

**“NATIONAL CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE”
FOUNDATION**



**EXPERT PANEL REPORT
INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION OF
YEREVAN STATE ARMENIAN-GREEK COLLEGE OF TOURISM, SERVICE AND FOOD
INDUSTRY (SNCO)**

Yerevan – 2025

INTRODUCTION

The institutional accreditation of Yerevan State Armenian-Greek College of Tourism, Service and Food Industry (SNCO) (hereinafter referred to as the TLI or College) is carried out based on the application submitted by the College. The process of institutional accreditation is organised and coordinated by “National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance” Foundation (hereinafter ANQA), guided by regulation on “State Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Academic Programmes in RA” set by RA Government Decree N 978-Ն (dated June 30, 2011) and by Decree N 959-Ն on “Approval of RA Standards for Professional Education Accreditation” (dated June 30, 2011).

The expert examination was carried out by the independent expert panel formed in accordance with the requirements set by the “National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance” foundation in the regulation on “Formation of the Expert Panel”. The Panel is composed of 4 local experts.

The accreditation process was funded by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Armenia.

The institutional accreditation is aimed not only at external evaluation of quality assurance but also at continuous improvement of the quality of management and academic programmes at the institution. Special emphasis was placed on the cooperation between the institution and employers, as well as its impact on the content of education.

The report hereby comprises the results of the evaluation of the institutional capacities of the TLI by the State Accreditation Criteria and Standards.

Context of the Evaluation of the VET Institution's Activities

Background and History of the Institution

The College was established in 1943 under the name “Food Industry Technical School.” Throughout its operation, the institution has undergone several name changes. In 2002, by Order No. 447-M of the RA Minister of Education and Science, the “Food Industry Technical School” was renamed “Yerevan State College of Food Industry.” Subsequently, in 2006, by Order No. 357-A of the RA Minister of Education and Science, the “Yerevan State College of Food Industry” was renamed “Yerevan Greek-Armenian State College of Tourism, Services, and Food Industry” SNCO.

The registered address of the College is: Republic of Armenia, Yerevan, Arshakunyats Avenue.

In 2023, the College underwent its first institutional accreditation and was granted a two-year conditional institutional accreditation.

Development Directions and Educational Programmes

According to the 2024–2025 academic year data, the College has a total of 1,325 students. To ensure the implementation of its academic programs, 85 faculty members deliver instruction, of whom 64 are full-time and 22 are part-time. All 85 faculty members hold higher education qualifications, among them 3 hold scientific degrees, and only 1 lecturer holds a secondary professional education qualification. Tracer studies of graduates indicate that the majority are employed in their professional field. According to the 2023–2024 academic year analysis, the College had 254 graduates, of whom 129 (50.7%) were employed in their specialty with the support of the Career Center Coordinator.

The College currently implements nine academic programs in the following specialties, awarding the corresponding qualifications:

- Service Organization – Service Sector Manager
- Tourism Services Management with Advanced Foreign Language Training – Tourism Service Manager
- Administration with Advanced Foreign Language Training – Administrator
- Bread, Pasta, and Confectionery Production Technology – Technologist in Bread, Pasta, and Confectionery Production
- Fermentation Production Technology and Enology – Technologist in Fermentation Production and Enology
- Dairy Production Technology – Technologist in Dairy Production
- Public Catering Technology – Technologist in Public Catering
- Tourism (Dual Education) – Specialist in Tourism Services
- Transport Management and Logistics – Logistics Coordinator

Within the scope of the expert review, the distribution of teaching staff involved in the evaluated academic programs is as follows:

- Public Catering Technology academic program – 32 lecturers
- Bread, Pasta, and Confectionery Production Technology academic program – 29 lecturers
- Administration with Advanced Foreign Language Training academic program – 30 lecturers.

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

The expertise of the Yerevan State Armenian-Greek College of Tourism, Service and Food Industry was carried out by the independent expert panel, formed in accordance with the requirements of the "Regulation on the Formation of the Expert Panel" of the «National Centre for Professional Education Quality Assurance» Foundation. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with 10 institutional accreditation criteria set forth in the RA Government Decree N 959-Ն, dated June 30, 2011.

Following its first institutional accreditation, the College has aligned its overall development priorities and managerial decision-making with the 2023–2028 Strategic Plan (hereinafter, the "SP"). The SP was developed considering the outcomes of the previous accreditation process, the expert panel's advisory feedback, and the findings of consultations with internal stakeholders and employers. It is commendable that the College has demonstrated a consistent commitment to implementing the actions outlined in the Follow-up plan.

