 2012

Subproject 12SUB08

International visit, 29 October – 2 November 2012

Subproject 12SUB09

National Stakeholders' Conference, 8 & 9 October 2012

Subproject 12SUB10

Training HEI on IQA Implementation, 10 & 11 October 2012 (2 days)

Subproject 12SUB11

Training HEI and ANQA on EQA, 11 & 12 October 2012 (days 1-2/3)

Subproject 12SUB11

Training HEI and ANQA on EQA, Nov/Dec > 18-21 Dec 2012 (day 3/3)

Subproject 12SUB12

E-train: Train the Trainer, 11 & 12 October 2012 (2 days)

Subproject 12SUB13

Training ANQA staff on external review, Nov/Dec > 18-21 Dec 2012

Subproject 12SUB14

Review information system ANQA

Subproject 12SUB15

Pilots in HEIs on writing SER

Subproject 13SUB01

Pilot institutional audit YSU

Subproject 13SUB02

Pilot institutional audit YSMU

Subproject 13SUB03

Pilot programme assessment YSU

Subproject 13SUB04

Pilot programme assessment YSMU

**ANNEX I.4 Programme Study Tour in the Netherlands and Flanders (12SUB07)
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 1.5 Programme Study Tour in Switzerland (12SUB08)
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
- Lunch with stakeholders (UNIL)
- 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 / Dinner with Rolf Heusser, chairman of ECA

Friday 2 November: Zurich

- S8 – Visit HEI 3: University of Zürich
- Lunch with stakeholders (UZH)
- Travel home

ANNEX I.6 Overview of Participants per Delegation

Visit to the Netherlands and Flanders – September 2012

- 1 MoES, Ministry of Education and Science
Mher Ghazaryan, head of staff
- 2 MoES, Ministry of Education and Science
Hasmik Ghazaryan, director Center for Education Projects (PIU)
- 3 YSU, Yerevan State University
Armen Budaghyan, associate vice-rector for university development and educational reforms
- 4 ANQA, National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation
Anna Karapetyan, coordinator
- 5 ANQA, National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation
Anushavan Makaryan, programme manager
- 6 SAPA, State Public Administration Academy, student representative
Hayk Mamijanyan, student Master in Political Management and Analysis

Visit to Switzerland – October-November 2012

- 1 ANQA, National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation
Ruben Topchyan, director
- 2 ANQA, National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance Foundation
Susanna Karakhanyan, deputy director
- 3 YSU, Yerevan State University
Aleksandr Grigoryan, vice rector of educational affairs
- 4 YSMU, Yerevan State Medical University
Armen Mkrtychyan, assistant professor and senior specialist quality assessment and assurance
- 5 SEUA, State Engineering University of Armenia
Eduard Hakobyan, head Electrical Engineering and Electric Drive (and panel chair)
- 6 YSU, Yerevan State University, student representative
Laura Simonyan, student Bachelor in Romance-Germanic Philology

ANNEX I.7 Overview of International Organizations

Quite a number of quality assurance agencies, universities, student bodies, governmental and other organizations in the Netherlands, Flanders and Switzerland have been involved in Line 4. Their input and efforts in preparing the study tours were much appreciated.

1 Quality Assurance Agencies

NVAO

Organisation Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders
Location The Hague, Netherlands
Website www.nvao.com/
Contact Michèle Wera, senior policy advisor and ARQATA project manager
E-mail m.wera@nvao.net

OAQ

Organisation Swiss Center of Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education
Location Bern, Switzerland
Website www.oaq.ch
Contact Laura Beccari, international affairs
E-mail info@oaq.ch

QANU

Organisation Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities
Location Utrecht, Netherlands
Website www.qanu.nl/en
Contact Barbara van Balen, project manager
E-mail vanBalen@qanu.nl

VLIR

Organisation Flemish Interuniversity Council & Quality Assurance Agency
Location Brussels, Belgium/Flanders
Website www.vlir.be/content1.aspx?url=english
Contact Patrick Van den Bosch, quality assurance unit
E-mail patrick.van.den.bosch@vlir.be

