Second Interim Report on ARQATA: Stage 2

Yerevan/The Hague, 26 April 2013

ANQA[1] and NVAO[2] are engaged in a World Bank project for technical assistance as stipulated in a contract between CfEP PIU[3] and NVAO (27 April 2011). This project goes under the name of ARQATA: Armenia quality assurance technical assistance. According to this contract, the second interim report deals with the progress made in stage 2 of the project. This second stage is completed end March 2013.

The second interim report relates all activities and outcomes since the previous report, and covers the period October 2012 until March 2013. All relevant documents are to be found in annex. The report also gives an insight into plans for stage 3 as these are presently being developed.

This second interim report includes:
1. An executive summary;
2. An overview of the activities including the results and an evaluation;
3. Key findings;
4. Recommendations;
5. Evaluation of stage 2;
6. Planning stage 3
   − Annex Part I on the project;
   − Annex Part II on the results.

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[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

Changing circumstances make it difficult to plan ahead, and call for an agile approach to planning and managing the ARQATA project. Early 2012 the project itself changed – from policy development towards implementation – resulting in an adaptive team, plans and methods. One year later, a lot of progress has been made but further changes were necessary. The major change concerned the postponement of the pilots on external quality assurance at the explicit request of the universities involved. HEI[4]s need more time to prepare for the self-evaluation reports, and the site visits for the institutional audit and the programme assessment. Obviously, HEIs have underestimated the work involved.

The second stage of the ARQATA project set in with Q-week in October 2012. The outcomes of stage 1 were presented and discussed at the national stakeholders' conference, and stage 2 continues the training sessions with HEIs and ANQA. In stage 1, eight HEIs were involved; in stage 2 two HEIs are offered guidance and assistance in preparing and undergoing the pilots for institutional audit and programme assessment in June 2013 and not in March as originally planned. The focus of the training shifted from internal towards external quality assurance although at all times the interrelation between both is being emphasized.

As to the further professionalization of ANQA, the training on internal quality assurance has been continued keeping in mind that at one point ANQA will also need to prepare for the proof external review scheduled for September 2013. Also ANQA's further training of experts have been given due attention.

Also in the second stage of the project the international visit to Switzerland took place. The aim of this Swiss visit in October-November 2012 was to contribute to the further development of an Armenian quality culture in higher education.

Stage 2 ended mid-March 2013 with the last round of feedback on the draft SERs. Two HEIs have been writing and rewriting two SERs on institutional and programme level. Both YSU and YSMU have put a lot of effort and time in finishing their reports in time make good use of three rounds of feedback.

It is unavoidable that there will be overlap between this second interim report and previous reports on the various activities within the project because all five lines are intertwined. Many topics have indeed been the subject of previous reports.

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[4] TLI or the more commonly used HEI (Higher Education Institution)

2 Project

Reports
In addition to the reports on Q-week in October 2012 and the December visit to Yerevan, in the past period of time two more reports were delivered. Both these document report on the outcomes of two of the five lines of the project: internal quality assurance (IQA) in Armenian higher education institutions (Line 1) and overall development of an Armenian quality culture through international visits (Line 4).

In the report on Line 1 all HEI related IQA issues have been brought together, and a first draft of a QA Toolkit is being presented. The (draft) report has been presented to and discussed with ANQA and all 8 HEIs involved in this line. See also Annex I.11.

The report on Line 4 includes the programmes, outcomes and evaluation of both international visits. The document has been discussed with ANQA during the most recent visit in December 2012.

Amendment
Amendment 4 to the contract deals with changes in the NVAO team and an adjustment of the planning of activities. Amendment 4 has been approved by all parties on 20 February 2013.

Adjustments regarding the planning of activities
A number of activities need to be rescheduled and/or reorganized:
(a) HEIs are not ready for the activity planned in March 2013;
(b) One activity rescheduled (pilots) causes rescheduling and/or reorganising the next activities as they are interrelated.

Ad a
The new time line is as follows:
− 1 April 2013: deadline self-evaluation reports in Armenian
− 1 May 2013: deadline self-evaluation reports in English (*instead of 1 February 2013*)
− 10-21 June 2013: site visits (*instead of March 2013*)

Ad b
The roundtable conference on EQA planned in May 2013 has been postponed until after the pilots and after the four panel reports are available. These reports will be written in Armenian and at a later stage translated into English. An estimate is that the reports can be finalized by September-October 2013. Given this uncertainty in time, the roundtable conference on EQA is difficult to plan ahead. Be that as is it may, October-November 2013 would be the earliest possibility. The National Stakeholders' Conference is scheduled for December 2013.

A more efficient approach would be to make full use of the presence of the entire panel by giving feedback immediately after the pilots (in June 2013), and to use the National Stakeholders' Conference in December 2013 as a platform to present and discuss not only the outcomes of the external proof review of ANQA (Line 3) but also of the pilots in Yerevan State University (YSU) and Yerevan State Medical University (YSMU) (Line 2).

Also, in total 14 international experts are involved in the project: 2 Groningen, 2 Delft, 1 Leiden, 1 Brussels, 1 United Kingdom, 3 NVAO chairs (Leiden, Brussels and Maastricht) for pilots HEIs, and 4 ENQA panel members (Graz, Vienna, Bern, Oslo) for the proof external review ANQA. Their involvement in numerous subprojects and at various occasions stretches the ARQATA budget to the limit, and called for a critical appraisal of activities planned for and not absolutely necessary.

Adjustments in the composition of the NVAO team
The team member responsible for Line 4 left the NVAO office, and has been replaced by the project coordinator. (Annex I.3)

Time line
An updated time line is attached. (Annex I.2)

3 Activities

12SUB01 – Project Website
For the website see: www.anqa.am/arqata, and Annex II.1.

The website includes information on the project, documents, partners and participants, and news items such as events. The responsible ANQA staff member has been replaced due to a change in staff.

Evaluation:
− The website gives a good overview on the developments of the last months. ANQA is encouraged to continue its efforts.

12SUB09 – National Stakeholders' Conference (8 & 9 October 2012)
The programme and outcomes of both days are included in the report '*Q-week'.* (see also Annex I.5)

Some 250 stakeholders participated at the two-day event on internal quality assurance. The conference dealt with a variety of aspects of quality assurance put into practice mainly at institutional level. All relevant stakeholders contributed to the event, and often in more than one session: HEI, ANQA, students, experts, and employers. Topics covered include the impact of quality assurance on Armenian higher education and the challenges to be met, the present state of affairs in quality assurance both from the viewpoint of ANQA and HEIs, panel experts' reflections on the process of auditing and assessing, the mechanism of internal quality assurance, and the roles of both students and employers in quality assurance. Also a number of international experts presented their views on internal and external quality assurance, and gave input to the discussion.

On day 2 of the conference, stakeholders having participated in stage 1 of the ARQATA project on internal quality assurance shared their views and experiences with the other stakeholders. The conference was concluded with round table discussions. International experts and HEI representatives reflected on quality assurance issues in four parallel sessions: management, faculty, students and quality assurance coordinators/units. These round table discussions proved a success with 50 to 70 participants per session.

Evaluation:
− After more than five years of designing and developing a quality assurance system incorporating and adjusting European models, Armenian higher education is ready to move beyond this pioneering stage and to take matters into its own hands.
− During Q-week four major concerns have become apparent:

1. Higher education in Armenia is putting a lot of effort in preparing itself for the European Higher Education Area. But as already referred to in the ARQATA interim report (September 2012): the **ambitions and expectations** are high if not unrealistic within the foreseen time frame. It is therefore essential to prioritize in consultation with the politicians and the rector's conference. Too many, too far-reaching goals might lead to disappointments which can easily be avoided by setting attainable targets. Although this is not on the present list of priorities, it might be worthwhile to consider the evaluations of the programmes, for instance in the sciences. These assessments require less effort and have immediate results in terms of quality enhancement at programme level. It would also allow HEIs to demonstrate the quality of their educational programmes while building on more substantial quality improvements at institutional level.

2. In discussions with representatives of different universities it remains unclear in how far 'academic leaders' fully support the development of internal quality assurance (IQA) and external quality assurance (EQA). The 'sense of urgency' within the **academic leadership** seems rather modest. The quality assurance staff of the universities, however, are well motivated and eager to take the necessary steps towards quality enhancement. The apparent lack of academic leadership and ownership of quality assurance within universities is a threat to the implementation of quality assurance systems in Armenian higher education. The actual support and commitment of the academic leaders –rector, vice rectors, deans and deans – are prerequisites for the acceptance and

the success of these systems. Without their explicit engagement and open support there is a considerable risk for failure despite all efforts and good intentions of quality assurance staff involved in the various international projects. It is essential for universities to seriously contemplate this issue and to take appropriate actions. ANQA could be helpful in initiating the dialogue but in the end the responsibility for adapting a true quality culture lies with the universities.

3. ANQA relies heavily on **international projects and experts** for implementing quality assurance in Armenia. As such, ANQA's major preoccupation is with managing these projects rather than managing its own processes. So many projects, so many different inputs, so many different opinions and visions can be confusing instead of being helpful. Once clear and well-founded choices have been made by Armenian higher education i.e. ANQA and HEI, processes and procedures have to be made fit-for-purpose. Only then the actual implementation of quality assurance can be successful. In this process, ANQA can take the initiative, and to put into practice what it has been learning in years past. These activities might include offering assistance and guidance to HEI, facilitating peer reviews, training of experts, and organising audits. Q-week also made it clear that there is considerable overlap in the objectives of the international projects, and that the overall management of these projects (including ARQATA) is at times a burden for ANQA even up to a point that these projects risk to be no longer effective.

Comment ANQA: The effectiveness of these projects is tangible. Only through these projects does ANQA staff get trainings at local and international levels. Besides, it is due to the projects that the universities started to change their attitude to quality assurance. It might be a burden for ANQA, but, by no means does it mean that this is not effective.

4. ANQA's preoccupation with projects also hinders the process of becoming a fully operative and financially robust quality organisation. ANQA should focus its particular attention on developing policy plans and prioritizing activities, staff capacity building, actually using quality assurance instruments and developing a quality culture. In order to be able to do so, it is essential for **all ANQA staff members** to be actively involved in the core business of the agency: the actual implementation of quality assurance. Most ANQA staff members are well qualified and have undergone the necessary training. Individual staff members should be able to take the responsibility that comes with the job: process management of institutional audits and programme assessments.

Comment ANQA: Most of the trainings were within the frames of the projects we are running. We should not underestimate the value that the projects bring in.

12SUB10 – Training HEI in IQA Implementation (10 & 11 October 2012)
The programme and outcomes of both days are included in the report '*Q-week'.* (see also Annex I.5)

Following the conference with stakeholders, some 15 key persons of two HEIs – Yerevan State University (YSU) and Yerevan State Medical University (YSMU) – attended a two-day training on internal quality assurance (12SUB10). ANQA staff members attended this training as observers to continue the process of professionalization. The training session focused on internal quality assurance at programme level and the organisational aspects of an institutional audit. As such, day 2 of the training marked the transition from IQA to EQA to be continued in yet another training session on day 3 on ESG (12SUB11).

A number of tools to enhance the quality of educational programmes have been presented and discussed first in small groups and later in plenary sessions: a quick scan for a quick insight in the current state of affairs on programme level; a matrix for the involvement of stakeholders; an index for a policy document on student assessment on programme or faculty level. And once more, the importance of relating all QA activities to the PDCA-cycle was made apparent.

Next HEI representatives worked in pairs, completing two lines of the framework on quality aspects on programme level: (1) embedding of research in education and (2) student satisfaction. The last session dealt with quality assurance and the use of quantitative data making use of good practice: the Management Information Dashboards of the Technology University of Delft. The training was concluded

with drawing up a plan for improvement discussing which actions to be taken on programme level, who to involve, etc. And once again: by completing the PDCA cycle.

Evaluation:
– Once more, it became apparent that more time is needed for the accreditation process at large and the ARQATA pilots in particular. [By the end of Q-week, it was decided to postpone the pilots with three months i.e. visits in June 2013 (instead of March 2013).]

12SUB11 – Training HEI and ANQA on EQA (11 & 12 October 2012)
The programme and outcomes of both days are included in the report '*Q-week'.*
(see also Annex I.6, I.7 and I.8)

In a training (12SUB11) both HEIs and ANQA staff developed competencies for carrying out (HEI) and coordinate (ANQA) pilots on EQA. The training covered the understanding of the framework, starting the process of writing the self-evaluation report and actually writing it, organising the actual audit, and developing a handbook for EQA.

Day 1 – Organisational aspects of an institutional audit (Delft & NVAO)
The first day of the training continued with IQA and gradually proceeded towards EQA. This training session was set up as a discussion rather than a workshop. Agenda of the session was based on tips and tricks that were derived from the experiences of the Technology University of Delft with the institutional audits (both the pilot in 2008 and the formal audit in 2011). Whenever necessary or desirable, the perspective of the NVAO on these experiences was addressed. And obviously, both the pilots in YSU and YSMU were discussed at length.

Organisational aspects of an institutional audit, were dealt with in two sessions: (1) Preparing the institutional audit – from zero to SER, and (2) Which are the key elements in preparing the audit? How are these elements planned in a timely schedule? Which stakeholders are involved and why? What is an audit trail and how do HEI prepare for audit trails? What are the dos and don'ts when meeting the panel? Which follow-up is given to the institutional audit and why is the formalisation of this follow-up necessary? By the end of the day, HEI decided on the important steps in organising an institutional audit.

Day 2 – European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)(NVAO)
The aims of the second day training were twofold: (a) to provide participants with knowledge on Part 1 of the ESG within the context of the European QA landscape; (b) to increase the understanding of participants with regard to the implementation of Part 1 of the ESG in their own HEIs.
The participants included faculty from Yerevan State Medical University (YSMU) and Yerevan State University (YSU) as well as staff members from ANQA. The morning sessions focused on the European QA landscape, the position of the ESG Part 1 within this landscape, and how the ESG Part 1 are related to the ANQA criteria for institutional and programme accreditation. In the afternoon sessions, the implementation of the ESG part 1 in YSMU and YSU formed the core part of the discussions.

