UNIVERSITY OF TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

MANUAL

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WORKING GROUP

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The manual is intended for all departments of UIM, academic, administrative staff, QA specialists, students.

The purpose of the manual is to raise awareness of the university's internal and external stakeholders regarding the quality assurance and management system.

"Manual of Internal Quality Assurance of UIM" was prepared based on:

- Bologna process priorities and developments
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
- The procedure for state accreditation of educational institutions implementing professional educational programs and their professions in the Republic of Armenia
- Revised and newly developed regulatory documentation base aimed at assuring and managing the quality of the UIM.

CONTENTS

TERMS USED

- **Assessment:** The process of systematic gathering, classifying and applying information aimed at determining the effectiveness and adequacy of a process or structure to a defined purpose.

  A technically designed process to assess student learning outcomes, improving student learning and development, and increasing learning effectiveness.

- **Accountability:** description of the organization's performance in front of society and stakeholders.

- **Accreditation:** The process by which a governmental or private organization assesses the quality of a higher educational institution or educational programmes and a recognition status or a certificate allowing the activity, a license, is granted.

- **Best Practice:** A method or an innovative process involving a set of reasonable processes that improve the performance of a university or educational programme and is recognized as the best by partner organizations.

- **Credits:** A credit is an agreed upon quantified means of expressesing the level of learning based on learning outcomes and their associated workloads.

- **Definitions of quality:** depending on the approach and the purpose of use, quality as excellence, quality as compliance with a defined purpose, quality as improvement, etc.

- **European quality assurance standards and guidelines:** Developed by the European Quality Assurance Association (ENQA) and published in 2005. A document adopted at the Bergen Summit, which includes European standards and guidelines for internal and external quality assurance and European quality assurance agencies.

- **Educational criteria:** Checkpoints determining the achievement of certain goals and/or standards.

- **Educational standards:** are statements of educational requirements that indicate the degree of compliance with each criterion and the conditions necessary for an unbiased assessment.

- **Educational outcome:** the result of the implementation of an educational programme or any institutional goal.

- **Internal quality assurance system:** A structured and documented management system that describes and implements the university's quality assurance policy, tasks and principles, organizational powers and responsibilities.

- **National Qualifications Framework (NQF):** unit providing recognition of learning outcomes and abilities at the national level.

- **Professional educational programs:** the main component of higher education, which includes all the processes performed in a certain field: organization of education, management, study, research.

- **Quality of education:** is a multi dimensional, multi level and dynamic concept that relates to the institutional mission and goals, as well as specific standards within the given system, university, programme.
- **Quality assurance:** is an ongoing process of assessing, monitoring, ensuring, maintaining and improving the quality of a university or educational programme.
- **Quality audit:** quality assessment process, through which the competent external body ensures (verifies) the existence of the QA procedures of the educational programme or the general quality assurance procedures of the entire educational system, their adequacy to the defined goals and their actual implementation.
- **Quality improvement:** a continuous process of quality improvement managed by quality planning and quality monitoring.
- **Quality assessment (quality examination):** process of external evaluation (study, measurement, evaluation) of the quality of the university and educational programs.
- **Quality management:** a combination of regularly implemented activities at the university or educational system level to ensure the quality of higher education with an emphasis on quality improvement.
- **Quality culture:** a system of mutually acceptable and integrated principles of quality, which is characteristic of the university's management system.
- **Quality planning:** activities that define problems and requirements for the application of individual elements of the quality system.
- **Quality control:** quality review process aimed at internal or external measurement of the quality of a university or educational programme.
- **Quality policy:** General intentions and directions in the QA arena, which are officially presented by the university management.
- **Self-Assessment:** A systematic assessment of the educational institution to check the current situation and identify needs.
- **Self-Assessment Report:** A document subject to a QA agency as the result of teir self assessment.

ABBREVIATIONS

HEI	Higher Education Institution
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ESG	European Standards and Guidelines
ECTS	European Credit Accumulation and Transfer System
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ANQA	National Center for Quality Assurance
QA	Quality Assurance
IQA	Internal Quality Assurance
QAS	Quality Assurance System
PEP	Professional Educational Program
PIEI	Plan, Implement, Evaluate, Improve
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance
PEI	Professional educational institution
SCL	Student centered learning
AS	Academic Staff
IS	Information Systems
UTM	University of Traditional Medicine
GPA	Grade Point Average
SCL	Student Centered Learning

FOREWORD

Quality higher education has a special role in the development processes of economic, scientific, social and universal values of any country. For the evaluation of the effectiveness of the educational activities of modern universities, it is important not only to plan and implement the educational process, but also to evaluate the educational outcomes formed as a result of the implementation of educational programs, the possibilities of employment of graduates and being in demand in the labor market, which should be the main criteria for evaluating educational results. Based on the creation of the European Higher Education Area, as well as in the RA Law on "Higher and Post Graduate Professional Education", particular attention is given to ensure the quality of education. Quality assurance is the responsibility of every higher education institution, which can be implemented only through an effective internal system of quality assurance. Emphasizing the quality of higher education also pursues goals of comparability and recognition of diplomas as well as qualification degrees, recognition of the advantages of European education, increasing credibility and competitiveness.

Quality assurance is an important tool for educational activity of the university, which guarantees not only satisfaction of society's demands and needs, but also the university's independence and self administration.

The University's mission

The University of Traditional Medicine is a leading medical higher education institution, the activitiy of which is aimed at training new quality doctors who are brilliant for national international labor market in the field of medical education, medicine and healthcare, highly moral, who are also aware of their role in the doctor patient relationship and who will be able to integrate modern, scientifically based diagnostic and treatment methods of traditional medicine.

The University's vision

The University of Traditional Medicine aspires to become national and international higher education institution that:

- strives to develop its priorities and competitive advantages, to integrate unique approaches of scientifically based traditional medicine and modern medicine, incorporate them into educational activities, ensuring transfer of knowledge to different stakeholders,
- offers educational, scientific, research competitive medical programs in accordance with the basic principles of the European Medical Higher Education Area,
- will be an accessible, affordable higher education institution for different segments of society regardless of age, gender, race, nationality, beliefs and political preferences,

- has an efficient and effective management and administration, necessary infrastructures, modern technologies, teaching and laboratory base, which contributes to the constant and continuous improvement of the quality of education,
- will be able to implement a coordinated development strategy by investing in its own capabilities in order to promote education and scientific research.

I. HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE FOUNDATIONS

The Republic of Armenia switched from the previous education system to the Bologna system according to the Bologna Declaration of May 19, 2005. This declaration defines a number of fundamental provisions for higher education institutions in Europe, among which are:

- Creation of the European Higher Education Area,
- A common system of easily legible and comparable diplomas,
- A framework based mainly on three main cycles: bachelor, master, doctorate,
- Common quality assurance system,
- Establishing a credit system for organizing students' studies,
- Mobility of professorial and administrative staff,
- The importance of lifelong learning.

The Declaration also emphasizes the establishment of European standards and guidelines in the processes of quality assurance of education.

Establishing the prerequisites for quality assurance in the UTM

The Bologna process stimulated the creation of internal systems of professional education quality assurance, self analysis, self assessment and accreditation processes in universities.

The implementation and development of a reliable, solid and transparent quality assurance system in universities was one of the measures of reforms of the Professional Education System initiated by the RA Government.

The internal quality assurance system was introduced at the University of Traditional Medicine (UTM) in 2011. Hence, specific measures aimed at improving internal quality assurance system are implemented due to developed appropriate procedures and mechanisms.

The quality of education at the UTM is the compliance of the provided educational services with the mission of the university and the goals of the adopted strategic plan.

Quality assurance, certification and monitoring of educational activities are organized effectively, including the entire staff of the university, students, as well as external stakeholders with various functions.The internal and external stakeholders of the UTM are:
- students, administrative and academic staff,

- employers, graduates, applicants and their parents,
- state and society.

The education quality assurance (QA) system of the UTM is aimed to determine the level of compliance of the content, personnel, material, technical, financial, methodical, scientific and other resources of the implemented educational programs in accordance with the mission of the university.

1.1. European Standards and Guidelines for External and Internal QA of Higher Education

The objectives of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESQM) are:

- improving the provision of accessible education to students at the universities of the European Higher Education Area,
- supporting universities in the management and improvement of their quality, thus, helping in establishing institutional autonomy,
- creating the basis for a work of QA agencies,
- making external QA more transparent and easier for stakeholders.

The purpose of these standards and guidelines is to support universities in the development of quality systems, and agencies in the implementation of external quality assessment. This does not mean at all that these standards and guidelines will dictate actions and remain unchanged.

Standards and Guidelines for QA in the European Higher Education Area

Tertiary level institutions require the following standards:

1) *Policy and procedures for QA:* Institutions should have a policy and associated procedures for the assurance of quality and standards of their programs and awards. Furthermore, they should act deliberately in order to develop a culture that recognizes the importance of quality, and QA in their work. Institutions should develop and implement a strategy for continuous enhancement of quality to achieve this outcome.

The strategy, policy and procedures should have a formal status and be publicly available. They should also include a role for students and other stakeholders.

2) *Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards:* Institutions should have formal mechanisms for approval, periodic review and monitoring of their programmes and awards.

3) *Assessment of students:* Students should be assessed using published criteria, regulations and procedures which are applied consistently.

4) *Quality assurance of Academic Staff:* Institutions should have distinct methods to make sure that the staff involved with students are qualified and competent enough. The teaching staff should be present during external reviews, and their accomplished works must be illustrated in annual reports.

5) *Learning resources and student support:* Institutions should ensure that the resources available for the support of student learning are adequate and appropriate for each program offered.
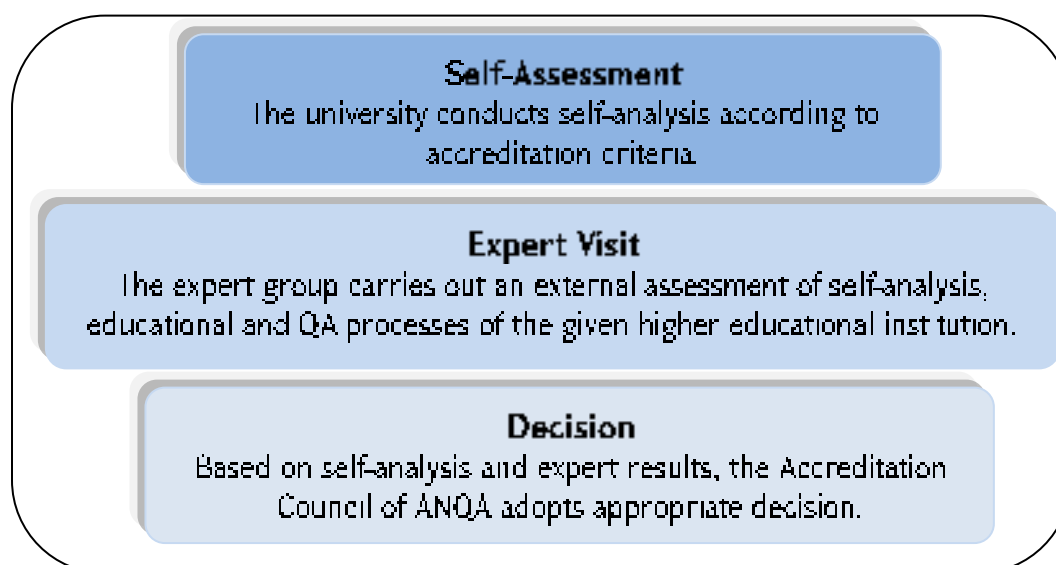
6) *Information systems:* Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programs of study and other activities.

7) *Public information:* Institutions should regularly publish recent news, impartial and objective information, both quantitative and qualitative about the programs and awards they are offering.

1.2. External Quality Assessment

External quality assurance provisions serve three essential purposes:

- **Accountability and transparency:** Quality assurance process provides one of the key mechanisms for ensuring that society's interests in the quality and standards of higher education are safeguarded, besides it demonstrates the quality of individual higher education institutions both nationally and internationally.

- **Control:** It suggests that the institution does not merely control the expenditure of resources but also shows how high quality is achievable with existing resources. It raises the issue of the definition of "good value".