VLHORA

Organisation Flemish University Colleges Council & Quality Assurance Agency
Location Brussels, Belgium/Flanders
Website www.vlaamsehogescholeerraad.be/be-en/index.html;
Contact Daphne Carolus, quality assurance unit
E-mail daphne.carolus@vluhr.be

2 Universities

CRUS

Organisation Rector's Conference of the Swiss Universities
Location Bern, Switzerland
Website www.bolognareform.ch
Contact Sabine Felder, head Teaching Coordinating Unit
E-mail sabine.felder@crus.ch

CUS

Organisation Swiss University Conference
Location Bern, Switzerland
Website www.cus.ch/wEnglisch/index.php

Contact Martina Weiss, secretary general
E-mail martina.weiss@cus.ch

VSNU

Organisation Association of Universities in the Netherlands
Location The Hague, Netherlands
Website www.vsnu.nl/Home-english.htm
Contact René Haverslag, policy advisor
E-mail haverslag@vsnu.nl

HBO-raad

Organisation Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences
Location The Hague, Netherlands
Website www.hbo-raad.nl/english
Contact Boudewijn Grievink, policy advisor
E-mail grievink@hbo-raad.nl

EPFL

HEI Federal Polytechnic Lausanne
Location Lausanne, Switzerland
Website www.epfl.ch/index.en.html
Contact Michel Jaccard, head quality assurance, accreditation and evaluation
E-mail michel.jaccard@epfl.ch

HUB

HEI University College Brussels
Location Brussels, Belgium/Flanders
Website www.hubrussel.be/HUB_english
Contact Paul Garré, director quality and education
E-mail paul.garre@hubrussel.be

LOI

HEI Institution for Distance Education
Location Leiderdorp, Netherlands
Website www.loi.nl
Contact Michiel Jansen, coordinator quality assurance
E-mail mjansen@loi.nl

UL

HEI Leiden University
Location Leiden, Netherlands
Website www.leiden.edu
Contact Marijke Visch, policy advisor
E-mail M.Visch@BB.LeidenUniv.nl

UNIL

HEI University of Lausanne
Location Lausanne, Switzerland
Website www.unil.ch/central/page2192_en.html
Contact Jacques Lanarès, vice rector
E-mail jacques.lanares@unil.ch

UU

HEI Utrecht University
Location Utrecht, Netherlands
Website <http://www.uu.nl/en/pages/default.aspx>
Contact Marie-Jet Fennema, policy advisor
E-mail m.j.c.fennema@uu.nl

UzH

HEI University of Zürich
Location Zürich, Switzerland
Website www.uzh.ch
Contact Anita Klöti, scientific staff member general secretariat
E-mail anita.kloeti@gs.uzh.ch

3 Students

LSVb

Organisation Dutch National Union of Students
Location Utrecht, Netherlands
Website www.lsvb.nl
Contact Simone de Bruijn, international affairs
E-mail simone@lsvb.nl

VVS

Organisation Flemish Student Association
Location Brussels, Belgium/Flanders
Website <http://www.vvs.ac>
Contact Annelies Raveyds, educational and international affairs
E-mail info@vvs.ac, annelies.raveyds@vvs.ac

VSS-UNES-USU

Organisation Swiss Student Union
Location Bern, Switzerland
Website www.vss-unes.ch
Contact Annina Grob, general secretary
E-mail info@vss-unes.ch

4 Government

OCW

Organisation Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (Netherlands)
Location The Hague, Netherlands
Website <http://www.government.nl/ministries/ocw>
Contact Sarah Morassi, policy officer higher education, quality assurance and accreditation
E-mail s.morassi@minocw.nl

Dep. Ond.