Evaluation:
– The exercises in the various training sessions depended on some basic knowledge of the ANQA accreditation process and participants varied in their preparedness for this.
– The group work on implementation problems showed a difference in critical attitude between HEIs. Whilst one faculty were quite straightforward in naming the implementation problems, the other faculty were rather descriptive and more hesitant in mentioning problems.
– There seems to a basic understanding of the ESG Part 1 and how these are related to the ANQA criteria. As the ESG have only 7 standards (and the ANQA criteria have many) a discussion on major implementation problems under these headings proved useful. Implementation problems are mainly related to policy and procedures, assessment of students, QA of teaching staff and information systems.

12SUB12 – E-train: Train the Trainer (11 & 12 October 2012)
The programme and outcomes of both days are included in the report '*Q-week'.* (see also Annex I.9)

The aim of the two-day training was to provide ANQA staff and panel members with tools which they can use when designing and implementing an external reviewer training programme. After an introductory session on the national frameworks and quality assurance documents, trainer skills and attributes were discussed in smaller groups. In subsequent sessions, participants' needs were assessed, and aims and outcomes were defined for the training programme. As a group it was decided what knowledge, skills, etc. should be covered. During the second day of the training, the focus was on matching learning outcomes and delivery methods to materials. Topics covered included: aim of session, material to be covered and how it will be delivered (ppt, group work, role play, etc.), learning outcome(s), and explanation of how the session will be conducted. A last session dealt with the pros and cons of assessment and/or feedback to participants.

Evaluation:
− The responses to the pre-course questionnaire for 'Train the Trainer', made clear that some participants thought that the training to be delivered was reviewer training (even though the aims and outcomes had been communicated to them). This may have been simply due to lack of clarity in the pre-course information, or it might reflect lack of clarity in the understanding where ANQA stands in the process of building capacity for reviews. Some participants may have assumed that since they had not already received reviewer training, they would be offered this *before* train the trainer.
− Not all participants of 'Train the Trainer' had the same level of knowledge and skills in areas such as communication skills, learning styles, adult learning. It may be worthwhile to carry out a more detailed pre-course questionnaire to determine whether participants need such elements in the training.

Subproject 12SUB08 – International visit Switzerland, 29 October – 2 November 2012
The programme and outcomes of the Swiss visit are included in the report on Line 4.
(see also Annex I.10 and Annex II.2)

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 overall objective of the international visits is to contribute to the further development of an Armenian quality culture.

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 precious 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:
- 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.

Subproject 12SUB11 – Training HEIs and ANQA on EQA, 19 December 2012
The programme and outcomes are included in the report on the December visit: '*Final Trainings'*.
(see also Annex I.12 and Annex II.3)

Representatives of both HEIs (YSU and YSMU) and the ANQA coordinators responsible for the 4 pilots (two on institutional level and two on programme level) participated in a final one-day training on EQA. Feedback was given on the first drafts of the self-evaluation reports (SER) on both institutional and programme level. A panel of NVAO staff scrutinized the draft reports and commented on the outline and the texts covering the first criteria of the frameworks. Their written comments were discussed in more detail.

The second part of the training dealt with the actual organisation of the pilots i.e. the external audit/assessment. Topics covered included the composition of the panel and the timetable of the visits.

Evaluation:
– The participants were especially interested in the remarks per SER. The discussions about the remarks were very interesting for all participants. The discussion on detailed level led to a discussion on a higher level, to the level of the general remarks.
– The discussion of the outline SER was less effective. The necessity of making an outline before writing a SER is not a priority for YSMU and YSU. The pressure on writing the SER is evidently too high.
– Once more the discussions made clear that there is no common understanding of the ANQA framework on institutional level and on programme level.
– HEI participants appear to lack relevant information about the actual organisation of the pilots. It seems that YMSU and YSU have no clear idea about the 'ownership' of this process.

Subproject 12SUB13 – Workshop ANQA on QA, 20 December 2012
The programme and outcomes are included in the report on the December visit: '*Final Trainings'*.
(see also Annex I.13)

The training sessions with ANQA included:
   a) One-day workshop on QA (part 1): QA tools continued (12SUB13)
   b) Workshop ANQA on QA (part 2): completing the QA handbook (12SUB06/12SUB13)
   c) Workshop ANQA on external review (part 3): preparing for the external proof audit (12SUB13)

Ad a and b
In the March 2012 meeting, some tools were presented and elaborated on. The same tools were to be made fit for purpose:
– guideline assessment theses by the panel;
– description of the domains of the organisation (protocols);
– flowchart on institutional accreditation;
– agenda board meeting.

ANQA has further developed its protocols during the past months. Presently, most of the protocols are finalised. During the meeting some aspects of these protocols were discussed, such as the definitions, the purpose and nature of indicators and targets. Some of the protocols were discussed more in detail such as the protocol for institutional and programme accreditation. ANQA will make some adaptations to

the protocols, considering the outcomes and suggestions of the discussions. Also reviewed were the evaluation matrix and the set of questions for accreditation procedures.

Ad c
The focus in this workshop was on ESG in relation to the ANQA accreditation manual. Each of the standards has been thoroughly analysed, and strengths and weaknesses of the ANQA procedures were discussed.
Other issues were: the composition of the Accreditation Committee (independence, international composition), the further development of the internal quality assurance within ANQA, the selection procedure for expert panels and the role of ANQA coordinators and director, and their role during the site visit process. Also discussed were topics such as the development of the review reports, the professionalization of and the instructions for the expert panels, the role of students in the external reviews and the decision making process. Regarding the ANQA accreditation standards, particular attention has been paid to the high ambition of these standards.

A first attempt has been made to define a general outline of a SER. The NVAO SER was discussed and commented. This SER is available on the NVAO website. The outline of the NVAO SER of NVAO might be a good starting point for the development of the ANQA SER. The composition of the review team has been discussed and a time frame has been made.

Evaluation:
−   Unfortunately, most of the ANQA protocols and some other documents requested by NVAO were not provided in advance and thus could not be analysed before the workshop. Therefore, not all protocols have been discussed in detail.
−   Some NVAO tools (e.g. the evaluation matrix) is not very well suited to ANQA, considering the implementation phase of the Armenian accreditation legislation and procedures.
−   The ANQA quality assurance framework seems to be a well-defined framework including clearly described underlying procedures, but it its robustness has still to be proven. First results are promising though.

Subproject 13SUB01 – Pilots in HEIs: Writing SERs, November 2012 – March 2013
The outcomes are included. (Annex II.3, II.4 and II.5)

When discussing internal quality assurance with HEIs in Line 1, a number of criteria have been discussed in detail. In this earlier stage, HEIs were invited to reflect on some criteria and to write parts of a SER on institutional level. HEIs also received feedback on their assignments.

In Line 2, NVAO offered technical assistance and guidance to YSU and YSMU in writing SERs on both the institutional and the programme level. These SERs are to be considered as the first steps in the internal quality assurance process of the four ARQATA pilots. This technical assistance is basically offered on line with the exception of one feedback session in December 2012.

As YSU and YSMU are writing two SERs on both levels (institutional and programme), it was agreed to cross-reference where necessary and possible. HEIs were instructed to avoid overlap between SERs for institutional audits and programme assessments. When writing the SER on programme level one can refer to the SER on institutional level. No need to repeat everything if nothing specific can be added on programme level. Also YSU was given further instructions how to deal with two biology programmes in one SER. It is a matter of combining both programmes when possible, and making a clear distinction when necessary.

Another issue discussed concerned the Idjevan Campus of YSU and whether to include this location in the pilot. NVAO does include all locations in the institutional audits for the simple reason that the central management of HEIs are responsible for all locations, and hence for the quality of all education programmes regardless of the location. As to the NVAO procedure regarding the location(s):
−   The SER for HEI and all location(s) is one document;
−   The SER should include information on the location(s) per criteria;
−   The panel does not need to visit the location(s);

- The HEI delegation the panel talks with should include representatives from the location(s);
- The panel report on HEI including location(s) will be one document.

In stage 1 (December 2012) of 'Taking writing SERs to the final step', it still seemed that little had been done with the feedback given when discussing the draft SERs in Line 1. The texts dealing with the same criteria showed only minor changes. Therefore, more or less the same remarks were repeated as they were still very valid.

In stage 2 (February 2013), YSU and YSMU seemed to have taken the earlier comments on board. In general the texts were more relevant, better selected and above all, they better matched with criteria and standard under review. Obviously, there is still room for improvement but overall progress has been made. The descriptions per criterion and standard are still very factual and extensive, but there is more self-reflection and evidence of the administrative dealing with problems. Also the use of the SWOT analysis has improved: achievements and shortcomings follow from the text.

Stage 3 (March 2013) shows that although the quality of the texts has improved, the gap between the current state of affairs and the high ambitions of the criteria in both frameworks remains visible. The SERs show that YSMU and YSU are putting a lot of effort in preparing themselves for the European Higher Education Area. But the ambitions and expectations are high within the foreseen time frame.

During the process of writing the SERs, the deadline in the preliminary timeline was adjusted as it was not in line with the Statute for State Accreditation in the Republic of Armenia. Indeed, if the HEIs were to submit the SERs on 1 May 2013, too little time would be left for the expert panels to make the initial evaluation. Also the timeline did not mention the deadline for the SERs in Armenian as part of the accreditation package to be sent to the Accreditation Council at the end of the process.

Hence, the deadline for the SERs was changed: the Armenian SERs on the 1st of April, and the deadline for the English versions on the 1st of May 2013. In doing so, the SERs will be available in both languages, the panel will have enough time for the initial evaluation and at the same time the procedures set out in the Statute will be appropriately implemented.

Evaluation:
- HEIs worked hard to meet all deadlines but they clearly underestimated the work involved. Even so, they did a wonderful job in writing the SERs and following up on all recommendations, even if it took some time to fully grasp their meaning.
- Lessons learned are not always put into practice, at least not immediately.
- Little use has been made of additional assistance and guidance on line in case remarks and suggestions were not clear. HEIs however were urgently invited to make full use of that possibility.
- Discussing the remarks with HEIs obviously has an added value over online guidance.
- The timetable for submitting the SERs both in Armenian and English needed to be adjusted in order to fully comply with the ANQA manual.

Subproject 13SUB02/03/04/05 – Pilots institutional audits and programme assessments
The agenda and outcomes of the preparatory panel meeting are included. (Annex I.14 and II.8) as well as the information about the panel compositions (Annex II.7).

According to the contract, the pilots concern pilots on two institutional audits and two programme assessments, so one in each HEI. As to the programmes, it was decided during the October 2012 meetings with YSU-ANQA-NVAO and YSMU-ANQA-NVAO to take two programmes (one bachelor and one master) for YSU and one programme (MD) for YSMU. University programmes are usually assessed in clusters because of the obvious links between bachelors and masters in terms of intended and achieved learning outcomes, and teaching and learning environment. Also, doing things differently in both pilots – YSU with two and YSMU with one programme – broadens the perspective and learning effect.

During the October 2012 meeting with YSU-ANQA-NVAO, it was decided on the spot to choose for the bachelor in Biology and the master in Applied Biology. At a later stage, this was changed into the

master in Genetics as the other master programme only started recently and no master theses were yet available.

In October 2012, it was also agreed to postpone the SERs and site visits to June 2013 (3 months later) as HEIs encountered major difficulties in meeting the deadlines. Obviously they needed extra time for writing the SERs.

While HEIs worked on their SERs, ANQA and NVAO worked out a new time schedule and a draft programme for the pilots. Also the panel compositions were discussed and the ANQA coordinators for the pilots were identified.

The ANQA coordinators followed the feedback sessions on the SERs, both via mail and during the final training session in December 2012. It should help them to fully understanding the steps of writing a SER (both content and process), and of offering guidance and assistance to HEIs in future. A better understanding of the SER (and the framework), will also help them to coordinate the process. The ANQA coordinators are also responsible for organizing the pilots following the ANQA manual, starting with the contract and the composition of the panel. And of course, they will be responsible for the panel report. The four coordinators will be assisted by two senior ANQA staff members.

NVAO and ANQA agreed on the composition of the panel in general terms: number and profile. A grid has been designed and discussed at several occasions. As to the profile, the ANQA regulations for the composition of panels are followed (Guidelines and Criteria for Peer-Reviewers). As soon as panel members are identified by both ANQA and NVAO, HEIs are offered the opportunity to comment on the composition following ANQA's aforementioned guidelines.

In February 2013, the NVAO chairs for the first time and discussed the objectives, organisation and planning of the four pilots. A draft programme for each pilot has been made as well as additional requests regarding the SERs. The outcomes of the meeting have been communicated to both HEIs and ANQA, and are being followed up.

Evaluation:
− The pilots had to be postponed as HEIs needed more time to prepare themselves.
− The composition of the panels is not an easy task for ANQA especially because of the lack of experience with programme assessments. Also attracting international peers is difficult due to financial constraints.

Subproject 13SUB06 – Proof external review ANQA
The agenda and the outcomes of the preparatory panel meeting are included. (Annex I.15 and II.9)

ANQA also started preparing writing its SER for the proof external review scheduled in September. ANQA opts for type A of external review: a review with the sole purpose to test compliance with the ENQA membership criteria. During the December 2012 visit, the outline of the SER has been part of a workshop.

A panel consisting of four experienced ENQA peers has met in Vienna late January 2013. This panel discussed the objectives, the organisation, the programme and some practicalities. The panel would like to receive a draft SER (15 May 2013) so as to maximise the learning effect. The final SER is expected to be ready by 1 August 2013.

The outcomes of the meeting have been communicated to ANQA, and are being followed up.