- **Quality enhancement:** It provides an opportunity for the institution to undertake broad, corporate reflection on the nature and effectiveness of its quality processes and to consider whether they are contributing to the continuous development and embedding of a quality culture within the institution.

- *The process of external quality assurance is carried out in 3 stages:*

Self-Assessment
The university conducts self-analysis according to accreditation criteria

Expert Visit
The expert group carries out an external assessment of self-analysis, educational and QA processes of the given higher educational institution.

Decision
Based on self-analysis and expert results, the Accreditation Council of ANQA adopts appropriate decision.

State accreditation is the recognition that an institution maintains standards requisite for its graduates to gain admission to other reputable institutions of higher learning or to achieve credentials for professional practice. Accreditation is granted for a certain period of time and it guarantees that the institution or program has necessary capacity to provide education for a definite time span.

In the field of higher education, state accreditation includes two components: institutional accreditation and program accreditation.

Institutional state accreditation. Infrastructural (institutional) accreditation is the recognition of educational and QA processes of the educational institution by the state, educational programs of the professions and conformity between the state educational standards and the infrastructural accreditation standards. It is a mandatory process carried out regularly for all professional educational institutions. This process allows periodic evaluation of the effectiveness of university's activities, as well as to monitor progress of the mission defined itself.

Institutional state accreditation is a prerequisite for program accreditation.

Program accreditation. Program accreditation is the recognition of educational program of a specialty, the quality of training of specialists, and conformity between state educational standards and program accreditation standards by the state.

The target of programmatic accreditation is the educational program of a particular discipline, and not all educational programs are carried out by the institution. This process allows periodic assessment of effectiveness of the educational program of the specialty, as well as to control it. Does it ensure that learning outcomes are achieved to the full extent expected?

1.3. Self-Assessment

Self assessment is a type of evaluation that is carried out within the framework of the institution or educational programs to assess whether educational services provided by the university, as well as educational programs, serve the intended educational goals and learning outcomes. The purpose of self analysis is to improve the quality and accountability of the educational programs, as well as to contribute to the improvement of learning.

Universities should carry out institutional self revision and programmatic self revision every year. Self analyses should be critical not descriptive, that will allow to review planned actions, analyze results, identify problems and areas of improvement.

Self analysis of the university's 5 year activity is presented in order to participate in the state accreditation process.

Within the framework of institutional and programmatic accreditation, the Ministry of Education should carry out an internal evaluation of the institutional capabilities and educational

program of the studied profession, respectively, by the "Professional Education Accreditation Standards" approved by the RA Government's decision N 959 N of June 30, 2011.

The organization that conducts external evaluation is the National Center for Quality Assurance Foundation, ANQA in RA. To undergo institutional or program accreditation, RA universities can also apply to international accrediting organizations registered in the European Register of Quality Assurance of Higher Education, as well as full members of the European Association for Quality Assurance of Higher Education.

Methodology of Self-Assessment

It is required to arrange the following basic steps to commence self analysis:

- clarification of the purpose. Why should we initiate the process of self analysis?
- clarification of the final results. What results should we achieve through self analysis?
- development of measurement and evaluation. What kind of methodology, tools and mechanisms are to be used for measurements?
- data collection. What data do we collect?
- analyses and evaluation. What methods are we going to use to analyze the data?
- decision making. How are we going to use the analysis results in developing new strategies and advancement plans?

II. THE INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM AT THE UTM
2.1. Objectives and organizational structure of the UTM QA system

Implementing and maintaining QA system is primary responsibility of universities. The main mission of the QA system is to ensure continuous improvement of the activities of higher education institutions, which can be realized thanks to responsibilities assumed by the staff while guaranteeing the strengthening of their capacities. Internal QA processes are part of the educational institution's activities, and since there is no "exact model" of QA, each university develops its QA system based on the accreditation standards of RA professional education and state educational standards.

QA is used as a mechanism for monitoring in the context of accountability.

The objectives of the Internal Quality Assurance System of the UTM are:

- to contribute to the implementation of the UTM's mission, in accordance with its strategic goals and objectives,
- to maintain the defined standards of educational programs and awarded qualifications,
- to ensure accountability regarding the quality of educational processes to internal and external stakeholders,

- to create methodological and regulatory basis for internal and external quality assessments, as well as link between internal and external quality assessment processes.
- to promote development of quality culture and its continuous improvement.
- to allow assuring itself, its beneficiaries, and external evaluators that the policy adopted by the University is effective.
- assist in strengthening links with national, regional and international QA agencies and the University.

4 Vital Tools of Internal QA Defined by the National Quality Assurance Agency are:

Monitoring tools	Student progress	Absolute student progress (the ratio of students who graduated and dropped out, the ratio of those who passed the exam and those with academic debt)	Feedback from the employer and the graduate (feedback results received)	Research activity
Assessment tools	Assessment by students (their satisfaction with the educational program, speech, teaching methods, …)	Subject course assessment (curriculum evaluation involving all stakeholders)	Evaluation of educational services	Evaluation of research activity
QA specific processes	QA of the student assessment system (how transparent, acceptable, clear is the assessment?…)	Staff quality assurance	QA of resources and equipment	QA of student support
QA specific tools	SWOT analysis or self-assessment	Teaching quality audit	IS (document management, informing stakeholders and society about quality activities of the university)	QA manual (including all processes and activities of the university's educational sphere)

Organizational Structure of the QA System of the UTM

- **The Management Board** approves long term strategic plans, budget, and staff list of the UTM activity. Within the framework of the annual report, results of the QA processes of professional educational programs are discussed and ways of improvement are suggested.