The College's governance system operates in accordance with the principle of collegiality, thereby ensuring transparency in decision-making, stakeholder participation, and a clear delineation of managerial functions. Governance efforts have predominantly focused on enhancing infrastructure and educational resources, strengthening accountability mechanisms, expanding external and international cooperation, and modernizing academic programs, culminating in several positive institutional developments.

However, regarding the quality assurance (QA) system, data collection processes, and mechanisms for data-informed decision-making, the expert panel notes substantial areas for improvement. Although a set of QA-related documents has been developed, the existing mechanisms do not yet fully align with the institution's strategic objectives and development priorities. Particularly, the survey system remains inadequate: it lacks methodological rigour and clearly defined objectives, demonstrates low stakeholder participation, and the results are not systematically utilised as evidence for decision-making or continuous improvement.

The College's academic programs are subject to periodic review and continuous enhancement, informed by labor market demands, employer feedback, and outcomes of collaborative activities. In recent years, almost all academic programs have undergone structural and content-related revisions, including the introduction of new subjects and contemporary thematic components. Employers have been actively engaged in both program revision and internship implementation processes, thereby ensuring a practical foundation for the development of students' professional competencies. Tracer study results further demonstrate strong labor market integration of graduates, with an average professional employment rate of approximately 50–60%, which is considered relatively high within the vocational education sector.

Following the previous accreditation process, the College has taken consistent measures to upgrade its infrastructure and facilities. Substantial improvements have been made to the physical environment, including renovation of the building, roof, and classrooms. Additionally, a new state-of-

the-art kitchen laboratory equipped with relevant technological tools has been established. These improvements have significantly strengthened the practical component of the educational process and advanced the overall learning environment. At the same time, the expert panel emphasizes the importance of maintaining resource enhancement as a strategic priority. In particular, it is recommended to separate the existing kitchen laboratory from the wine- and dairy-processing facilities and establish independent laboratories for these disciplines. This recommendation is based on the limited compatibility between the respective fields and the strict hygienic and sanitary requirements that can be more effectively ensured in specialized laboratory settings.

Regarding the faculty, it should be noted that in recent years the College has adopted a policy of involving practitioners from the field, thereby localizing best professional practices and fostering a more practical orientation of the educational process.

In conclusion, the expert panel confirms that the College, overall, ensures the credible awarding of qualifications. The panel positively assesses the College's efforts to engage students, particularly those enrolled in production-oriented programs, in creative and practical activities. However, in research-oriented work, most student assignments still lack a systematic research component and remain at an early stage of development. The internal Quality Assurance Unit needs to further enhance the research dimension of student work by ensuring appropriate methodological guidance, clear requirements, and effective monitoring mechanisms.

The expert panel also highlights internationalisation as a strategic priority, a priority emphasised by the Governing Board, which actively contributes to establishing international partnerships to position the College as a competitive and progressive institution. To implement professional academic programs, the College collaborates with approximately 70 active local partners across all program profiles. The systematic expansion of this partnership network contributes to program implementation, resource enhancement, and students' professional development. The College has also gained early experience and demonstrated initial success in international cooperation, including steps undertaken toward participation in Erasmus+ initiatives.

Overall, the expert panel concludes that the College has a stable development dynamic.

Strengths of the Institution:

- Strategic long-term planning, based on the outcomes of the previous accreditation and feedback from stakeholders.
- A collegial governance structure that ensures stakeholder engagement and accountability.
- Continuous improvement of academic programs, informed by employer feedback and labor market demands.
- Effective mechanisms for student recruitment, needs assessment, and career support embedded in institutional practices.
- Sustainable increase in student enrollment numbers.
- Involvement of industry practitioners in the delivery of academic programs, enhancing practical learning.

- Growth in graduates' employment rates in the labor market.
- Implementation of a performance evaluation system for faculty, followed by targeted professional development initiatives.
- Ongoing improvement of professional infrastructure and resources aimed at strengthening students' practical skills.
- Collaboration with international and local partners, contributing to the development of students' practical competencies.

Weaknesses of the Institution:

- Ambiguity and non-measurability of certain indicators included in the Strategic Plan.
- Absence of methodological guidelines for the implementation of research activities.
- Inconsistency in reporting formats across departments and lack of analytical depth in reports.
- Insufficient in-depth analyses within the quality assurance processes.