5 Key Findings

General
–   As mentioned before, during Q-week four major concerns have become apparent. They relate to the unrealistic Armenian ambitions and expectations in the development of higher education, the rather modest academic leadership, the large amount of international projects and experts for implementing quality assurance in Armenia, and the involvement of all ANQA staff members in the actual implementation of quality assurance.
–   It is good to notice that even at the level of the prime minister Armenia comes to recognize the importance of good higher education in direction relation to a knowledge(-based) economy within a broader, European oriented context. The government not only wants to enhance the quality of Armenian educational programmes; it also aims at differentiating between universities filtering out those which do not deliver quality.
–   Stakeholders' opinions on the model of quality assurance were touched upon although it was not the main focus of the conference. Even so, recurrent concerns include the overlap in frameworks for both institution and programme accreditation, the large number of criteria and standards, the system based on institutional accreditation versus the more common model starting with programme assessment, the independence and expertise of Armenian experts/panel members, and the tight time schedule for accreditation. These issues will be dealt with in the ARQATA pilots, and result in recommendations by the end of the project.

Comment ANQA: The reason for this approach - system based on institutional accreditation - has been justified. With its centralized approach to management no HEI would allow the programmes to initiate a quality assurance movement. In our case, unless the top management is totally involved no change is possible at programme level.

–   All stakeholders including HEIs have to work through an ambiguous situation: on the one hand, accreditation procedures are considered time-consuming with little added value; on the other, audits and assessments are expected to consolidate one's position. Especially the established HEIs hope to benefit from accreditation although they also seem to be somehow lacking in a self-critical attitude. Against this background, it is regrettable that the State Engineering University of Armenia (SEUA) does not continue in Line 2 of the ARQATA project as there is evidence of good practice.
–   The National Qualifications framework, which has been primarily developed by a group of international experts, is potentially confusing to reviewers and HEIs, since it does not seem to reflect the Dublin descriptors. It is markedly different in format from other NQFs, and also includes references to staff and to linguistic skills which do not seem entirely appropriate in a document of this kind.

HEI
–   It remains unclear how well the smaller and private HEIs are prepared for the process of accreditation. During Q-week they remained somewhat aloof. This is definitely the case with private HEIs which feel uncertain about what to expect.
–   Faculty still seem to operate in relative isolation and with a large degree of freedom. In order to make quality assurance a success, faculty needs to work as a team. They should be open for necessary changes, student evaluations, curriculum evaluations etc.
–   Quality assurance staff are very involved and eager to participate in the ARQATA project. They certainly are crucial in the further development of an Armenian quality culture but their efforts are fruitless without the full commitment of the academic leaders.
–   The various discussions proved to be useful for a better understanding of the ESG and their relationship with the ANQA criteria.
–   By now, the process of Plan-Do-Check-Act is a familiar concept for quality assurance staff, not yet for faculty. Using this four-step model though for improving the quality is far from common practice.
–   The academic standards on research in bachelor's and master's programmes are very ambitious and could be difficult to meet at present. The same applies for the research profile of the staff, the resources and the development of internal quality procedures in HEIs. IQA seems to be primarily a task for quality managers and quality assurance staff, rather than being fully developed within the university staff.

ANQA
– The ANQA manual is very detailed in prescribing the process for review and reporting. The pilots will be used to test whether such rigid procedures are effective and efficient.
– Communication between ANQA, HEIs and experts/panel members is mainly on the level of management. ANQA staff members and quality assurance HEI staff are hardly involved. This is not conducive for the guidance and assistance of HEIs in the process of accreditation.
– ANQA staff members could not really participate in the group work on implementation problems in HEIs. However, they were able to fully participate in the previous parts of the training.
– At present, there is a lack of sufficiently trained experts. Armenian reviewers are being trained as reviewers and participating as such in other projects (Tempus) but this is not done in a consistent way. And it is doubtful whether the 'Train the Trainer' session will solve that problem in the near future. The training is explicitly part of the ARQATA project (visit 6). To this purpose ANQA management was present at the dissemination conference of the E-train project in Madrid in June 2012 in order to get an insight in the 'train the trainer' programme. It is necessary to give a follow-up on the October training and for ANQA to start with the actual training of experts.

Comment ANQA:
– The training should have had objectives appropriate for our needs. Who analysed the needs? We like to have training of experts, but not training how to organize training. We were fully aware of our needs.

ARQATA
– The combination of various trainings and a major conference within one week seemed to be efficient from an organisational perspective. However, from a perspective of training effectiveness and span of attention of participants it was less beneficial. Indeed, it has been a long and rather demanding week for all participants, especially for the representatives of both YSU and YSMU being involved in both the conference and all training sessions. Even so participants were well motivated and eager to contribute even when on occasions people had to leave due to prior engagements. Also on Friday afternoon, only half of the participants were present at the training session on ESG.
– Knowing your participants is a critical part of any training. This was not possible as an adequate participants list was not available prior to the training, a pre-questionnaire could therefore not be sent, and participants changed during the day. As a consequence it was not possible to adapt the training to the level of experience of participants. This has been observed at all previous occasions.
– A recurrent observation is that ANQA is very critical about international experts using their own good practice as reference. These experts should not overemphasise their home experience as it might hinder the further development of the QA system in Armenian HEIs (cf. 12REP01). Even so, ANQA needs to accept that international experts can contribute to the further development of Armenian higher education by explaining their choices in QA matters. That is their specific expertise. Yet, international experts cannot be expected to be fully familiar with the Armenian context. It is up to ANQA and HEIs to discuss the various possibilities presented to them, and make them fit for purpose if relevant. In order to avoid future disappointment and possible misunderstandings it is essential to agree on these terms of cooperation.

Comment ANQA: This is a misunderstanding. We never underestimated the contribution of international experts. It is just the international experts that come should not only concentrate on conveying what they know, rather, they should concentrate on our needs.

– The translation by ANQA staff members was excellent. However, the time taken by translations (including translations of discussions among participants) means that the discussions can hardly go in-depth. In the next stage of the project, this might cause problems.
– At the end of all activities, participants were invited to fill in the evaluation forms on paper (conference) and on line (training). The results of the surveys however are not always available.

Comment ANQA: This will be finalized soon.

– It is not clear in how far ANQA follows up on the recommendations within the ARQATA project. In the December 2012 meeting ANQA and NVAO have gone through all recommendations and actions taken and/or to be taken.

6 Recommendations

HEI
- Academic leaders should make good use of the external force of circumstances (accreditation) to carry the HEIs through the inevitable changes resulting from quality assurance (quality enhancement). Now is the momentum for change.
- With so many small and unique programmes, it is advisable to opt for clustering when assessing the quality of these programmes.
- For HEIs with more branches it might be more efficient to include these in the institutional audit provided they also opt for programme assessment, if only at random.
- Faculty need to be responsible for the quality assurance at programme level with reference to earlier comments on academic leadership. As a consequence, faculty should also take the lead in writing the self-evaluation report on programme level. Reference can be made to the self-evaluation report on the institutional level to avoid overlap.
- It is clear that HEIs have still much to work on policy and procedures, assessment of students, QA of teaching staff, and information systems. Therefore it seems logical to concentrate efforts (either within or outside of ARQATA) on these issues.
- In working with the HEIs it should be emphasised that international practices can be useful to look at but should always be adapted to the local context. It can be harmful if an international practice is taken out of context to legitimise a certain choice within the HEI.
- More attention may be needed to foster a self-critical attitude in some HEIs as became apparent in some training sessions.
- Also smaller and private HEIs need to be involved in all quality assurance matters. If need be, a specific strategy might be developed in order to ensure that also these HEIs are well prepared to go through the accreditation process.
- Intensify the contacts with ANQA about the frameworks on institutional level and programme level. This is necessary to have fruitful discussions with the panel members during the side visits.
- Be more proactive towards ANQA about the process of the forthcoming site visits.
- Make better use of the possibility to consult NVAO experts.

ANQA
- In order to assure that enough qualified reviewers are available, ANQA needs to set up a policy plan for the recruitment and training of experts. Urgent action needs to be taken if one wants to avoid that HEIs are better informed about QA matters than their peers.
- More training on the content and on the operation of the EQA process is required, both for those who will be reviewers (panel members) and those who will train reviewers.
- It is necessary to clarify which documents should be used to inform reviewers and trainers (e.g. the ANQA accreditation manual) and these should be easily available on the ANQA website.
- ANQA staff members should be allowed to take full responsibility as process managers for each individual assessment procedure.
- ANQA coordinators are involved in the organisation of various activities. During the training sessions, however, they should not be preoccupied with organisational matters so as to allow them to fully benefit from the training. Again, this has been touched upon before (cf. 12REP01).
- Translation hinders an effective dialogue if trainings go more in-depth and require an intensive dialogue between participants and trainer (which would have been the case if the training would have touched on the possible solutions for implementation problems). In such cases it should be investigated whether only participants who are sufficiently proficient in English can be allowed to participate. They could then inform their colleagues in their HEI. The ARQATA project management and/or ANQA staff members could monitor whether this knowledge transfer indeed takes place.
- For future trainings ANQA needs to deliver an accurate participants list prior to the training, enabling a pre-questionnaire and a more tailor-made training. That also enables trainers to limit the amount of participants as more people tend to attend the meetings than agreed upon. Also participants are not always matching the requirements. This has been recommended before.
- For future trainings there may be a need to clearly define the role of ANQA staff as participants in the trainings. It is not clear whether HEI representatives feel less open when future assessors are in their midst.

7 Evaluation Stage 2

The training sessions and the workshop in Line 1 (IQA) have been unanimously evaluated as detailed, practical, franc, very helpful and productive but unfortunately too short. Suggestions were made for further online help facilities. The ARQATA certificate for the training was much appreciated. ANQA and HEI staff regarded it as a positive evaluation of their individual efforts.

The other main activities in stage 2 – Q-week and the Swiss visits – were evaluated rather positive. Especially the international involvement and settings were much appreciated. The participation of so many international experts during Q-week and the readiness of the Swiss colleagues to receive the Armenian delegation show a shared interest in quality assurance. And this common interest hopefully enhanced the Armenian quality culture.

Lastly, YSU and YSMU worked hard when writing their SERs. They followed a tight time schedule but all deadlines were met. And most importantly: they appreciated the feedback on their SERs and clearly improved their texts. All in all, a most strenuous writing progress but well worth the effort.

8 Planning Stage 3

Pilots in two HEIs will be organised during two weeks in June 2013 involving four panels and about 20 peers. In numbers, time and effort, these pilots are quite demanding on all concerned. Preparations are well underway: the Armenian SERs are ready, the English translation are due to be ready by 1 May 2013, the panels had their first meeting both in The Hague (chairs) and Yerevan (Armenian panel members), the ANQA team is all set and so is NVAO.

In September 2013, ANQA will undergo its proof external review. The review panel expects a draft SER mid-May 2013 and the final report 1 August 2013.

In Stage 3, the focus will be on external quality assurance both for ANQA and HEIs. Even so, as was the case in stage 2, internal quality assurance will be leading in the sense that all pilots and reviews are geared towards quality enhancement. The panels and also the reports will therefore concentrate on recommendations to improve the quality assurance systems at institutional and programme level, and within ANQA. It is essential to understand that given the present state of development, judgments on each standard have little added value and might go against what we are trying to achieve: the further development of quality assurance and quality culture.

For a listing of activities in Stage 3, please refer to annex I.1 and I.2.

ANNEXES

PART I
(project)

ANNEX I.1   Activities

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 (1-2/3)	18-20 December 2012
8	Pilots 2 HEIs (institutional audit & programme assessment in each of the HEI) Final preparation ANQA for external review	9 - 22 June 2013
9	**Roundtable Conference** on EQA Final preparation ANQA for external review Review Information System	May 2013
10	Proof ENQA review	September 2013
11	**National Conference** on QA	December 2013

ANNEX I.2   Time & Activity Line

Separate attachment (dated 1 April 2013).

ANNEX I.3   NVAO Team

TEAM MEMBER	SPECIFIC EXPERIENCE
Michèle Wera	Project manager
Irma Franssen	Internal QA & Training expert
Mark Frederiks	External QA expert
Rudy Derdelinckx	Professionalization expert
Lucien Bollaert	QA expert
Esther van den Heuvel	International visits
Axel Aerden	IT expert & international visits
Helmut Konrad	International expert
Elisabeth Fiorioli	International expert
Frank Wamelink	Training expert
Monique Knoester	Project secretariat

RESPONSIBILITY	TEAM MEMBER RESPONSIBLE
Overall project	Michèle Wera
Team internal quality assurance	Irma Franssen
Team external quality assurance	Mark Frederiks
Team ANQA professionalization	Rudy Derdelinckx
Team international visits	Michèle Wera
Team training	Irma Franssen
Team implementation	Michèle Wera

ANNEX I.4   Overview of Activities

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, 11 September 2012
Meeting 12COM05
Visit NVAO, 8-12 October 2012
Meeting 12COM06
Visit NVAO, 18-21 Dec 2012

Meeting 13COM01
Visit NVAO, June 2013
Meeting 13COM02
Visit NVAO, September 2013
Meeting 13COM03
Visit NVAO, December 2013

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, September 2012
Report 12REP05
First Interim Report, 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
Report 13REP02
Second Interim Report, April 2013

Amendment 12AME02
Amendment 2, 10 January 2012
Amendment 12AME03
Amendment 3, June 2012
Amendment 13AME01
Amendment 4, February 2013

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, 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, 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 HEIs on IQA Implementation, 10 & 11 October 2012
Subproject 12SUB11
Training HEIs and ANQA on EQA, 11 & 12 October 2012
Subproject 12SUB11
Training HEIs and ANQA on EQA, 18-21 Dec 2012
Subproject 12SUB12
E-train: Train the Trainer, 11 & 12 October 2012

Subproject 12SUB13
Training ANQA on QA, 18-21 Dec 2012

Subproject 12SUB14
Review information system ANQA

Subproject 13SUB01
Pilots in HEIs: writing SERs
Subproject 13SUB02
Pilot institutional audit YSU, June 2013
Subproject 13SUB03
Pilot institutional audit YSMU, June 2013
Subproject 13SUB04
Pilot programme assessment YSU, June 2013
Subproject 13SUB05
Pilot programme assessment YSMU, June 2013