- The quality of activity of the university's structural units is re monitored by the **Rector** and the **Scientific Council**. The latter approves the QA strategy, policy, discusses current reports, annual reports and proposed improvement measures.
- **Quality assurance committee attached to the scientific council**: it, as an advisory and expert body, evaluates the compliance of quality assurance procedures and standards with the accepted criteria. The chairman of the commission is the rector, the commission approves regulatory and procedural documents of quality.
- **QA spesialists**: QA spesialists of the university are **the vice-rector for quality assurance and education reforms, the leading QA specialist**. The vice rector for QA and QA plans, organizes and supervises the execution of QA works, involves the employees of the university's departments and other interested persons in the works coordinated by him. He is responsible for the implementation of the QA policy, monitoring, review and improvement of the QA processes.
- **The leading QA specialist** participates in the processes of QA, participates in the resolution of problems arising from the sectoral functions and in the adoption of decisions on the instructions of the vice rector.
- **Quality supporters in structural departments**: it includes representatives from the professorial, student and administrative staff of the University, who carry out their activities under the instructions of the vice rector for QA and education reforms. The heads of the relevant departments are directly responsible for ensuring the quality of the activities of all the structural units of the UTM (faculties, chairs, departments, etc.).
- **Students** participate:
  - in quality assurance processes as stakeholders and representatives of self governing bodies (student council, student scientific society),
  - in the processes of evaluating the teaching quality of the teaching staff and the activities of the administrative staff
  - in quality assessment processes of the services offered by the university and the existing resource base

    in the processes of self analysis of educational programs of institutional capacities and professions.

External stakeholders are included:
  - in the internal QA processes of the university,
  - in the processes of developing and revising the educational programs of specialties,
  - in the processes of assessment of the university educational environment,
  - in the works of self analysis groups of institutional capacities and professional educational programs.

- in the final attestation processes of graduates.

2.2. The basic processes, procedures, mechanisms of QA

■ **Ensuring the quality of educational programs. It includes:**
- program planning and licensing,
- development and approval of programs,
- control (monitoring) of program implementation,
- program evaluation and periodic review.

■ **Assessment of students' learning outcomes:**
- evaluation of learning outcomes of courses/learning modules,
- assessment of the overall educational results of the program.

■ **Ensuring the quality of the Academic Staff's activities.**
- teaching and learning assessment processes,
- training and professional development of lecturers,
- processes for filling teaching positions, promotion by category and material incentives.

■ **Ensuring the quality of educational resources and support services.**
- evaluation of the adequacy of qualitative and quantitative characteristics of educational resources (library, reading rooms, access to computer classrooms, Internet access, furniture of classrooms and educational laboratories, other consulting services, etc.) necessary for the implementation of educational programs,
- implementing process of assessment of students' educational and individual needs,
- conducting surveys on student satisfaction with the quality of support services.

■ **Evaluation of scientific research activity.**
- number of professors involved in research projects,
- student involvement in research work,
- number of scientific publications.

■ **Assessment of public involvement.**
   The number and volume of materials published about the university,
   The efficiency of the dissemination of information about the university,
   The results of the study of public opinion about the university.

Procedures for internal QA system

Implementation of internal QA system includes organization and implementation of the following procedures:

1. Assessment of the state of existing QA system.
2. Development of a QA manual.
3. Analysis and updating of the QA system documentation base.
4. Introducing the university staff to the QA system.
5. Identification and implementation of quality monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
6. Study of the opinion of stakeholders through surveys.
7. Analysis of university self assessment results.
8. Clarification of the strategic plan of the university development.
9. Improvement of the existing quality system.

Quality Assurance Mechanisms

Internal QA mechanisms are common and continuous. These mechanisms include the following areas:

- self assessment of departments (student progress, number of dropouts, reason, inflow and outflow of students, number of faculty members, publication of collections, course observations, budget allocations and other data are key performance indicators of departments).
- benchmarking of best practices (for example, in the case of human resources management benchmarking, the mechanisms used for the implementation of the human resources development strategy of leading organizations and the effectiveness of that process, the provision of training and development, the review of the effectiveness of these processes, etc. are studied).
- feedback to internal and external stakeholders (data collection through feedback, meetings, questionnaires, individual interviews, focus groups).

2.3. Current State of the QA system at the UTM

The UTM's QA system is a set of processes for planning, monitoring, raising issues, and implementing improvements related to all areas of the university's activities (education, science and public services).

The internal QA system of the university's education is regulated, the responsibilities and powers of the responsible persons are defined.

Documents regulating all processes at the university: rules and procedures, reports, analyses are available to stakeholders in paper and/or electronic versions. To ensure and manage the quality of all components of the educational process, several regulations have been developed, approved, and amended, which have been posted on the official website of the university: www.utm.am:

Internal stakeholders actively participate in the QA processes of the university. In recent years, consistent efforts have been made to improve the quality of educational programs of the profession. It includes conducting anonymous surveys among students, graduates, and professors, analytical reports, studies of chair activities, reports of certifying commissions, results of discussions with students and professorial staff, studies of the opinions of external and internal stakeholders regarding educational programs, actions carried out by their comparison, etc.

To provide feedback to internal and external stakeholders, questionnaires and procedures for conducting surveys among students and other target groups have been developed and applied. Reviews are collected and processed by the university's QA specialists. Papers and online surveys using various questionnaires are conducted at the university. The latter provides opportunity to increase the efficiency of the process, and summary of results, as well as it allows to save time and other resources. The results of the survey are summarized and presented to the scientific council of the UTM, the scientific council in its turn gives instructions to the relevant infrastructural units to discuss this or that process of QA, to solve raised issues and to present ways of improvement according to relevant indicators. Recommendations identified and substantiated during current year are taken into account when planning the processes for the next academic year.

When improving the quality of the educational process recommendations, remarks and considerations of students, employers, heads of interns, chairpersons and the members of certifying commission, the results of comparative analysis (benchmarking) and the results of similar programs of advanced universities are taken into account.

The processes of checking and evaluating students' knowledge are considered to be a priority in the university. To ensure the objectivity of the assessment, the following regulatory documents have been introduced and are applied: "Order on knowledge testing and assessment system for students of UTM", "Regulation on Academic Honesty", "Order on final Graduation Certification of UTM" and others.

The application of the Credit System electronic program continues, which not only makes accessible the large scale data base related to the educational process (includes plans, personal data of students, graduates, progress, academic transcript) but also provides objective and transparent process. From semester to semester, the program is supplemented with students' evaluations, automatic calculation of semester, annual, productive GPA and the data is used for

discounting of tuition fees and for compilation of academic reports. Seminars, consultations, training in new educational technologies, online learning, modern methods of teaching and learning and other directions are regularly organized to increase pedagogical qualities of the academic staff, to exchange advanced experience, and to spread best practices.