Organisation Department of Education, Flanders
Location Brussels, Belgium/Flanders
Website <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/English/>
Contact Nina Mares, deputy director, higher education
E-mail nina.mares@ond.vlaanderen.be

SER

Organisation State Secretariat for Education and Research
Location Bern, Switzerland
Website www.sbf.admin.ch
Contact Isabella Brunelli Adhikari, deputy head
E-mail Isabella.Brunelli@sbf.admin.ch

ANNEXES

PART II (Evaluation)

21 September 2012

During the evaluation meeting on Friday 21 September 2012, the delegation was invited to reflect on lessons learned and lessons found less useful for Armenia higher education. They also listed the key factors for quality assurance from the point of view of HEIs, the student and ANQA. Both tasks resulted in a short review of topics dealt with in the course of the one-week visit to the Netherlands and Flanders.

1 LESSONS LEARNED

Most relevant lessons learned during the study visit

- 1 The importance of bringing **QA criteria and standards** in line with the actual state of affairs of the HEI. (HEI)
- 2 The development of a **quality culture**. (ministry).
- 3 The active use of **learning outcomes** on programme level. It is important for the Higher Education in Armenia to elaborate and implement learning outcomes in the curricula. (ministry)
- 4 The possibilities and necessity of a **curriculum committee** and a **board of examiners**. (student)
- 5 The development of tools for assessing **experts**. (ANQA)
- 6 The way Flanders recruits **students** for panels. (student)
- 7 To reconsider the procedures for licensing of **new programmes** and possibly integrate these in the QA system (ministry) .

Less useful topics

- 1 **Compulsory programme accreditation** – There are far too many programmes to undergo a compulsory assessment procedure. It would be difficult if not impossible to organize for ANQA, also because the limited number of Armenian experts and the issue of independency. (HEI).
- 2 **Initial accreditation** – Armenia has no quality check of new programmes other than desk research making use of a check list. (ministry)
- 3 **Distance learning** – Armenia has no HEI for distance learning. However, a number of programmes have some aspects of distance learning in their curriculum. (ministry)
- 4 **Organizational structure of HEI** – It has become apparent that HEI in Armenia and Flanders/Netherlands are organized in a different way. Especially professors and students seem to hold different positions. The same holds for management. In Flanders/Netherlands, they work closely together, also on QA issues. This is not yet the case in Armenian HEI. In general, the organizational structure of Armenian HEI is not comparable to the European situation. (student)

2 QA KEY FACTORS

Quality assurance key factors as defined by participants are as follows:

1 QA key factors as defined by HEI

A - Internal quality assurance

- 1) Existence of IQA systems in HEIs
- 2) Quality culture at HEIs

B – External quality assurance

- 3) Training of experts (peer review)
- 4) Good criteria & standards
- 5) Consistent QA procedures

2 QA key factors as defined by student

- 1) QA culture ↔ trust (trust to be earned in due course)
- 2) QA at programme level
- 3) Ownership of QA
- 4) Student oriented education i.e. programmes
- 5) Realisation of self governance

added value

→ IMPACT of student involvement in QA

3 QA key factors as defined by ANQA

- 1) QA cycle PDCA is applied
- ↓
- 2) Mechanisms of gathering the necessary data (related to 1)
- 3) Guarantee of independent experts
- 4) Active involvement of stakeholders

ANNEX II.2 Questionnaire International Visits (12SUB07/08)

	MEAN ⁸
General	
1. The information about the international visit	4.9
2. The material provided before and during the international visit	4.7
3. The workshops and presentations in meeting your expectations	4.7
4. Topics relevant for further use	4.7
5. Choice of speakers	4.9
6. Dinners with stakeholders	5
7. Hotel accommodation	4.6
8. Transport	4.5
9. Guidance and availability NVAO staff	4.9
10. Amount of free time	3.3
11. Overall organisation of the visit	5
OVERALL	4.4

⁸ On a scale of 5.

ANNEX II.3 Questionnaire Visit Netherlands and Flanders (12SUB07)

September 2012

	MEAN⁹
General	
1. The information about the international visit	5
2. The material provided before and during the international visit	4.5
3. The venue and facilities	4.3
4. The workshops and presentations in meeting your expectations	4.5
5. Topics relevant for further use	4.3
6. Choice of speakers	4.8
7. General and individual assignments	4.2
8. Dinners with stakeholders	5
9. Hotel accommodation The Hague & Brussels	4.5
10. Transport (train and taxi)	4.2
11. Guidance and availability NVAO staff	4.7
12. Amount of free time	2.8
13. Overall organisation of the visit	5
OVERALL	4.4

⁹ On a scale of 5.