Subproject 13SUB06
Proof external review, September 2013

Subproject 13SUB07
National Stakeholders' Conference, December 2013

<u>Overview of Activities in Stage 2</u>

Meeting 12COM05
Visit NVAO, 8-12 October 2012
Meeting 12COM06
Visit NVAO, 18-21 Dec 2012

Report 12REP05
First Interim Report, 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
Report 13REP02
Second Interim Report, April 2013

Amendment 13AME01
Amendment 4, February 2013

Subproject 12SUB01
Website
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 HEIs on IQA Implementation, 10 & 11 October 2012
Subproject 12SUB11
Training HEIs and ANQA on EQA, 11 & 12 October 2012
Subproject 12SUB11
Training HEIs and ANQA on EQA, 18-21 Dec 2012
Subproject 12SUB12
E-train: Train the Trainer, 11 & 12 October 2012
Subproject 12SUB13
Training ANQA on QA, 18-21 Dec 2012
Subproject 12SUB14
Review information system ANQA

Subproject 13SUB01
Pilots in HEIs: writing SERs
Subproject 13SUB02
Pilot institutional audit YSU, June 2013
Subproject 13SUB03
Pilot institutional audit YSMU, June 2013
Subproject 13SUB04
Pilot programme assessment YSU, June 2013
Subproject 13SUB05
Pilot programme assessment YSMU, June 2013

Subproject 13SUB06
Proof external review, September 2013

8-9 October, 2012

**THE STATE OF AFFAIRS IN QUALITY ASSURANCE IN ARMENIAN TERTIARY EDUCATION
ANQA II BIENNIAL STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE**

AGENDA

Start	End	
		Date: Monday, October 8, 2012 *Venue: Yerevan State Medical University, Main Administrative Building* *Chairperson: Alexander Grigoryan*
9:00	9:30	**Registration**
9:30	9:45	Opening note -Ruben Topchyan, ANQA Director
9:45	10:00	Welcome note -Armen Ashotyan, RA Minister of Education and Science
10:00	10:30	Quality Assurance: A Must and A Chance for Armenian Higher Education - Karl Dittrich, NVAO President
10:30	11:00	Quality Assurance: An external obligation or An Institutional Need- P. Rullmann, Education Quality Assurance at Delft University of Technology
11:00	11:30	**Coffee Break**
11:30	12:00	ANQA's approaches: Accreditation Process - Ruben Topchyan, ANQA Director
12:00	12:30	Impact of External Quality Assurance on the Tertiary Level Education System in the Republic of Armenia – Susanna Kharakhanyan, Head of ANQA Policy Development and Implementation Unit
12:30	13:00	Recognition and Mutual Recognition of Quality Assurance Results - Rolf Heusser, President of the European Consortium for Accreditation
13:00	13:30	A Glance at ANQA State of Affairs: reflections of an ENQA expert – Heinz-Ulrich Schmidt, Special Representative, Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA), Germany
13:30	14:30	**Lunch**
14:30	15:00	Reflections of Expert Panel Members on the ANQA Approaches to Accreditation - Margarita Shahverdyan/ Edward Hakobyan
15:00	16:00	Reflections of Higher Education Establishments on the ANQA Approaches to Accreditation – Sargis Tovmasyan, Yerevan State University of Architecture and Construction
16:00	16:30	**Coffee Break**
16:30	17:00	Reflections of Students on the State of Affairs at Higher Education Institutions and the Role of ANQA – Tatevik Sargsyan, Students' Voice
17:00	18:00	Discussion and conclusions Chairperson – Alexander Grigoryan

Start	End	
		Date: Tuesday, October 9, 2012 *Venue: Yerevan State Medical University, Main Administrative Building* *Chairperson: Ruben Topchyan*
9:00	9:30	**Registration**
9:30	9:45	Morning Session Chairperson's opening note – Ruben Topchyan, chairperson
9:45	10:15	Development and Integration of Internal Quality Assurance Systems –Mariam Movsisyan, Armenian State Agrarian University
10:15	10:45	Employer - University Cooperation within the Frames of Quality Assurance - Arsen Ghazaryan, The Union of Manufacturers and Businessmen (Employers) of Armenia
10:45	11:15	**Coffee Break**
11:15	11:45	Students' Role in the Internal Quality Assurance Processes
11:45	12:15	Internal Quality Assurance Mechanisms: ANQA reflections – Anushavan Makaryan/Anna Karapetyan, ANQA
12:15	13:00	Writing of self-assessment report- Birgit Hanny, Yana Moehren, ASIIN
13:00	13:30	Discussion and Conclusions Chairperson – Ruben Topchyan
13:30	14:30	**Lunch**
14:30	14:40	Presentation of ARQATA project – Michèle Wera/Ruben Topchyan
14:40	15:40	Presentation of the outcomes of the pilot SER - Irma Franssen/ Susanna Karakhanyan, Armen Budaghyan, Hayk Mamijanyan
15:40	17:30	*Training the students in internal quality assurance implementation* *I.Franssen* *NVAO* *Training the faculty in internal quality assurance implementation* *K. Dittrich,* *NVAO* *Training the HEI management in Internal Quality Assurance implementation* *P. Rullmann* *Delft University of Technology* *Training the quality assurance coordinators in Internal Quality Assurance implementation* *J. Brakels* *Delft University of Technology*
17:30	17:45	**Coffee Break**
17:45	18:00	Conclusions and Discussion Closing note - Ruben Topchyan

ANNEX I.6 Programme Training HEI in IQA Implementation (12SUB10)

QUALITY ENHANCEMENT ON PROGRAMME LEVEL

Jenny BRAKELS,
Delft University of Technology

Wednesday 10 October 2012

Quality Objectives

Quality enhancement on programme level is not the same as having a sound quality assurance system on paper. The main objective is not the system as such, but it is the quality of the programme. A sound system is supportive of this goal: the instruments chosen have to be fit for purpose (related to the quality targets), stakeholders have to be involved (leave it to professionals wherever possible) and results have to be analysed and have to be given a proper follow-up.

Participants

15 representatives including students of YSU and YSMU, responsible for quality assurance at programme level (biology and general medicine)
+ ANQA observers

Introduction

09.00 – 09.15   Short introduction of participants
09.15 – 09.45   Short introductory presentation to the Delft QA plan
09.45 – 10.00   Questions and discussion

Quality enhancement on programme level – session 1

10.00 – 11.00   Introduction Quick Scan: a quick insight in current state of affairs on programme level
                In small groups: complete tab1 and tab 2 quick scan for one of your programmes
                Discussing results - Insights? Usefulness? What would be the follow-up? Frame it to QA cycle

11.00 – 11.15   Short break

11.15 – 11.45   Introducing tab4 - involvement of stakeholders both internal and external
                Plenary completion of matrix
                Discussing organisation structure TU Delft

11.45 – 12.30   Introduction of policy on student assessment and examination
                Topics to be addressed in a policy document on student assessment on programme (or even Faculty) level?
                In small groups: discuss the topics and come to an index
                Presentation of findings - introducing format of TU Delft
                Who are involved in this process? Plenary exercise - completion of chapter 1

12.30 – 12.45   Round up morning sessions - framing activities to QA cycle: quality of the programme is main target; stakeholder involvement and quality of assessment and examination are key elements!

12.30 – 13.30   Lunch break

Quality enhancement on programme level – session 2

13.30 – 13.45   Intermezzo: different instruments for different purposes

13.45 – 14.30   Framework quality handbook
In pairs: complete two lines of the framework for the quality aspects programme,
embedding of research in education and student satisfaction > the lecturer has to play a role
Discussing outcomes: different roles of lecturer when it comes to QA and use of
handbook in framing QA activities.

14.30 – 15.15   Quality assurance and the use of quantitative data
Discussing findings and presentation of Management Information Dashboards TU Delft
(definitions are key as well as targets)

15.15 – 15.30   Short break

15.30 – 15.40   Short case introduction
15.40 – 16.30   Draw up a plan for improvement. Which actions should be taken on programme level?
Discussing plans: who is involved, results in short time? Does it imply adjustment of
Quality definition? Make PDCA complete!

16.30 – 17.15   Final issues
Round up of the day: important aspects of QA on programme level (PDCA)

**ANNEX I.7   Training HEI in IQA Implementation (12SUB10) &
               Training HEI and ANQA on EQA (12SUB11)**

ORGANISATION OF AN INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT

**Jenny BRAKELS,
Delft University of Technology**

Thursday 11 October 2012

Quality Objectives
Organisational aspects of an institutional audit. Which are the key elements in preparing the audit? How are these elements be planned in a timely schedule? Which stakeholders are involved? Why? How do you prepare for an audit trail? Which follow-up is given to the institutional audit? Why is the formalisation of this follow-up necessary? These and similar questions will be discussed. At the end of the day the group will have decided on the important steps in organising an institutional audit.

Participants
15 representatives including students of YSU and YSMU, responsible for quality assurance at institutional level + ANQA-staff as observers

Working method
This session is set up as a discussion group rather than a workshop. Agenda of the session is based on tips and tricks that are derived from the experiences of TU Delft with the institutional audits. Whenever necessary or desirable, the perspective of the NVAO on these experiences will be addressed.

Introduction
09.00 – 09.15   Short introduction of participants
09.15 – 09.45   Short introductory presentation to the institutional audits held at TU Delft (both the pilot
                and the formal audit in 2011)
09.45 – 10.00   Questions and discussion

Preparing the institutional audit – from zero to SER
10.00 – 12.30   Which actions should be taken in order to prepare a clear SER? Topics that will be
                discussed are for example the meeting with HEI top management, profile of HEI, time
                planning, stakeholder involvement, roles and responsibilities etc.
                Participants will prepare and discuss a time schedule for their own HEI. Important dates
                in this schedule are:
                11 October 2012   Training ARQATA
                18 December 2012   Final training ARQATA
                31 January 2013   Submission of SER
                11 March 2013   Institutional Audit – visit panel

12.30 – 13.00   Round up morning part: main lessons and most important steps so far.

13.00 – 14.00   Lunch break

Preparing the institutional audit – from SER to a successful audit
14.00 – 17.00   Which aspects should be taken into account in preparing the visit of the panel? What
                can be expected during the visit? Should you prepare your faculty and students for the
                visit? If so, how can this be done? What are the do's and don'ts when meeting the
                panel? What is an audit trail? How would you give adequate follow-up to the feedback of
                the audit panel? These topics will be discussed and transferred to important steps in the
                process. A list of do's and don'ts will be drawn up.

17.00 – 17.30   Round up of the day: important steps in organising an institutional audit

ANNEX I.8   Training HEI and ANQA on EQA (12SUB11)

ESG Training Programme
Friday 12 October 2012, Yerevan
(M. Frederiks, NVAO)

Aims of the workshop
- To provide participants with knowledge on Part 1 of the ESG within the context of the European QA landscape

- To increase the understanding of participants with regard to the implementation of Part 1 of the ESG in their own HEIs

Topics to be covered
- Overview of the European QA landscape

- Part 1 of the ESG in the European QA context

- Part 1 of ESG and the ANQA accreditation manual

- Bottlenecks in the implementation of Part 1 of ESG

- Towards effective implementation of Part 1 of ESG

Learning outcomes for participants
At the end of the programme participants should:
1. Know the main elements of European QA landscape (LO 1)

2. Know the significance of the ESG Part 1 within the European QA landscape (LO 2)

3. Be able to relate the ESG Part 1 to the institutional and programme accreditation standards of ANQA (LO 3)

4. Be able to identify the main bottlenecks for implementation of standards in your own HEI (LO 4)

5. Be aware of possible solutions for bottlenecks in the implementation of standards (LO 5)

Time	Title	Format
09:00	**Introductions**	Plenary group information swap
	1. Workshop aims and outcomes • Ground rules • House-keeping • Outline of the day	Leader input
09:30	**2. Overview of the European QA landscape and Part 1 of ESG** • Overview of the European QA landscape • European Standards and Guidelines for QA, Part 1 within the European QA context	Leader input with plenary discussion LO 1 LO 2
11:00	**Break**	
11:30	**3. Part 1 of ESG and the ANQA accreditation manual** • How are the ESG Part1 covered in the institutional accreditation standards in the ANQA accreditation manual?	Small group work and then plenary discussion LO 3
12:30	Lunch	
13:15	**4. Bottlenecks in the implementation of standards** • Which standards require special attention in your HEI? • Which bottlenecks do you experience when implementing the standards?	Small group work and then plenary discussion LO 4
14:45	**Break**	
15:15	**5. Towards effective implementation of standards** • Identifying good practices • Proposing solutions for implementation problems	Small group work and then plenary discussion LO 5
16:45	**6. Conclusions and wrap up**	Plenary group information swap
17:00	**End of day**	

Bottlenecks when implementing standards

ESG Part 1	Bottlenecks/problems in implementation
1.1 Policy and procedures for quality assurance	No culture of developing QA procedures No QA handbook QA procedures not properly formulated Plans available but implementation not clear Weak involvement of stakeholders
1.2 Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards	Procedures not well documented and sustained Learning outcomes not well defined on bachelor level; medical education will introduce 1 integrative degree (combined bachelor and master), therefore development of separate LOs for bachelor not considered necessary Plans/regulations finished but implementation in progress
1.3 Assessment of students	Oral examinations/assessment methods in progress Testing system is not good yet (e.g. how to assess communication skills?) Assessing student involvement in research Contradiction between expectations regarding oral and written examinations Examination results not always transparent for students
1.4 Quality assurance of teaching staff	Teachers are not obliged to advance their knowledge Small proportion of teachers do not work on self-development/difficult to motivate teachers for training Teacher promotion mechanisms not (always) in use
1.5 Learning resources and student support	No career advising centre for students (not regulated)
1.6 Information systems	No central information system In development No electronic documentation system
1.7 Public information	Absence of evaluation of effectiveness of providing public information

ANNEX I.9   Train the Trainer programme for ARQATA E-TRAIN (12SUB12)

A programme for agency staff and panel members who will be training external reviewers for the ANQA.