It is planned to activate skills of the administrative staff of the university in the management of education, processes of education organization, educational support services, social responsibility of the university, evaluation of the academic environment, search for effective solutions to the problems raised as a result of internal and external evaluation, and other topics. UTM is present on the Internet through the official website (www.utm.am) and Facebook social networks in order to inform the public fully and properly about the quality of the processes carried out at the university.

Considering great interest and multi usability of social networks, it is necessary to ensure the university's presence in other networks and domains as well.

UTM ensures constant participation in various seminars and conferences dedicated to reforms in the field of higher education, organized both in RA and in partner universities abroad.

To organize internal QA processes, the university provides necessary material and technical resources. The role of the QA system is gradually increasing, as regular analyses of internal and external environments are performed to make decisions based on reliable data. Efforts are being made to improve the University's education quality management structures.

2.4. Quality assurance management

Continuously improving the quality of an educational institution and all its processes is based on Deming's famous cycle of regular process improvement, the main steps of which are:

- **Plan** i.e. setting an objective and formulating measures to reach it.
- **Do i.e.** accomplishing actions.
- **Assessment.** at this stage, the quality of the implemented processes is evaluated and analyzed, as well as the compliance of the results with the set goals and actual achievements are checked. If necessary, appropriate corrections are made.
- **Act.** at this stage, based on the results of "assessment", improvement oriented developments and corresponding planning are carried out.
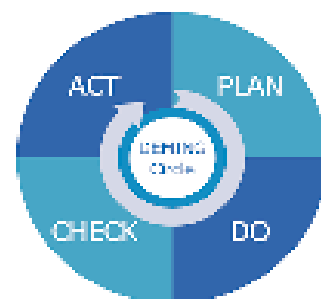
Quality management approaches

The most acceptable version of quality management in the professional education System is the input process outputs improvement approach (scheme 1).

Inputs
Policies, procedures, resources, staff capacity: qualification and skills, quality assurance

Process
Implementation strategies

Outputs
results of the programme assessment, students feedback, faculty employers feedback, government and society feedback

Improvement
Improvement plans
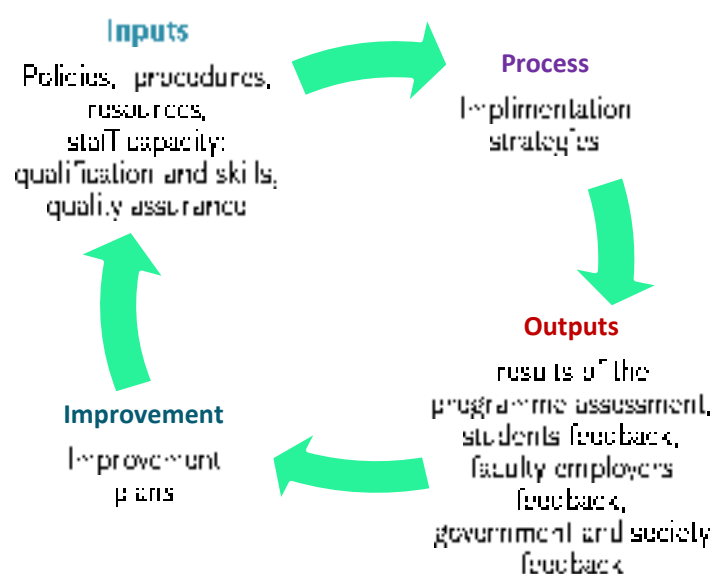
The **INPUT** field mainly stresses policies, procedures, organization of educational processes, resources and staff capacity to achieve the objectives set out in the strategic plan as well as the QA mechanisms ensuring effectiveness and efficiency of the process management.

The **PROCESS** field highlights the educational processes, in particular those activities that are aimed at the implementing strategies, planning and enacting policies and procedures. The staff capacity involved to carry out the outlined objectives is of paramount importance. The QA staff responsible for self assessment in its turn should analyze measures taken to achieve the objectives: QA systems, teacher training, admission policy, methods and equipment.

The **OUTPUT** field outlines quantitative or qualitative indicators, which determine whether the program or institution's objectives are met.

In the **IMPROVEMENT** field plans are reconsidered, adjusted and/or developed anew. If the objectives are not met relevant steps aimed at improvement should be included in the plan.

To ensure that processes are being implemented properly, it is important to look at the investments that support those processes.

To understand the dynamics of the institution's development, detailed analyses are required at the levels of both outcomes and processes.

Tools and methods for quality management and measurement

Quality management is a conscious and planned process implementation of which implies the use of qualitative and quantitative tools[1]. These include:

- process block diagrams,
- charts,
- Pareto analysis,
- fish bone diagram,
- point diagrams,
- evaluation sheets,
- control charts,
- brainstorming,
- benchmarking,
- SWOT analysis.

2.5. Quality culture

The internal QA processes of the university education are aimed at the formation and development of a quality culture. Each department and each employee is responsible for the quality of the work performed. Quality culture formation includes:

- implementation of processes based on Deming's management principle,
- application of mission and priority goals,
- taking appropriate actions based on reliable information to solve problems,
- regulatory activity with clear procedures and their consistent application,
- design of processes, problems and solutions according to the SMART principle: Specific (S), Measurable (M), Achievable (A), Relevant (R), Time bound (T),
- carrying out periodic self analysis of capabilities,
- demonstration of high responsibility at work,
- formation and strengthening of the student centered principle,
- stakeholder satisfaction with educational programs and services provided,
- identifying and disseminating best practices.

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[1] The mentioned tools and methods are presented in detail in the guide to the formation of internal quality assurance system in TLI's /available in Armenian/

2.6. Standards and Guidelines for Intra-university QA

Based on European standards and guidelines, the following intra university standards have been defined:

1. QA policy.

2. Development and approval of educational programs.

3. Admission of applicants, progress, awards of qualifications.

4. Student centered learning, teaching, assessment.

5. QA of the academic staff.

6. Learning resources and student support.

7. Scientific research activities.

8. Information management.

9. Social Responsibility, Publicity and Accountability.

10. Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of educational programs.