Main recommendations:

Data-Driven Management

1. Review the indicators for measuring the attainment of the goals and objectives defined in the SP, ensuring their measurability and clear targeting.
2. Ensure that monitoring reports and internal evaluations of the SP are aligned with its priorities and indicators, providing a systematic analysis of the strategy implementation progress.
3. Introduce mechanisms for diversifying financial resources (e.g., international grants, production-based income, etc.), which will expand funding opportunities and strengthen the college's infrastructure.
4. Implement a unified methodology for reporting, ensuring analytical interpretation of results, alignment with defined KPIs, and improvement-oriented recommendations linked to strategic priorities.
5. Review and update the Quality Assurance policy and regulation, clarifying the core purpose of the QA system, its objectives, key stakeholders and their responsibilities, operational mechanisms, methodological approaches, and toolkit.
6. Strengthen the linkage between QA processes and management, ensuring data-driven decision-making, more substantiated strategic planning, and enhanced transparency.
7. Develop a clear methodology for surveys, including goal setting, definition of target groups,

structural design of instruments, and minimum participation criteria.

8. Revise and improve the content of survey tools to enable in-depth analyses, identification of issues, trend comparison, and evidence-based conclusions supporting improvement decisions.
9. Diversify QA data collection mechanisms, complementing surveys with additional tools.
10. Update and modernize the official website, ensuring inclusion of a dedicated QA section with documentation, survey results, analyses, and improvement actions.
11. Promote the continuous professional development of the QA responsible, ensuring participation in trainings, seminars, and experience-sharing activities at both national and international levels.

Credible Awarding of Qualifications

12. Review the Policy on Assessment and Review of Academic Programs to align it with the actual processes implemented at the College, specifying responsible parties, their functions, data collection methodology, as well as the stages, timelines, and periodicity of the process.
13. Consider revising the format of internship diaries, establishing a clear structure that includes: the list of competencies and skills to be acquired during the internship, documentation of the student's work related to these skills, evaluation criteria applied by the employer, and the opportunity for student self-assessment concerning the internship process, encountered challenges, and further development needs.
14. Include a clear procedure for appeals in the student assessment system, ensuring transparency and accountability in the process.
15. Enhance benchmarking and comparative analyses by pre-defining collaboration objectives, analysis directions, and expected outcomes, while ensuring active involvement of departments and academic staff in planning, implementation, and summarizing results, including proper documentation for subsequent analysis and program adjustments.
16. Continue programs for professional development of academic staff, focusing on innovative teaching methodologies to improve the effectiveness of the instructional process.
17. Analyze faculty academic workload and define the maximum number of modules assigned to each instructor, reducing overload and ensuring effective teaching.
18. Develop and implement a unified system for class observations, specifying the purpose, timing, responsible parties, and format of observations. Consider the possibility of separating

laboratories for technologically oriented academic programs, particularly by establishing independent laboratories for dairy and wine production, to enhance the effectiveness of practical training in these programs.

19. Modernize chemistry, physics, and biology classrooms/laboratories, re-equipping them to provide the necessary conditions for practical sessions.
20. Enrich professional literature collection by including modern printed and electronic resources to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and research activities.

Long-Term Development

21. Publish graduate employment data on the College's official website, presenting it in comparative and dynamic formats to highlight the institution's effectiveness and reputation, and to provide a basis for strategic decision-making.
22. Consider organizing general student assemblies based on students' previously expressed needs, aiming to enhance their engagement in governance processes and to foster the generation of new ideas.
23. Regularly update and enrich the College's official website content (in Armenian and foreign languages), including comprehensive information on applied procedures and ongoing activities, thereby promoting transparency of the College's operations.
24. Explore opportunities to share the College's experience in inclusive education, continuing collaboration with stakeholder organizations and parent communities.
25. Review the procedures for organizing research activities at the College, clarifying their structure and scope of targeted application.
26. Organize professional development for academic staff, developing competencies in research planning, data collection, analysis, and reporting using key methodologies and tools.
27. Study best practices in research activities at other local and international VET institutions, to identify and adapt the most applicable models.
28. Promote the dissemination of successful research activities conducted at the College, including the publication of student and faculty initiatives in article form, thereby contributing to the sharing of professional expertise and fostering a research culture within the College.

DESCRIPTION OF EXTERNAL REVIEW

COMPOSITION OF EXPERT PANEL

The following expert panel conducted an external evaluation of the institutional capacities of Yerevan State Armenian-Greek College of Tourism, Service and Food Industry.