Participants will be asked to fill out a brief questionnaire and submit it to the training leader 10 days before the programme. The questionnaire will ask participants about their training background and what are the most important things for them to achieve in this training programme.
Participants will be expected to know the agency's quality assurance review process in detail and to bring with them any relevant manual, handbook, codes of practice, qualifications framework, etc., which will inform the agency's training.

Aim of the workshop
- To provide agency staff and panel members with tools which they can use when designing and implementing an external reviewer training programme.

Topics to be covered
- Review of national documentation for quality assurance
- Skills and aptitudes required of a trainer – personal strengths and areas for development
- Assessing participant needs; 'what's in it for them?'
- Setting aims and outcomes for the training programme; deciding what knowledge, skills, etc. should be covered
- Developing relevant training materials and structuring the programme
- Should the participants be assessed?
- Evaluating the programme

Learning outcomes for participants
At the end of the programme participants should:
1. be aware of their own skills as a trainer and have identified areas for development (LO 1)
2. be aware of the need to know their participants and the material to be communicated (LO 2)
3. be able to write session aims and outcomes (LO 3)
4. be able to choose delivery methods which suit the participants and the material (LO 4)
5. be able to develop training materials (notes, visuals) which deliver the outcomes (LO 5)
6. consider assessment tools, if required (LO 6)
7. understand the importance of evaluating the programme (LO 7).

Timings in the programme are provisional and will be amended in the light of participant needs

DAY 1

Time	Title	Format
1000	**Introductions**	Plenary group information swap
	1 Workshop aims and outcomes • Journal or learning log. • Ground rules • House-keeping • Outline of the day	Leader input
1030	**2 Recap on national quality assurance documents** • ANQA Accreditation Manual • European Standards and Guidelines • ANQA Strategic Plan (for background only)	Leader input with plenary discussion
1115	**Break**	
1130	**3 Trainer skills and attributes** •Training styles •Attributes of an effective trainer •The participant's main objectives for this workshop •The participant's project for today •Choosing a buddy	Leader input followed by small group discussion. Participants will be encouraged to identify for themselves one objective or area of preparation to take forward through the day. They will be encouraged to choose a buddy for the day – a person they can bounce ideas off, try out ideas, ask for advice/encouragement. LO 1
1215	**4 Participant profile and needs** • Who are the participants? • What do they need to know? • How will they learn most effectively?	Leader input followed by small group discussion and then work with buddy; **each participant to draw up a profile of the people to be trained and to decide what subject matter** the training needs to cover. LO 2
1315	Lunch	
1400	**5 From subject matter to learning outcomes** • How to construct an effective learning outcome	Leader input followed by small group discussion and/or buddy conference. **Each participant to write learning outcomes for some of the subject matter** identified above. LO 3
1530	**Break**	
1600	**6 From outcomes to session design** **(a) Structure** •How to structure and sequence training •How to decide how to deliver the training •What resources are necessary?	Leader input followed by plenary brainstorm: what imaginative ideas do you have for delivering the material? Ideas to be captured for distribution. Followed by short plenary discussion on what ideas are appropriate for different outcomes. **Each participant to decide what delivery method** is appropriate for the learning outcomes identified and to begin to think about resources. LO 4 and 5
1700	**6 From outcomes to session design** **(b) Effective delivery** • Communication skills • How to deal with difficult situations	Leader input followed by small group exercises
1800 (latest)	**End of day**	

DAY 2

Time	Title	Format
0900	Introduction to the day	
0915	**7 Matching learning outcomes and delivery methods to materials**	Leader input followed by individual activity: **each participant to write a handout for a participant for one training session** describing: • Aim of the session • Material to be covered and how it will delivered (ppt, group work, role play, etc) • Learning outcome(s) • Explanation of how the session will be conducted. Discuss with buddy and improve if necessary. Buddy acts as a potential participant on your programme! LO 4 and 5
1045	Break	
1115	**8 Does the training need to be assessed?**	Plenary discussion of the pros and cons of assessment and/or feedback to participants. Suggestions for how training might appropriately be assessed or feedback given. Capture for later distribution. LO 6
1145	**9 It's not over until the evaluation is done!** • The training cycle • Transfer of training to the real review situation	Leader input: the importance of getting feedback from your participants and using it to improve the programme in the future. Each participant to construct a list of questions for a feedback questionnaire. LO 7
1245	Lunch	
1345	**10 Putting learning from this workshop into action** How to maximise retention	Leader input and discussion.
1415	**11 Summary and next steps** **12 Action planning**	Trainer summary of the day. Plenary or small group sharing of the most important learning points – one from each participant if possible. Where do we need to go next? • As a group of trainers • Personally as a trainer for my agency Personal reflection; formulation of personal next steps and action planning Discussion with buddies
1530	Close	

During the day, participants will build up their own personal portfolio of materials relevant to the reviewer training as follows:

- **a profile of the people to be trained and the subject matter** the training needs to cover
- **learning outcomes for some of the subject matter** identified above
- **the delivery method(s)** appropriate for the learning outcomes identified and initial consideration of resources
- **a handout for a participant for one training session**
- **a list of questions for a feedback questionnaire.**

ANNEX I.10   Programme International Visit (12SUB08)

Study Tour in Switzerland
29 October – 2 November 2012

Objectives
The objective of the second study tour is 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 overall objective of the international visits is to contribute to the further development of an Armenian quality culture.

Delegation
1. ANQA – Ruben Topchyan, director
2. ANQA – Susanna Karakhanyan, head policy development and implementation unit/deputy director
3. YSU representative – Alexander Grigoryan, deputy rector for academic affairs
4. YSMU representative – Armen Mkrtchyan, assistant professor and senior specialist quality assurance
5. SEUA representative – Eduard Hakobyan, head Electrical Engineering and Electric Drive (and panel chair)
6. YSU student representative – Laura Simonyan, student bachelor Romance-Germanic Philology
7. NVAO – Michèle Wera, senior policy advisor & project manager ARQATA

Programme

DAY 1 – Sunday 28 October: Zurich & Bern
− Travel to Bern via Zurich; no official programme

DAY 2 – 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

DAY 3 – Tuesday 30 October: Bern
− S3 – Swiss Center of Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education (OAQ)

DAY 4 – Wednesday 31 October: Bern & Lausanne
− S4 – Student Union (VSS-UNES-USU)
− Travel to Lausanne
− S5 – Visit HEI 1: University of Lausanne

DAY 5 – Thursday 1 November: Lausanne & Zurich
− S6 – Visit HEI 2: Federal Polytechnic Lausanne
− Travel to Zürich
− S7 – Meeting / Dinner with Rolf Heusser, chairman European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education (ECA)

DAY 6 – Friday 2 November: Zurich
− S8 – Visit HEI 3: University of Zürich
− Farewell lunch
− Travel home

ANNEX I.11   Presentation outcomes Line 1 on IQA (12REP07)

Tuesday 18 December 2012

Meeting 8 HEIs and ANQA on IQA: outcomes Line 1

Participants   2-3 representatives per HEI (e.g. quality coordinator, representative management,
                student) and ANQA coordinators on IQA (in total: max 30 participants)
Material   Report Line 1 (draft) to be sent by mail to all participants (*by ANQA*)

Meeting
16.00-16.30   Presentation outcomes Line 1 on the basis of report on IQA
16.30-18.00   Discussion

ANNEX I.12   Programme Training HEIs (YSU & YSMU) and ANQA on EQA (12SUB11)

Wednesday 19 December 2012

The training of both HEI and ANQA staff on EQA in general and writing a self-evaluation report in particular will be continued. During this session, HEI will get feedback on their draft self-evaluation report (SER) on institutional and programme level, and continue working on writing a SER. By the end of this final day's training, HEI should be able to write a SER to be finished by 1 April 2013 (Armenian text).

Participants   5 to 6 representatives per HEI and 2 ANQA coordinators (1 junior and 1 senior)
                (max 15 participants)
Material   Feedback on draft SER (by NVAO panel)

Meeting
9.00-9.30   Introduction
9.30-11.00   Feedback on SERs –part 1
11.00-11.30   Morning break
11.30-13.00   Feedback on SERs – part 2
13.00-14.00   Lunch break
14.00-15.30   Training on writing SER
15.30-16.00   Afternoon break
16.00-17.15   Preparing for the external audit/assessment
17.30-17.45   Evaluation

TAKING WRITING SELF-EVALUATION REPORTS TO THE FINAL STEP

Universities

Yerevan State University (YSU)
1. SER on institutional level;
2. SER on programme level: Bachelor in Biology and Master in Genetics

Yerevan State Medical University (YSMU)
1. SER on institutional level;
2. SER on programme level: MD programme.

No External Quality Assurance without Internal Quality Assurance

The further development of the internal quality assurance system and its implementation rely on team work within each HEI. Board members, deans, teaching staff and students need to join forces in order to make the internal quality assurance system work as it is intended: to enhance the quality of the individual programmes in a systematic way.

Ownership of Quality

The process of writing a self-evaluation report implies a collective reflection on the quality assurance system of the institute, and offers an opportunity for quality improvement. HEI are urged to make full use of this opportunity and to involve all HEI members in this process.

Also external stakeholders need to be included in the process of evaluation of and reflection on quality assurance. Stakeholders are clearly defined in ANQA's accreditation manual. In the implementation, however, stakeholders are not yet involved in a consistent way. The participation of alumni and the labour market needs further improvement.

Self-evaluation Report

The audit or assessment procedure starts with the application of the higher education institution providing ANQA with a self-evaluation report (SER). This document is submitted to a panel of peers, including a student member, carrying out the audit or assessment according to the ANQA procedures and standards.

A SER needs to be informative and useful explicating the present quality assurance system. Standards and criteria are well documented in a concise report. Appendixes are relevant and limited. Additional information and further evidence made available during the site visit will complete the picture.

The SER is a collaborative effort of a team. It needs to be an accurate analysis in a well-structured, pleasantly readable and easily accessible document. Most importantly, the SER needs to follow and correspond with the ANQA framework. All stakeholders both internal and external have made contributions, and have been actively involved in finalising the report. An abstract of the SER is published on the HEI's website.

HEIs at Work

All SERs have to cover all the standards and criteria of the respective ANQA frameworks. Also the panel will adhere to these frameworks. HEIs are advised to write a SER on the level of a criterion not on the level of the individual standards. Trying to explicitly focus on the compliance at the level of each individual standard will most likely result in SERs on a too detailed level. Also overlap needs to be avoided.

Each criterion of the framework on institutional level is linked to the strategic plan. It is important to write in the text per criterion in one or two sentences what the relation is between the criterion and the strategic plan. For the institutional SER it is necessary to rewrite 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 level of the textual remarks.

HEIs need to keep in mind that a panel will only be interested in relevant information within a comprehensible context. Too many details, too many side-tracks and too many repetitions are not conducive for a good understanding of the text, and it certainly does not help the panel in reviewing the quality of an institution or programme. So make the PDCA cycle for each criterion transparent by giving facts and findings, and unambiguous conclusions.

When it is not possible to describe the whole PDCA cycle, because there is e.g. no Check and Act it is essential to explain how these two stages of the PDCA cycle will be completed in the near future (end 2013). The text needs to explain which, when, how and by whom actions are taken to complete the PDCA cycle.

A SWOT, with the strong points and points for enhancement, is written per criterion

There will be some overlap between the frameworks on institutional level and programme level. It is not necessary to write the same text on both levels. In the SER on programme level one can refer to the text on institutional level. In the SER on programme level one can clarify in two or three sentences the main subject of the text on institutional level.

Volume
The maximum number of pages is 75 for a complete SER. This should be sufficient for covering all criteria and standards of the framework. This limitation implies that HEIs really need to reflect on what is relevant for the purpose of audit or assessment. Less is more.

The 'foundations' and regulations, and how the 'foundations' and regulations are established are part of the annex. The number of annexes is limited to maximum 15. In the SER itself, reference to annexes needs to be made by making a few explanatory remarks. The SER needs to clarify in two or three sentences in what way the annex contributes to giving evidence as to comply with a particular criterion.

Assistance and Guidance
The ARQATA project provides assistance and guidance in the writing process of the self-evaluation reports for pilots in June 2013. The deadline to hand in the final SERs in **English** is **1 May 2013**.

The guidance will be organized in two activities:
1)   online guidance by commenting on draft versions of the self-evaluation reports. This will be organized by e-mail but also Skype sessions could be part of this assistance.

2)   a final training in December 2012 of HEIs and ANQA on the preparation of SERs will go into the issues that manifest themselves during the guidance.

The assistance will have a 'hands-on' character. It has to be remembered that comments will be on a general level and are suggestions to the HEIs. At all times, HEIs remain responsible for the SERs. Also, te assistance does not include editing texts or correcting of the English language.

NVAO offers on line guidance and assistance directly to HEIs. Of course, ANQA process coordinators will be able to follow the process very closely. This procedure meets the requirements of independence separating advising/counseling (NVAO) and assessing (ANQA).

Assistance and Guidance Team
Three NVAO senior policy advisors, all former quality assurance coordinator at universities in the Netherlands and Flanders, will work as a team and comment on the draft SERs and give feedback by mail to HEIs (cc. ANQA).

Timeline SERs

Stage 1 – October/December 2012

Deadline SERs: 6 December 2012
Institutional level
- outline/ table content of the SER (criterion 1-10)
- criteria 1, 2 and 3 (note: rewrite the text of criteria 1 and 3)

Programme level
- outline/ table content of the SER (criterion 1-7)
- criteria 1 and 2

Meeting NVAO team: 11 December 2012
Feedback to YSU and YSMU, cc. ANQA: 13 December 2012

Stage 2 – December 2012/February2013

Deadline SERs: 7 February 2013
- institutional level: criteria 4, 5 and 6
- programme level: criteria 3 and 4

Meeting NVAO team: 12 February 2013
Feedback to YSU and YSMU, cc. ANQA: 14 February 2013

Stage 3 – February/March 2013

Deadline SERs: 7 March 2013
- institutional level: criteria 7, 8, 9 and 10 (note: rewrite the text of criteria10)
- programme level: criteria 5, 6 and 7.