11. External quality assessment.

2.6.1. Quality assurance policy

The university's QA policy is accessible to internal and external stakeholders and forms part of its strategic management.

The policies and processes of the QA system, which represent a cycle of improvement and development, contribute to the institution's accountability, development, educational environment, and the formation of a quality culture.

QA policy is effective if it makes practical connections between teaching, learning and research, and takes into account strategic approaches and supports:

- the formation of a QA system,
- structural units, administration of the institution and students who fulfill their responsibilities in the field of QA,
- academic honesty, freedom,
- participation of internal and external stakeholders in QA processes.

2.6.2. Development and approval of educational programs

The university has a procedure for developing and approving educational programs in accordance with the defined goals and expected results.

The qualification awarded as a result of mastering the program is clearly determined in accordance with the structure of the RA National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and European Higher Education Area qualifications.

The implementation of educational programs is the mission of universities, which provides students with both academic knowledge and necessary abilities and skills, promotes personality development and is applied in future careers.

Educational programs are developed in accordance with the university's institutional goals and express clear learning outcomes, as well as:

- determine student workload according to ESC,
- include type and location of the students' internship,
- are developed with the participation of students and stakeholders,
- undergo external expertise, are provided with information resources,
- are discussed, approved in the relevant administrative circles and receive the status of an official document.

The development and evaluation of any educational program and course should be conducted according to the intended educational outcome. Furthermore, all investments (teaching and learning methods, assessment methods, academic staff and learning outcomes) to implement given educational program should be planned and evaluated based on educational outcomes.

The intended educational outcomes define what a student should know, understand and be able to demonstrate at the end of the educational process.

Achieved learning outcomes indicate what students have achieved at the end of the educational program, compared to the intended learning outcomes.

The criteria and standards for evaluating educational programs of the specialty should be based on the achievement of the final results set by the student. Moreover, for each outcome appropriate teaching, learning and assessment methods should be clearly defined.

Educational outcomes should be defined for each professional, educational program and course, and the outcomes defined in PEP should be aligned with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF): Educational outcomes must be clear, well defined and measurable.

The university conducts labor market studies on the content of the educational program and, since the consumers of knowledge are students the participation of students in the development of the content of the educational programs is a necessity.

Some forms of participation of students and employers are used in the process of designing PEPs.

1. **Surveys of satisfaction with graduate educational program**, which are carried out at the end of the academic year. The results are used to revise educational programs.

2. **Employers' requests** that enable education programs to be as close as possible to labor market requirements, emphasizing learning and transfer of skills in the work environment.

3. **Roundtable discussions or university-employer workshops**, where participants present reports on the relationship between today's labor market and universities. Intense discussions, exchange of opinions and experience provide an opportunity to bring the educational programs as close as possible to the requirements of the labor market.

These forms of participation provide an opportunity to form professional, general competencies of the educational program.

Today, a new term called **student employability** has been put into circulation around the world. A student or graduate can obtain an initial job and subsequently move in the labor market. Today, the role of the university has also changed a bit. It should not only provide detailed professional knowledge but also **general employability skills**.

2.6.3. Admission of Applicants, Progress, Awards of qualifications

Educational institutions uniformly apply pre-determined and published rules that cover the following stages: admission, recognition and qualification.

The criteria and process of admission of students should be consistent and transparent, after that students will have the opportunity to adapt to the university and educational programs. The educational institution should implement processes and tools for monitoring and accomplish based on the information about student progress.

Students receive a document confirming qualification, including the results achieved, content, level, education status at the graduation stage.

The RA Government approved a new list of higher education specialties and qualifications developed in accordance with the international classifications of education in order to increase the degree of international comparability and recognition of the qualifications awarded in RA in 2014. Recognition of higher education is an integral component of student achievement progress and contributes to the development of their mobility.

The recognition procedure is based on the institutional practice of recognition in accordance with the Lisbon Convention, in cooperation with other educational institutions, QA agencies and ENIC/NARIC national centers for the coordinated recognition of qualifications within the country.

2.6.4. Student-centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

The university ensures the development of educational programs that encourage students to take an active role in the learning process, and the assessment of their progress reflects this approach.

Student centered learning and teaching play an important role in student motivation, self expression, and participation in the learning process, which requires balanced approach to curriculum development, teaching and assessment of learning outcomes. It implies:

- more active, mobile learning.
- focus on deeper learning and understanding; highlighting students' needs, using different forms of learning.
- increased student responsibility and accountability.
- encouraging sense of student autonomy and at the same time providing necessary support from the lecturer.
- collaboration between teacher and learner.
- mutual respect in teacher student relations.
- existence of a student complaints procedure.

Student centered education is characterized by innovative teaching methods aimed at fostering the connection between teachers and learners in educational process, making students active participants in their learning, and promoting such transferable skills as problem solving, critical and reflective thinking. It also provides skills for life. In student centered teaching, the teacher acts as a guide and mediator rather than an instructor.