	MEAN
DAY 1 – Monday 17 September 2012: Presentations and workshops at the NVAO office, The Hague	
1. General introduction to NVAO and visits and assignments	5
2. Workshop Institutional Audit	4.3
3. Lunch with NVAO board	4.8
4. Workshop learning outcomes	5
5. Presentation of selection, training and role of student panel members	4.2
6. Workshop panel compositions	4.7
7. Meeting/dinner with stakeholders: The Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences HBO-raad) and the Association of Universities in The Netherlands (VSNU)	4.8
OVERALL	4.7

	MEAN
DAY 2 – Tuesday 18 September 2012: Visit Utrecht	
1. Visit HEI 1: Utrecht University	5
2. Lunch and visit Assessment Agency: Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities (QUANU)	4.3
3. Meeting/dinner with stakeholders: students of the Dutch National Union of Students (LSVb)	4.8
OVERALL	4.7

	MEAN
DAY 3 – Wednesday 19 September 2012: Visit Leiden and Brussels	
1. Visit HEI 2: Leiden University	4.8
2. Meeting/dinner with stakeholders: Ministry of Education (Flanders)	4.3
OVERALL	4.6

	MEAN
DAY 4 – Thursday 20 September 2012	
1. Visit HEI 3: University College/University of Brussels	5
2. Lunch and visit Flemish Council of Universities and University Colleges (VLUHR)	4.5
3. Visit Flemish Ministry of Education	3.8
4. Meeting/dinner with stakeholders: students of the Flemish Student Association (VVS)	4.5
OVERALL	4.5

	MEAN
DAY 5 – Friday 21 September 2012	
1. Visit HEI 4: Institution for Distance Education (LOI). Leiderdorp	4.8
2. Visit Dutch Ministry of Education (OCW)	4.7
3. Workshop on Initial Accreditation	4.5
4. Visit Commission on Efficiency in Higher Education (CDHO)	4.5
OVERALL	4.6

ANNEX II.4 Questionnaire Swiss Visit (12SUB08)**November 2012**

	MEAN¹⁰
General	
1. The information about the international visit	4.8
2. The material provided before and during the international visit	4.8
3. The workshops and presentations in meeting your expectations	4.8
4. Topics relevant for further use	5
5. Choice of speakers	5
6. Dinners with stakeholders	5
7. Hotel accommodation	4.7
8. Transport (train, taxi, metro etc.)	4.8
9. Guidance and availability NVAO staff	5
10. Amount of free time	3.8
11. Overall organisation of the visit	5
OVERALL	4.8

¹⁰ On a scale of 5.

	MEAN
DAY 1– Monday 29 October 2012: Bern	
1 State Secretariat for Education and Research (SER)	4.5
2 Rector's Conference of Swiss Universities (CRUS) & Swiss University Conference (CUS)	3.5
3 Meeting / Dinner with stakeholders	4.8
OVERALL	4.3

	MEAN
DAY 2 – Tuesday 30 October 2012: Bern	
1 Swiss Center of Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education (OAQ)	5
OVERALL	5

	MEAN
DAY 3 – Wednesday 31 October 2012: Bern & Lausanne	
1 Students Union (VSS-UNES-USU)	4.3
2 Visit HEI 1: University of Lausanne	4.8
OVERALL	4.6

	MEAN
DAY 4 – Thursday 1 November 2012: Lausanne & Zürich	
1 Visit HEI 2: Federal Polytechnic Lausanne	4.5
2 Meeting / Dinner with R. Heusser, chairman European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA)	5
OVERALL	4.8

	MEAN
DAY 5 – Friday 2 November 2012: Zurich	
1 Visit HEI 3: University of Zürich	5
2 Farewell lunch	4.7
OVERALL	4.9