Meeting NVAO team: mid-March 2013
Feedback to YSU and YSMU, cc. ANQA: mid-March 2013

Deadline: 1 April 2013 (Armenian text) and 1 May 2013 (English)

ANNEX 1

A SER in 10 Steps (training 1-3 March 2012)

1. Define project SER including timeline, activities, team

2. Collect analyses of data IQA (of the last 3 years)

3. Collect all policy documents IQA (e.g. policy on student assessment, internationalisation, plagiarism)

4. Describe facts and findings per standard using the documents

5. Get feedback from project team (internal stakeholders) per standard, and revise

6. Add analysis per standard using the analyses of the data

7. Get feedback from project team (internal stakeholders) on analysis per standard and revise

8. Write draft report

9. Consult both internal and external stakeholders

10. Finalise report

ANNEX I.13   Workshops ANQA on QA (12SUB13)

Wednesday 19 December 2012

Workshop on QA (part 1): QA tools continued
The further development of the professionalising of ANQA is the main goal of the workshop with ANQA management and staff. To this purpose tools introduced during previous training sessions are discussed and new tools are being introduced and developed by ANQA with assistance and guidance of NVAO.

Participants: ANQA management and staff including , coordinators and legal advisor

Meeting
9.00-9.30   Introduction
9.30-11.00   Existing QA tools
11.00-11.30   Morning break
11.30-13.00   New QA tools
13.00-14.00   Lunch break
14.00-15.30   New QA tools
15.30-16.00   Afternoon break
16.00-17.30   New QA tools

Thursday 20 December 2012

Workshop on QA (part 2): completing the QA handbook
This part of the workshop focuses on developing a QA handbook by and for ANQA. The tools offered during the various training sessions and workshops are to be made fit for purpose. These tools are the basic materials for the ANQA handbook.

Meeting
9.00-11.00   QA Handbook
                - aims & objectives, content and tools
                - tools: existing, missing, to be made fit for purpose > action plan to complete handbook

Workshop on external review (part 3): preparing ANQA for the external proof audit
By the end of 2012, ANQA will start preparing for the external review of the agency. The workshop will cover the following elements: the project proposal and the outline SER.

Meeting
11.30-13.00   Project proposal for external proof audit
13.00-14.00   Lunch break
14.00-16.00   Outline SER

ANNEX I.14   Agenda January Meeting Proof External Review Panel (13SUB06)

Vienna, Thursday 17 January 2013 (10.30 am until 5pm)

Issues to discuss mainly based on the ENQA guidelines for external reviews:

1. Introduction to ARQATA
    a. Line 1: internal quality assurance HEIs
    b. Line 2: external quality assurance HEIs including pilots two institutional audits and three programme assessments
    c. Line 3: quality assurance ANQA including proof external review
    d. Line 4: quality culture i.c. two international study tours

2. Purpose of the proof external review (Type A): possible outcomes (recommendations)

3. Key features of the review
    a. Notification of the ENQA Board (done)
    b. Terms of reference
    c. Panel (done)

4. Self-evaluation report
    a. role panel: suggestion Olav (*We could suggest that ANQA send us an informal draft already in early May. We will then be able to verify early whether the SER will be useful for us. If the report only reaches us just before the summer holidays, we will have almost no time for requesting/receiving clarifications/further documentation.*)
    b. guidance and assistance draft SER (NVAO)
    c. deadline 1 June 2013 (instead of 1 July?)

5. Site visit: review 8-11 September 2013
    a. Timeline before site visit
    b. During site visit
    c. After site visit

6. Report
    a. Outline
    b. Drafting process (panel)

7. Outcomes
    a. Extensive feedback session after review
    b. Presentation outcomes: national conference 9 &10 December 2013

8. Roles and responsibilities
    a. Chair
    b. Secretary
    c. Other panel members
    d. NVAO

9. Timeline in general

10. Financial issues

11. Final issues

ANNEX I.15   Agenda February Meeting Chairs Pilots YSU & YSMU (13SUB02/3/4/5)

The Hague, Wednesday 13 February 2013 (11 am until 4 pm)

Issues to discuss mainly based on the ANQA Accreditation Manual

12. Introduction to ARQATA
    a. Line 1: internal quality assurance HEIs
    b. Line 2: external quality assurance HEIs including pilots two institutional audits and three programme assessments
    c. Line 3: quality assurance ANQA including proof external review
    d. Line 4: quality culture i.c. two international study tours

13. Pilots
    a. Yerevan State University
        i. Institutional audit
        ii. Programme assessments: Bachelor in Biology & Master in Genetics
    b. Yerevan State Medical University
        i. Institutional audit
        ii. Programme assessment: General Medicine Programme (MD)

14. Key features
    a. Possible outcomes (recommendations)
    b. Terms of reference
        i. Accreditation criteria and standards (content; ANQA Manual pp. 34-46)
        ii. Accreditation procedure & Guidelines and criteria for peer-reviewers (process; ANQA Manual pp. 18-33; pp. 47-60)
        iii. WFME Global Standards Basic Medical Education (YSMU)
    c. Panels
    d. ASIIN observation reports (Nov & Dec 2011)

15. Self-evaluation reports
    a. Guidance and assistance draft SERs (NVAO)
    b. Max 75 pages & 15 annexes
    c. Deadline 1 May 2013

16. Site visits
    a. Draft programme June visit (general)
    b. Draft programme site visits
    c. Activities & timeline before site visits
        i. Draft programmes site visits
        ii. Draft programme preliminary panel meeting
        iii. Questions/issues arising from SER (panel)
        iv. List of questions/issues per session (secretary)

17. Reports
    a. Outline
    b. Drafting process (secretary & panel)

18. Outcomes
    a. Extensive feedback session after review
    b. Presentation outcomes: national conference 9 &10 December 2013

19. Roles and responsibilities
    a. Chair
    b. Secretary / ANQA coordinator
    c. Other panel members
    d. NVAO

20. Final issues

ANNEXES

PART II
(Results)

ANNEX II.1 Project website (12SUB01)

Separate attachment (screen shot website).

ANNEX II.2   Questionnaire Swiss Visit (12SUB08)

November 2012

	MEAN[5]
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. Diners 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**

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[5] 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**

TAKING WRITING SELF-EVALUATION REPORTS TO THE FINAL STEP

1. Introductory remark

In an earlier stage (Line 1) feedback was given on a number of criteria. It seems that little has been done with this feedback in that the text dealing with the same criteria in the present SERs has hardly changed. At this stage (Line 2, round 1) more or less the same remarks are repeated as they are still valid. In the next round (February 2013), however, it is expected that the feedback is used to improve the text. If remarks and suggestions are not clear, further assistance and guidance on line is available at all times. HEIs are urgently invited to make full use of that possibility.

2. General remarks on the SERs

− The self-evaluation reports clearly show that the institution is in an initial phase of implementing the bachelor-master structure. The management has made all the required rules and regulations and has put in place all sorts of programmes to ensure the implementation of the new system, but this is far from completed;

− There is a large difference between the formal state of affairs and the 'human' factor, the attitudes and skills of the teachers and the people involved in the programmes. There seems to be a lot of theoretical knowledge on the new system but the implementation of this new system both at institutional and on programme level is only just starting. This becomes evident with the description of the implementation of the learning outcomes and the revision of the programmes to adopt this new system. Also, the assessments are not fully adapted over to the new system;

− The problems involved in this change and initial phase that are expressed at university level present themselves also at the programme level;

− The SERs show the beginning of cyclical quality assurance, but in its earliest phase. The problems with implementing the new system should be tackled by (short) cyclical improvement schemes at the level of the teachers and those close to the students, not only at management level. This is lacking from the description in the SERs. How does the institution make a connection between the strategic mission and goals with regards to implementing the bachelor-master structure and the 'work floor' of academics and teachers? That is the main challenge;

− The international panel members are well aware of the Bologna process and the impact it had on institutional and programme level. There is no need therefore to go into too much detail in the SER (e.g. the description of the bama-structure);

− The SERs elaborate extensively on regulations and the status quo of work. There is a lack of information on processes, evaluation of processes and how to improve. The panel will be able only to check if the regulations are met but that is not really the purpose of the assessment. The panel wants to see how institutions and programmes evaluate and improve the quality.

3. Remarks on the texts

− There is some reflection and evaluation, but not enough. In fact, the institutional SERs are completely lacking in this respect. The achievements and shortcomings (SWOT) are not connected with the main text and are even contradictory.

− The texts focus too much on the formal status and structures and too little on the policies and practices that operate within the structure. They should show how people deal with the system and what problems they face and how they solve them or improve on the existing situation. Examples are the problem with bringing assessments in line with the new learning outcomes and the system of recruiting and evaluation of academics, which is not linked with a cyclical system of review.

− Often, the texts fail to grasp that the standards are about the effectiveness of the systems not about whether or not all the rules are in place or have been adopted. Try to focus the descriptions on this aspect of the standards.

4. Remarks on outline SERs
- An outline per criterion and per standard is a must for starting writing a SER. The method to be followed can be compared with writing a research proposal first and then doing research and writing a research paper. The outline is a framework with the most important arguments for the SER.
- There is a lack of arguments in the outline. The outlines now only show a summary of facts and a classification of these facts.

5. Remarks on institutional level

Criterion 1
- The text of the achievements and shortcomings does not connect very well with the main text. The main text only describes the process and structures, not how it is being operated in practice. The achievements and shortcoming introduce new and very important elements that are mentioned without context or explanation. Move these to the main text and discuss the challenges and shortcomings there. Use the short list of achievements and shortcomings just as a summary;
- Try to include more information on particular profiles and choices made by your institution. Be much more specific on how the university judges itself, not only in the achievements and shortcomings, but also in the main text;
- Try to emphasize what is unique and particular for the institution, and not the things that are general for all universities (e.g. offering higher education programmes);
- The text does not allow a good assessment of whether the current mission is a good one. There should be more reflection in the text;
- Every shortcoming should be followed by a plan of action, an expected result. That is cyclical quality management.

Criterion 2
- The text needs to be much more informative on the effectiveness of the structures and formal arrangements being described. In most cases it just sums up the formal rules but does not evaluate the working of these processes;
- Try to avoid general statements in the mains descriptive texts. Argue why certain choices have been made and do not present them as facts;
- There is a severe unbalance and lack of logical coherence between the list of achievements and shortcomings and the main text. Use the main text to discuss the shortcomings and the strong points by evaluating how things are going and what challenges are ahead. Also indicate for the weaknesses the way they are being dealt with. There is no information on the improvement processes and the monitoring in the present text.

Criterion 3
- When something is seen as a shortcoming, there should be a plan for improvement and a time frame for achieving results. The text leaves the reader with the undesirable impression that certain problems are just there and that the institution does not know how to deal with them. In itself, this is understandable in the new context, but there is no description of a plan of improvement;
- There should be more detailed data on the structure of quality assurance, using diagrams and organograms. Use pictorial information to avoid long descriptive passages;
- Ask yourself the questions: if something is a problem, what is its importance, who is dealing with it and what is the expected improvement? This shows how the institution is functioning as a learning organization, which is a crucial element in an institutional review.

6. Remarks on programme level

Criterion 1
  – Some of the achievements contradict with the shortcomings. In most of the shortcomings, there is no indication of what is being done to solve a problem;
  – The main text can be more specific and contain more examples to explain the argument better. It is often too descriptive and focused at the situation rather than at the process of improvement;
  – It is good that problems are clearly recognized and mentioned, but there is little sign of truly cyclical quality management. There are no measures for improvement or targets and time scheduled mentioned for the problems, such as the assessment of learning outcomes;
  – Much of the information in the text is given as statements, without qualification or mentioning the sources. Try to present them as observations by the people involved: what do teachers, students and the management think of the situation and what is their role in improving things? The process is more important than the static situation.

Criterion 2
  – The text gives a lot of information on the structure and the formalities, but fails to grasp the essence of the standard: is there a good and effective policy in recruiting the right teachers and in evaluating their performance. Are there enough measures to safeguard the professional and didactic training of teachers and how effective is this?
  – The text does not deal with the system that is in place to measure if there are deficiencies and how these are remedied. It also describes the teaching programme as a static entity. It should be part of a cyclical system of improvement; first evaluate and measure, then make a plan for the improvement and measure the outcomes;
  – This criterion is on personnel policy and should deal with the management structures and processes for recruiting, evaluating the right quality and quantity of teachers.

7. Remarks on annexes
  – The annexes do not always have the right connection with the main text. It is important that the content of the annexes substantiate to this text. Sometimes in the text there is a reference to the annex but there is a lack of arguments in the text why the information in the annex is important for the substantiation of the text;
  – The title of the annexes is not always in line with the title of the reference in the text;
  – Important annexes are missing: the strategic plan (old and new), the outline of the programme with modules, literature and teachers (programme level).

TAKING WRITING SELF-EVALUATION REPORTS TO THE FINAL STEP (2)

1 Introductory remark
– YSU and YSMU seem to have taken the earlier comments on board. In general, the texts per criterion on both programme and institutional level are more to the point and more accessible compared to the first texts (stage 1). The texts are better selected and placed at the right criteria and standards. There is still room for improvement but overall there is progression in writing the SERs;
– The descriptions per criterion and standard are still very factual and extensive, but there is more self-reflection and evidence of the administrative dealing with problems.
– The use of the SWOT analysis is better: achievements and shortcomings follow from the text.