Principles of student-centered learning

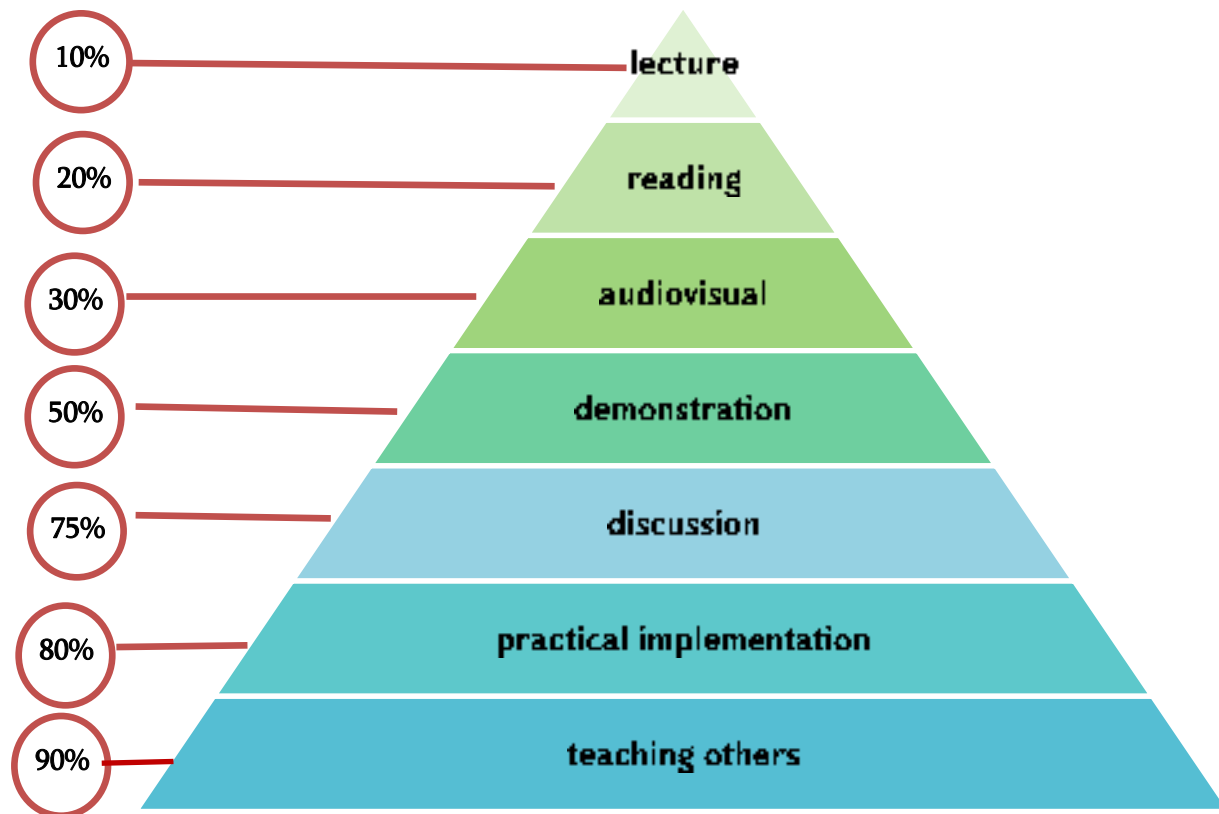| Principles	Description
It requires a continuous reflective process	Lecturers, students and institutions must continuously improve teaching, learning and institutional systems so that they can continuously improve the achievement of expected learning outcomes by students.
Students have different styles of learning	Students need a different pedagogical approach. Some learn best by trial and error, others by hands-on experience, some students learn by reading literature, and others must necessarily discuss theory to understand it.
Students have different background knowledge and different learning experiences	Learning should be relevant to the individual's life and professional experience. For example, if students already have considerable experience using information technology, it is pointless to try to teach them the same thing again. Personal experience can be used to motivate students.
Students have different interests and needs	Students have requirements and problems outside the subject program. Most of them are involved in sports outside of classes, and are members of various clubs. They may have children, face psychological problems, a disability, or they may get sick. It is necessary to take into account these requirements when designing the educational process.
There is no single approach or format that is common to all cases	Therefore, student-centered learning requires learning with an individual program according to the characteristics of the students.
Students have the opportunity to monitor their learning	Students, as active partners, should have the opportunity to participate in the processes of developing courses, curricula, and assessment mechanisms.
Student-centered learning is an "opportunity" rather than "information"	Traditional teaching implies that facts and knowledge are transferred mainly from the teacher.
Choice plays an important role in the effectiveness of student-centered learning	Student interest may be varied, but any offer should include reasonable choice (teaching method, evaluation and others):
Student-centered learning requires collaboration between teachers and students	Students and professors need to work together both in learning process and as stakeholders at the same university to understand and resolve common problems.

Common advantages of student-centered learning

Student	Teacher	Common advantages
1. Focus on the meaningful role of students in the academic community. creates independent learners, and responds to their changing and diverse needs. It is an opportunity for students to shape their path to life.	1. Interesting role and functions of the teacher (providing conditions and facilitating learning). enables training to be organized in various ways. Negative factors of working conditions related to learning decrease.	1. Improving the quality of education
3. Increasing independence and responsibility. the student becomes more independent and adaptable to life after graduation.	3. Positive impact on working conditions. The lecturer acts more as a facilitator than an instructor. encouraging students' independent thinking. analytical skills and critical thinking.	3. Increasing representation in management structures
4. Attention to students' demands. thanks to the feedback of the most interested students. the effectiveness of the work becomes measurable.	4. Continuous self-improvement. it enables professors to review and develop their courses and teaching methods.	4. Student Attraction
5. Increasing motivation to learn	5. Raising the status of the teaching profession. increases the flexibility of professors to apply new teaching and learning methods	7. Formation of culture of continuous training

Studies have shown that students absorb more information if there are more elements of active learning and active participation in the learning i.e. the level of assimilation of knowledge depends on the method of delivery of learning material. Active forms of learning show higher retention rates than traditional forms of learning. It is quite well expressed in the learning pyramid developed by studies carried out at the Learning Laboratory in England (Figure 1).

Learning Pyramid

Average Student Tuition Rates

10%	lecture
20%	reading
30%	audiovisual
50%	demonstration
75%	discussion
80%	practical implementation
90%	teaching others

The source. English National Teaching Laboratory, Bethel, Maine
Figure 1

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Teaching, learning and assessment are viewed in a unified logic. Teaching should create sufficient conditions for students to achieve the expected educational outcomes.

At the beginning of the course, the lecturer is obliged to acquaint the students with the expected educational outcomes at the end of the course, their assessment forms and procedures.

The academic freedom of the lecturer allows him to choose teaching and assessment methods at his discretion. The following principles can be used as a basis for choosing teaching and learning methods:

1. *Learning and teaching methods should maximize the achievement of educational outcomes by students.*

2. *Learning and teaching methods should meet the needs of students with different levels of ability.*
3. *Learning and teaching methods should provide an opportunity to do group work, and promote students' activity and independent practice.*
4. *Learning and teaching methods should provide feedback between student and lecturer.*

When teaching and learning are planned based on these principles, the focus is on the student, not the teacher, and the learning content is focused on the achievement of outcomes.