- **Gagik Ktryan** – Lecturer at the European University of Armenia, Head of the Expert Panel.
- **Kanakara Hayrapetyan** – Lecturer at the Chair of Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, Gavar State University, Member of the Expert Panel.
- **Narine Hovhannisyan** – Lecturer at the Chair of Plant Product Processing Technologies, Armenian National Agrarian University, Member of the Expert Panel.
- **Harutyun Chilingaryan** – Student-Expert, Kotayk Regional State College.

The composition of the expert panel was agreed upon with the Institution.

The work of the Expert Panel was coordinated by Anahit Terteryan, a specialist of the Department of Institutional and Programme Accreditation of ANQA.

All the members of the expert panel and the coordinator have signed independence and confidentiality agreements.

PROCESS OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW

The College applied for state institutional accreditation (22.11.2024) by submitting an ANQA application, including the application form, copies of the license, and the respective appendices.

The ANQA Secretariat checked the data presented in the application form and the appendices in the application package.

After deciding to accept the application (27.12.2024), ANQA and the College signed an agreement. The timetable of activities was prepared and approved.

Self-evaluation

Given that the educational institution is undergoing its first accreditation process and is in the initial stages of establishing a culture of quality assurance, ANQA has conducted online workshops with accredited VET institutions. The workshops aimed to prepare colleges for the organisational stages of the accreditation process. During the workshops, the interpretations of the institutional accreditation criteria and standards, the electronic questionnaire to be filled in for applying for institutional accreditation, and the features of self-evaluation and SWOT analysis were presented. The

educational institution conducted a SWOT analysis, which was discussed with ANQA employees. During the implementation of the self-evaluation, current discussions were organized by the ANQA to clarify the issues.

The self-evaluation of the institutional capacities of Yerevan State Armenian-Greek College of Tourism, Service and Food Industry was submitted on 17 February 2025. Representatives of the institution's administrative and educational staff, lecturers, and students participated in the self-evaluation process.

Preparatory phase

The Expert Panel, having reviewed the VET's self-evaluation report and the accompanying package of documents, conducted a preliminary evaluation in accordance with the prescribed format. As part of this process, the Panel prepared a list of additional documents requiring further examination and identified key issues and questions, indicating the respective structural units or target groups to be addressed. Subsequently, the Expert Panel consolidated the results of the preliminary assessment and developed a detailed plan and schedule for the site visit.

Preparatory visit

Before the site visit, a preparatory visit to the college was carried out on 07.04.2025. The ANQA coordinator, the head of the institutional program accreditation department and the head of the expert panel were present at the meeting. During the meeting, the site visit schedule was introduced and agreed upon with the college. Additionally, the meeting participants discussed and mutually agreed on decisions regarding the technical, organisational, and information aspects of the site visit, as well as the behaviour and ethical norms of the participants.

Site visit

The expert panel site visit took place from April 16-18, 2025. During the week preceding the site visit, the expert panel members and the coordinator visited the college, observed its infrastructure and resources, conducted class observations, and observed exams. Then the experts and the coordinator had a closed meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to identify the college's strengths and weaknesses against the standards, clarify the questions to be asked of the target groups, and discuss the meeting procedures and next steps.

The site visit began and ended with meetings with the College's director. All participants in the

meetings were randomly selected from a pre-provided list. All scheduled meetings were held. During the visit, the expert panel reviewed documents.

At the end of each working day, the expert panel held closed meetings to discuss the results of the interim expert assessment, and at the end of the visit, the main results were summarised.

The expert panel reached its conclusion on the criteria through discussions and analyses by all members, always applying the principle of consensus.

Expert panel report

The expert panel members and the ANQA coordinator prepared the preliminary version of the expert report, which was provided to the College on June 11. 2025.

The College did not submit any observations regarding the preliminary report. The expert panel prepared the final version of the report, which was approved on 10 July 2025.

Anahit Terteryan

Coordinator of the Expert Panel

10.07.2025

EVALUATION ACCORDING TO ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

CRITERION	CONCLUSION
<i>I. Mission and Purposes</i>	Satisfactory
<i>II. Governance and Administration</i>	Unsatisfactory
<i>III. Academic Programmes</i>	Satisfactory
<i>IV. Students</i>	Satisfactory
<i>V. Faculty and Staff</i>	Satisfactory
<i>VI. Research and Development</i>	Unsatisfactory
<i>VII. Infrastructure and Resources</i>	Satisfactory
<i>VIII. Societal Responsibility</i>	Satisfactory
<i>IX. External Relations and Internationalization</i>	Satisfactory
<i>X. Internal Quality Assurance System</i>	Unsatisfactory