2 General remarks on texts SERs (both on institutional and programme level)
– There are differences between both documents: the SERs on institutional level are more to the point and more informative than the SERs on programme level.
– The SERs lack a good description of the way improvements are being implemented and monitored. It is obvious that the programmes and the institutions are in a process of change and adaptation to the Bologna model. There are certain government plans to implement these changes, which are worked out by the institution and by the programme. The text would be much clearer if it laid out in a more general overview what the larger plan is and the roadmap for getting to the desired situation. This will help the uninitiated reader to better understand the many references to the government measures and regulations.
– The issues of teaching methods, quality assurance and personnel management are linked, but in the texts there is too much interference between the topics. Try to keep to the criteria and the standards and refer only to quality assurance when new information is added or when it is relevant for the specific description.
– Sometimes the texts fail to grasp that the criterion and standards are about the effectiveness of the systems not about whether or not all the rules are in place or have been adopted. Try to focus the descriptions on this aspect of the criteria and the standards.

3 Remark on programme level criterium 4
– Standard b: the assessment of the achieved learning outcomes is based on clearly stated and transparent policies and procedures as well as standards.
– The texts will not be enough for the panel to judge if the achieved learning outcomes meet the academic level (Armenian National Qualification Framework). The text have to give more information about how the programme organizes the assessment of the learning outcomes and what the results are. Do the students make a master thesis? How does the program organize (e.g. what criteria are used) the master thesis? Is there a list of master theses. It will not be enough to present the products of students during the side-visit. The text in the SERs has to provide input for the assessment of the level of the achieved learning outcomes by panel members.

4 Recommendation NVAO on institutional and programme level
The changes and innovations undertaken by both institutes and programmes are complex and take time to implement. It should be clear for the institution and programme which schedule and timetable are used and what the current situation is. It is unrealistic to expect that an institution can tackle all problems at once. Changing e.g. the style of teaching and setting up quality assurance and personnel management cannot be done all at once. Therefore, the institution and the programme should indicate priorities and targets within each of the criteria and for the SER as a whole. Which areas and problems will be dealt with first and what are the goals for the short and medium term? This helps to break down the process into manageable steps that can be monitored in time. Such a break down and list of priorities should be added to each criterion. It also helps the review panel to give a precise judgment and recommendations.

TAKING WRITING SELF-EVALUATION REPORTS TO THE FINAL STEP (3)

1 Introductory remark

Although the SERs have improved (see 2. General remarks on the texts), the gap between the current state of affairs and the high ambitions of the criteria in both frameworks is visible in the SERs. The SERs show that YSMU and YSU are putting a lot of effort in preparing themselves for the European Higher Education Area. But the ambitions and expectations are high if not unrealistic within the foreseen time frame.

2 General remarks on the texts

- The texts have improved, the institutional text a little better than the texts of the programmes. The texts read good, the English is clear and almost without mistakes. The texts are not too long (except for standard 10) and give an insight in the working of the institution and programmes;
- The use of the lists of achievements and shortcomings is much better: there is more connection to the main text and a more open evaluation;
- The text of some criteria is not always in line with the criteria in the framework. the text therefore gives no answer to the question that is central to the criteria;
- The notion of 'policy' is not well understood in both texts, but each at a different level. The description is mostly related to the current state of affairs and does not describe the process of planning and monitoring, which is what the standards where policy is concerned, are about;
- The texts show that there is attention for vital institutional processes (finances, information etc.). Yet, there are also large problems indicated in the text. This leads to some confusion for the reader: what is actually going on? It seems there are many ideals for the future and goals on a long term basis, but the planning for the short and medium term is the most urgent problem. That is not balanced well in the texts. Try to be not too smooth on the positive side and realistic only on the negative side. Treat both aspects equally realistic. Again, planning and prioritizing is needed to tackle all the major problems;
- The openness and honest evaluation of major problems in the text is good. It can be improved by also indicating the major measures for overcoming the problems.

ANNEX II.6   Pilots – Composition of Panels (13SUB02/03/04/05)

Subproject 13SUB02
Pilot institutional audit YSU, June 2013
Subproject 13SUB03
Pilot institutional audit YSMU, June 2013
Subproject 13SUB04
Pilot programme assessment YSU, June 2013
Subproject 13SUB05
Pilot programme assessment YSMU, June 2013

Pilots/Members	*Chair 1*	*Member 2*	*Member 3 (SEUA?)*	*Member 4 (AUA?)*	*Student 5 (QA trained)*	*Process coordinator*	*Secretary*
YSU	NVAO 1	NVAO 2	ANQA 5	ANQA 6	ANQA 1	ANQA PC 1 NVAO PC 1	ANQA PC 1?
YSMU	NVAO 1	NVAO 3	ANQA 5	ANQA 6	ANQA 2	ANQA PC 2 NVAO PC 2	ANQA PC 2?
Programme YSU (Biology)	NVAO 2	ANQA 7			ANQA 3	ANQA PC 3 NVAO PC 1	ANQA PC 3?
Programme YSMU (Med.)	NVAO 3	NVAO 1			ANQA 4	ANQA PC 4 NVAO PC 2	ANQA PC 4?

Procedure
NVAO and ANQA will agree on the composition of the panel in general terms: number and profile. The grid above is a first proposal. As to the profile, we simply follow ANQA regulations for the composition of panels (*Guidelines and Criteria for Peer-Reviewers*). As soon as panel members are identified by both ANQA and NVAO, HEIs are offered the opportunity to comment on the composition following ANQA's aforementioned guidelines.

Board meeting ANQA & HEI (in the presence of NVAO) – October 2012
ANQA will discuss the composition with both HEI at the highest level in the institution. This can be done during Q-week in the presence of both K. Dittrich (NVAO) and P. Rullmann (TU Delft). In doing so, full use is made of their experience as chair NVAO (K. Dittrich) and board member HEI (P. Rullmann). When starting the process of institutional audits both had a similar meeting.

Purpose of this meeting is manifold: HEI and ANQA discuss
  – the general outline audit (ANQA)
  – the composition of the panel;
  – the focus of the audit following the HEIs profile, good practice, issues, concerns, strengths/weaknesses etc.;
  – the planning;
  – practicalities (e.g. language)

Participants ANQA: director and process coordinator(s).

NVAO experts
It is advisable that NVAO experts chair the panels for the four pilots. These chairs will also be involved in at least one other assessment/audit either as chair or panel member. This is done for reasons of consistency and efficiency. All NVAO panel members have been QA trained and have broad experience in assessment procedures both in national and international settings.

At the moment we envisage the following experts:
- NVAO 1: prof. dr. **Ben Van Camp**, Free University Brussels (Belgian) – CONFIRMED
- NVAO 2: prof. dr. **Jan Kijne**, University Leiden (Dutch) – CONFIRMED
- NVAO 3: prof. dr. **Harry Hillen**, Maastricht University (Dutch)

CVs of the three NVAO experts are enclosed. At least two of them (H. Hillen and B. Van Camp) showed interest in ARQATA at an earlier stage. However, availability is a major issue here. It is important therefore to start looking for panel members early in the process.

ANQA experts
For the institutional audit we suggest five members including the student; for the programme assessment four including the student will do. ANQA guidelines say: "It may include five to seven experts."

Armenian experts are drawn from one state HEI and one private HEI. ANQA already suggested the American University of Armenia; in addition, NVAO would like to suggest the State Engineering University of Armenia (SEUA).

The SEUA has been closely involved in ARQATA, and all parties regret that this HEI will not continue in Line 2 on EQA. Even so, SEUA can still participate 'at the other side of the table' i.e. as the object to be assessed but as an assessor. As such, SEUA still profits in a direct way from ARQATA.

Taking the involvement of SEUA one step further, NVAO invites ANQA to consider **Eduard Hakobyan**, PhD, as expert panel member for the institutional audit. He has broad experience in QA and assessments, meets all ANQA criteria and has shown a keen interest in ARQATA. He is referred to as ANQA 5 in the grid.

For the ANQA members for the programme assessment, it is absolutely necessary that they are still <u>actively</u> involved in teaching and research, and/or the professional field given the fact that the chairs are retired professors.

Student members
Students are expected to have undergone a QA training. We envisage four students, one for each assessment procedure. ANQA guidelines say: "nominations for student representatives are requested from institutional student organizations."

ANQA process coordinators & secretaries
As of now, we want to work more closely with ANQA staff members responsible for the four assessments. ANQA will appoint four ANQA process coordinators (not two), so one per assessment as to maximise the learning effect for ANQA:
1. YSU > ANQA PC 1
2. YSMU > ANQA PC 2
3. YSU > ANQA PC 3
4. YSMU > ANQA PC 4

Also, four different reports need to be written and we will be working with different panels. The appointed process coordinators must be fluent in English as the assessment will be carried out in English. All four ANQA process coordinators will be assisted by NVAO.

ANQA also needs to decide as to whether the role/task of process coordinators and secretary are performed by one and the same ANQA staff member. If not, the secretaries need to be identified in due course (cf. grid).

Panel meeting
NVAO will organise a panel meeting with the NVAO experts as soon as an agreement has been reached between all parties concerned. ANQA will do the same: a meeting the Armenian panel members in Yerevan. These meetings will be prepared in October by both ANQA and NVAO.

(NVAO, 22 September 2012)

CVs NVAO chairs

NVAO 1 – Prof. dr. Ben Van Camp
MD (1971), Specialist Internal Medicine, Hematology (1976), PhD (1980)
Actual position
President of the Board of Governors of the University Hospital (UZ Brussel) and steering committee of the University Medical Center-Brussels project.
Member of the "OECD Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE)", as delegate for the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLIR) since 2011.
Full Professor in Hematology (since 1988)
Past positions
Rector of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (2000-2008) and Dean of the Faculty of Medicine (1994-2000). In both capacities he adapted the Academic and administrative Organisation of the University and led the implementation of the "Bologna" changes with emphasis on curriculum changes and quality assurance in all aspects of the academic mission (research, education and services to society).
As an active member (2007-2011) of the Steering Comité of UNICA (Network of the Universities of the Capitals of Europe), he took part in the evaluation processes of member universities and initiated efforts for joint International Master and PhD programs.
Head Division of Clinical Hematology (UZBrussel) (1985-2012).
Panel member NVAO institutional audit Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam (2012).
Honorary titles
Belgian Franqui Chair University of Antwerp (2001); Member of the Royal Flemish Academy of Medicine (2002); King Albert II of Belgium has honoured him with the peerage of Baron (2007)

NVAO 1 – Prof. dr J.W. (Jan) Kijne (1947), retired professor in bioscience at Leiden University
J. Kijne was professor in fytotechnology (1997–2006) and bioscience (2006–2010) in Leiden, and guest professor at Tromsø University, Norway (1995–2000). He also was educational director of the biology programmes (1996–2002) in Leiden, vice dean of the Faculty of Science (2002–2008), and scientific director of the Pre-University College, Leiden (2004–2008). J. Kijne has been chair of the accreditation committee for the degree programmes in biology in the Netherlands.

NVAO 3 – Prof. dr. H.F.P. (Harry) Hillen (1943) was trained as internist and specialist in hemato-oncology. In 1993 he was appointed as professor of Internal Medicine and Medical Oncology at Maastricht University. In 1996 he became head of the Department of Internal Medicine and director of the Internist specialty training at the Academic Hospital Maastricht. He has published over 100 scientific papers in the research domains of oncology and general internal medicine.
In 2003 he was nominated as dean of the Faculty of Medicine at Maastricht University and in 2007 as dean of the Faculty of Health Medicine and Life Sciences (FHML).
He was vice-president of the board of Maastricht University Medical Centre +.
Medical training and education were fields of special interest during his academic career.
Internationally, he was board member of the European Federation of Internal Medicine, and editor of the "European Journal of Internal Medicine". Since 2001 he is Fellow of the American College of Medicine.
After his retirement at 65, he is working now as adviser to the Board of Maastricht University with assignments in international medical education and in international university ranking. In 2008 and 2011/12 he was the chairman of the accreditation committee for the undergraduate medical training programs in the Netherlands. Chair initial accreditation of four off-shore medical schools (NVAO procedure).

ANNEX II.7   Pilots – Composition of Panels (13SUB02/03/04/05)

Separate attachment (dated 16 November 2012)

ANNEX II.8   Meeting Chairs Pilots YSU & YSMU (13SUB02/3/4/5)

Main Outcomes February Meeting (The Hague, 13 February 2013)

Present
1 prof. dr. Ben Van Camp, Free University Brussels
2 prof. dr. Harry Hillen, Maastricht University
3 prof. dr. Jan Kijne, Leiden University
4 Frank Wamelink, MA, NVAO
5 Michèle Wera, MA, NVAO

General
− The main objective of the four ARQATA pilots is offering commendations and recommendations for quality improvement on institutional and programme level through peer review. Panel members are 'critical friends' rather than assessors.
− Leading principles for the pilots will be the Armenian criteria and standards, and procedures as stipulated in the ANQA manual. Obviously, the panel will also take into consideration the local circumstances. In addition, the panel will review the MD programme according to international criteria.
− A major concern of the chairs is the composition of the four panels. Indeed, the quality of an assessment depends largely on the quality of the panel. If it proves to be difficult for ANQA to find suitable panel members, NVAO can make some suggestions for international peers (not Dutch or Flemish). However, financing of their participation needs to be covered by a third party. The ARQATA budget does not allow for extra panel members. ANQA will be asked about the current state of affairs, and how NVAO can be of any assistance. (*action: NVAO*)
− The assessments are pilots and not all issues will be covered in the limited time available. The panel will therefore prioritize and focus on topics to be identified on the basis of the self-evaluation reports (SER). HEIs can put forward some specific areas of interest as well. ANQA coordinators are expected to consult HEIs on this matter. (*action: ANQA & HEIs*)
− It would be helpful to receive a general outline of how health care is organized in Armenia for a better understanding of the local context of medical education. (*action: ANQA & HEIs*)

Programme assessment
− The chairs (and other panel members) would like to receive a study guide or handbook (pdf-file?) for the three programmes to be assessed (MD, BSc Biology and MSc Genetics) prior to the site visit. (*action: ANQA & HEIs*)
− Detailed information on students, staff and research on programme level needs to be included in the SERs. The required information is listed in a separate document. (*action: ANQA & HEIs*)
− In order to assess the achieved learning outcomes, panel members must judge students' work. The panel needs a selective list of 25 final research papers, master theses or any other appropriate documents as soon as possible, one list for each respective programme (MD, BSc Biology and MSc Genetics). The list of works covers the past 3 years and various subdisciplines, and contains student name, title (if need be, translated into English) supervisor(s), grade, year of graduation. Preferably, the grades should range from hardly acceptable to excellent. From each of the three lists, 12 papers will be selected and read by the panel prior to the site visit. (*action: ANQA & HEIs*)
− Session with professional field (MD programme): representatives of practising doctors, spin-offs companies, hospitals, umbrella organisations etc.
− Teaching material (MD programme): the panel will look at two courses in more detail:
    o Microbiology (year III);
    o Internal diseases (year IV & V).
All appropriate information should therefore be available at the meeting (site visit) including syllabi, readers, students assessments, course evaluations (data and analysis), pass ratio, staff involved, research opportunities related to both courses, etc. The panel would also like to meet staff members of both courses. They should therefore be part of the delegation. (*action: ANQA & HEIs*)

Organisation
−   At the start, NVAO will assist the chairs but in due course the four ANQA coordinators will take over that responsibility. The idea is that NVAO offers guidance and assistance to ANQA in performing its tasks.
−   The chairs will meet again 16 May 2013 in order to discuss the SERs and the final programme for the site visits. The deadline for receipt of the SERs (in English) is 1 May 2013. It is expected that ANQA organizes a similar meeting with the Armenian panel members in order to prepare for the site visit.
−   Based on experiences with institutional audits and making good use of the ASIIN observation reports on previous audits in Armenia, the chairs agreed on a number of organisational issues:
     1. The chairs invite the delegations to participate in the interviews from an **open and professional attitude**.
     2. No **mobile phones** during meetings.
     3. Each panel will be assisted by one of the four appointed ANQA **coordinators**. ANQA management is asked to restrain from participating in the meetings.
     4. A professional **translator**/interpreter needs to be available at all times (no student, no ANQA staff member). (*action: ANQA*)
     5. Each of the four appointed ANQA coordinators is expected to prepare the first panel meeting by analysing and commenting on the SER. This **analysis** will reach the panel 10 May 2013 at the latest (meeting chairs is scheduled for 16 May). (*action: ANQA)*
     6. If need be, **additional information** will be asked before the actual site visits.
     7. Panel members will be asked to comment on the self-evaluation report (SER) as input for the first panel meeting. Each of the four appointed ANQA coordinators sees to it that all panel members send their comments before 15 May 2013. The coordinator collects the material and prepares an overview of the comments per criterion. This **compilation** of comments will reach the panel at least one week before the actual site visit. (*action: ANQA & panel)*
     8. In addition, the coordinators will present **a list of questions per session** arising from the SER, the coordinator's first analysis and the panel's comments. This **analysis** will reach the panel 30 May 2013 at the latest. (*action: ANQA)*
     9. ANQA coordinators will discuss the **draft programme** of the four visits with both HEIs and programme directors/deans. ANQA will inform the panel of the outcomes, and present a list of representatives per session to choose from. (*action: ANQA & HEIs)*
     10. Sessions will consist of 6 to 8 **representatives** to be selected by the panel i.c. chairs. A list to choose from will be available 10 May 2013 at the latest (meeting chairs is scheduled for 16 May). (*action: ANQA & HEIs)*
−   The four ANQA coordinators are expected to report the outcomes of this February meeting to all panel members and the HEIs. The chairs (and NVAO) would appreciate any feedback to maximise the success of this joint enterprise. The chairs are willing to answer any questions that might arise. (*action: ANQA)*

Deadlines
−   Asap   Composition of panels
−   Asap   List of a selection of final research papers / theses
−   Asap   Study guide or handbook (pdf-file?) for each of the three programmes
−   Asap   general outline of health care in Armenia
−   1 April   SERs (Armenian)
−   1 May   SERs (English)
−   10 May   List with representatives to choose from > sent to panel
−   10 May   Analysis SER by each of four ANQA coordinators > sent to panel
−   15 May   Comments panel members on SER > sent to ANQA coordinator
−   16 May   2nd Meeting chairs (The Hague)
−   30 May   Compilation of comments panel members on SER > sent to panel
−   30 May   Questions per session > sent to panel

PILOTS – DETAILED INFORMATION (Feb 2013)
It would be helpful to include detailed information as specified below in the SERs.

0 Criteria *(only for MD programme)*
To unable the panel to assess the intended and achieved learning outcomes, the SER needs to include the frame of reference for the MD programme in Armenia. Reference to other (international) frameworks can be made. It would also be helpful to include:
- A comparison of the programme's competencies to other frameworks;
- The programme's competency measurement by course;
- The relationship between intended learning outcomes and master qualifications in European Higher Education (Dublin Descriptors).

1 Students
The panel would like to receive a track record of students for the last 10 years. This record should list the following information:
1. Number of applications
2. Admission rate including report on admission (e.g. students admitted but not meeting the admission requirements)
3. Attrition rate

(only for MD programme)
4. Number of students granted an MD
5. Number of students accepted in residency programmes

2 Faculty
Please provide an overview of faculty directly involved in the programme. This information should be listed in the following format:
1. Name
2. Discipline
3. Resident or visiting
4. Programme involvement: core or elective
5. Qualifications
    a. MD or PhD
    b. University
    c. Year
6. Current involvement in research
7. Number of publications over the past 5 years

(only for MD programme)
8. Clinical experience

3 Research
In what way are students involved in research? Are they in any way directly involved? Does the programme provide specific research related courses? If so, are these courses core courses or electives? In what way is faculty actively involved in research (cf. 2)?

4 Assessment
A policy on student assessment and the examination regulation need to be available. Please explain the assessment procedure and various responsibilities. What proof can be given that student assessments are valid, reliable and transparent? What methodology is being used? When and what is tested by whom? Who is responsible for student assessment in general? For the validation of the tests?

5 Library

Please give a short description of the library facilities available for students. How is the library equipped? In how far do students have access to relevant and current publications?

6 General documentation

The following documents (*one copy in print*) should be available at the site visit[6]:

1. Syllabi of all courses including the electives ordered per term/year;
2. Literature, handbooks, readers etc. for all courses;
3. More detailed documentation on the final research paper/thesis (procedures, supervision, assessment criteria etc.);
4. A selective list of 25 research papers/theses over the past 3 years (different grades, different subdisciplines) including name student, title, supervisor(s), grade, year of graduation. From this list, 12 papers will be selected and judged by the panel;
5. Examination regulation;
6. A list of all staff members;
7. Detailed documentation on the quality system;
8. Student guides / handbooks;
9. Minutes of meetings with stakeholders;
   (only for MD programme)
10. Reports of resident performance of graduates.

Access to the school's website in the meeting room would be helpful, if only for the panel to consult evaluation data online.

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[6] Some of these documents will probably be part of the SER. It would be helpful though to have these documents also in print at the meeting.

ANNEX II.9   Meeting Panel Proof External Review (13SUB06)

Main Outcomes January Meeting (Vienna, 17 January 2013)

Present
1. Helmut Konrad (chair), dean Faculty of Arts and Humanities, and former rector Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, Austria;
2. Elisabeth Fiorioli, secretary general Austrian Rectors' Conference, and former managing director Austrian Accreditation Council, Austria;
3. Stephanie Maurer (secretary), scientific collaborator, Ministry of Education, and former at the Swiss Center of Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education (OAQ), Switzerland;
4. Michèle Wera, senior policy advisor NVAO and project manager ARQATA.

Olav Øye, student from Norway at the Free University of Brussels (ULB) and representative of the European Students' Union (ESU), did not attend the meeting; he gave input by mail before and after the meeting.

General
− ANQA opts for type A of external review: a review with the sole purpose to test compliance with the ENQA membership criteria.
− The coordinating body for the proof external review is NVAO. The composition of the review panel as suggested by NVAO has already been agreed upon by ANQA. All panel members are experienced ENQA reviewers. The ENQA Secretariat has been notified about the ARQATA initiative to avoid any misunderstandings about the aim and objectives of the proof review.
− The outline of the review (terms of reference, protocol, and preliminary timetable) will be agreed upon with ANQA as soon as possible. The basic principles have already been discussed with ANQA. (*action: NVAO & ANQA*)
− Leading principles for the review will be the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) and the Guidelines for external reviews of QA agencies. Obviously, the panel will also take into consideration the local circumstances.
− Being a proof external review, its main objective is offering commendations and recommendations for quality improvement through peer review. Panel members are to be perceived as 'critical friends' rather than assessors. The idea is one of coaching (panel) and learning (ANQA). ANQA will be asked whether these intentions meet the expectations of ANQA. (*action: NVAO*)
− At the start, NVAO will assist the panel but in due course the secretary to the panel will take over that responsibility.
− All relevant documents related to the proof external review will be publicly available (also through the ARQATA website) as part of the obligations towards the WorldBank.

Before the site visit
− The panel has two major concerns regarding the self-evaluation report (SER): (a) as much as possible evidence based; (b) all relevant documents need to be in English. (*action: ANQA*)
− To maximise the learning effect for ANQA the panel wants to comment on the draft SER. In fact, the panel objects to NVAO going through the SER. This filter will undeniably mystify whose work the panel will be reviewing: NVAO's or ANQA's. The panel would like to receive the draft SER by mid-May 2013. The panel's comments will be available by 1 June 2013. A final SER should reach the panel by 1 August 2013. (*action: ANQA & panel*)
− A draft programme for the site visit will be agreed upon early March 2013. ANQA will present a list of representatives per session to choose from by 15 May. Sessions will consist of 5 to 6 representatives to be selected by the panel. The panel can nevertheless suggest to meet others than those presented. The final site visit schedule will be available by 20 August. (*action: NVAO & panel & ANQA*)
− Panel members will be asked to comment on the SER before 20 August 2013. The secretary collects the material and prepares an overview of the comments standard. This compilation of comments will reach the panel at least one week before 1 September. (*action: panel*)
− If need be, additional information will be asked before the actual site visits. (*action: panel*)
− In addition, the secretary will present a list of questions per session arising from the SER and the panel's comments. This list will reach the panel 1 September 2013 at the latest. (*action: panel*)

- The review will be conducted in English. However, a professional translator/interpreter needs to be available at all times (no student, no ANQA staff member). (*action: ANQA*)

During the site visit
- No mobile phones during meetings.
- The panel would like to invite ANQA for a dinner on the evening prior to the final panel meeting i.e. Wednesday 11 September 2013. (who?)

After the site visit
- The feedback session can consist of two meetings: ANQA staff and ANQA board. The panel presents its findings and the outcomes of the review. In the ENQA procedure, the meeting is a one way information event with no room for discussions. Since the external review of ANQA is a proof review, the panel will be less strict because of the learning effect.
- A more extensive feedback session can be organised in December 2013 based on the final review report for a broader audience during the National Stakeholders' Conference. At that occasion, the chair is willing to discuss/present a QA topic of interest to Armenian HEIs.
- The initial draft of the panel's report is scheduled for 10 November 2013; a revised report for 20 November. ANQA will receive the review report for comment on its factual accuracy. The panel will submit its final report to ANQA and NVAO by 1 December 2013. (*action: panel)*

Practicalities
- NVAO will take care of accommodation, tickets and visa. Most likely the panel will travel as a group, some leaving from Vienna, other travelling through Paris. Suggested departure and arrival dates are: Saturday 7 and Sunday 15 September 2013. (*action: NVAO*)

Dates
- 15 May   draft SER
- 1 June   panel's comments on draft SER
- 1 August   final SER

- 20 August   panel's written comments on SER
- 1 Sep   Compilation of comments panel members on SER > sent to panel
- 1 Sep   Questions per session > sent to panel

- 1 March   draft programme site visit
- 15 May   draft programme including list of names (to choose from)
- 20 August   final programme (on the basis of SER)

- 8-12 Sep   site visit

- 10 Nov   initial draft review report
- 20 Nov   revised report
- 1 Dec   final report

- 9-10 Dec?   National Stakeholders' Conference

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Proof External Review – Programme Sep & Dec 2013

Visit 1 – September 2013

Proof external review: 8 – 12 September 2013
- Sunday 8 Sep, 14:00 – panel meeting
- Monday 9 Sep – interviews
- Tuesday 10 Sep – interviews
- Wednesday 11 Sep – interviews + diner panel/ANQA
- Thursday 12 Sep – interviews (morning), panel meeting (afternoon) and extensive feedback session ANQA (at 16:00)

Visit 2: chair (?) – December 2013

National Stakeholders' Conference: 9 & 10 December 2013 (?)
- Monday 9 Dec – Conference day 1: outcomes proof external review
- Tuesday 10 Dec – Conference day 2: seminar/workshop/presentation on QA topic
- [Wednesday 11 Dec – meeting ANQA/NVAO/PIU: end of project]

Proof External Review – Site Visit Schedule

DAY 1 & 2 – Meeting with ANQA
➢ Sessions with ANQA
➢ Strong preference for English speaking representatives
➢ 15' in between sessions

1. ANQA review committee

2. Minister of Education
3. Ministry of Education

4. Student representatives

5. ANQA director and vice director
6. ANQA coordinators
7. ANQA supporting staff

8. University Council and/or Rectors' Conference
9. Teaching staff unions at the national trade union level as well as at uni/programme level
10. Other stakeholders?

11. Governing Board
12. Board of Trustees?
13. Advisory Board
14. Accreditation Committee

15. National chairs expert panels
16. National experts, panel members

DAY 3 & 4 – Meeting with HEIs
➢ 4 sessions with 3 types of HEIs, total of 12 sessions
➢ Each session 45' with 15' in between sessions
➢ Strong preference for English speaking representatives

− Type of HEIs:
   o HEIs having undergone institutional audits
   o HEIs not having participated yet in institutional audits
   o Private HEIs
− Type of meetings:
   o Top management
   o QA staff
   o Students
   o Teaching staff