Assessment of Educational Process at the UTM

The University of Traditional Medicine emphasizes evaluation of students' learning as an important component of education to solve its problems and achieve its goals. A system for assessing students' knowledge, abilities and skills was created and is operating at the university, which is periodically reformed, depending on the modern educational requirements. During the assessment, the following requirements are taken into account:

- while organizing the educational process, emphasize the availability of students to achieve the learning outcomes defined in the educational programs
- collect information relevant to the assessment in an efficient manner.

Principles of assessment system

- The quality of knowledge, skills and abilities provided by the educational program and course is measured by grades, and the number of credits depends on the volume of mastery by the student.
- Every program and course should be measurable and obvious.
- The grading system should allow easy calculation of grade points and a student's GPA for any period of study.
- Surveys are conducted in order to improve the process of assessing student knowledge.

Recommendations are presented after analyzing results. Later, concrete steps are taken to make the process more effective.

- The university operates a multi component system of student assessment (see "order on knowledge testing and assessment system for the student of the UTM students" posted on the official website of the university, which may be changed as a result of the above mentioned analyses.

The quality of a higher education institution or program is determined by comparing the educational outcomes achieved with the intended educational outcomes, which reveal the

learning achievement of the students. The content of the outcomes should be relevant to the objectives outlined in the course and should be at a level appropriate to the PEP.
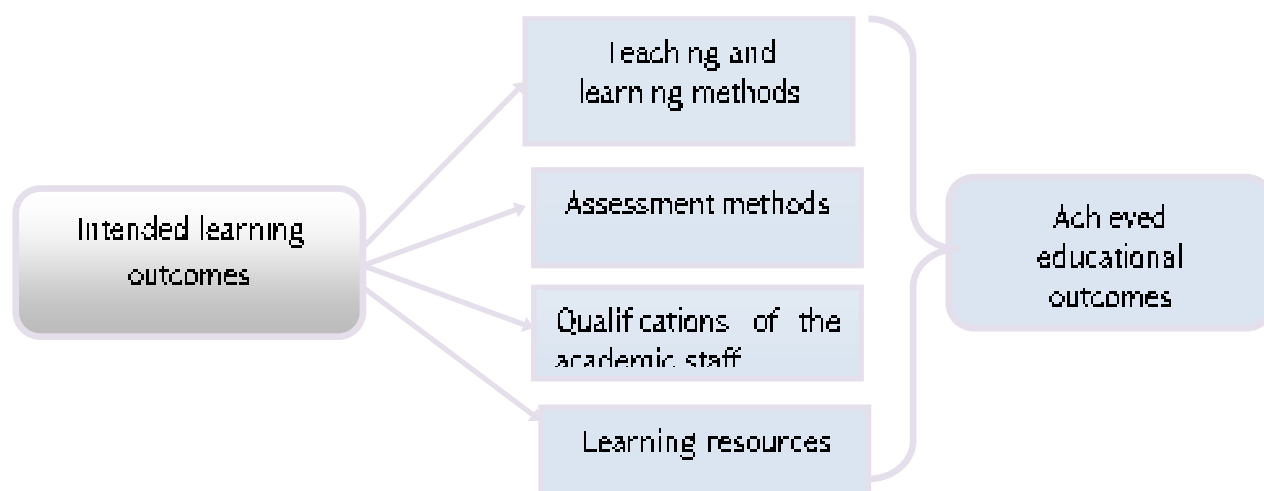
Figure 2: An approach to assessment of teaching and learning by learning outcomes.

2.6.5. Quality Assurance of the Academic Staff

The University is confident in the competence of its lecturers. The processes of employee selection, development and professional growth are fair and transparent.

The university is responsible for ensuring professional training of employees and favorable conditions for their effective work, which implies:

- clear and transparent processes for the selection of employees and provision of conditions, which highlight teaching activities,
- offering opportunities for the professional development of the academic staff,
- strengthening the link between teaching and scientific research, encouraging activities in that direction,
- supporting innovations in teaching methods and introduction of new technologies in the teaching process;

The AS of the university includes the following categories: lecturer, assistant, docent, and professor.

The policy and procedures for the formation of the AS are based on the Labor Code of RA, RA Laws "On Education", "On Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education".

The university ensures quality staff recruitment and appointment processes, provides opportunities for professors to improve their professional qualifications, and encourages their self improvement.

The university has rules, regulations and procedures that promote selection and professional development of professorial and educational support staff with necessary professional qualities.

The planning and classification of AS are carried out in such a way that all educational programs and courses are provided with a sufficient number of qualified lecturers for the implementation, updating and continuous improvement of educational programs. In that sense, in general, the following main factors are highlighted:

o The university has an approved faculty formation procedure and clear processes for its implementation, which include selection and appointment of personnel.

o O Competitive selection of the university's AS, which is considered an important prerequisite for attracting high quality staff, is carried out from the list of candidates meeting the requirements of planned positions, according to the defined and previously published criteria.

The System of Increasing the Qualification of Professorial Staff, Developing Professional Abilities

Increasing qualifications of lecturers is a guarantee of ensuring the quality of education and establishing a system of additional education.

The most important issues of qualification improvement are:

- updating and deepening the knowledge of professorial staff in the field of scientific, psycho pedagogical and professional activities based on the modern achievements of science, familiarization with technologies,
- mastery of advanced teaching methods, means and technologies, broadening of horizons,
- study of domestic and foreign experience.

The improvement of the qualification of professors and lecturers is carried out by annual plans developed in the departments of the university.

The plan for professional development and qualification improvement of lecturers includes:

- self study of the basics of pedagogy and psychology as well as teaching methods,
- attending training sessions conducted by leading professors of the department,
- participation in chair consultations, as well as scientific methodical conferences,
- participation in scientific research activities of the chair, and publication of articles related to teaching methodology.

Continuous improvement of qualification is lecturer's responsibility and primary task of the chair. It is very important to continuously assess further application of knowledge and skills acquired after training course. At the end of the courses participants should have the opportunity to fill in questionnaires or by other means comprehensively assess the quality of the material provided to them, it's relevance to their needs, evaluate teaching methods and many other issues.

Providing feedback is important both to understand the impact of the program and to provide ongoing advisory support to faculty. On the other hand, the information received from professors will allow them revise and improve the courses.

To assess the quality and effectiveness of the program for improving qualifications of lecturers, it is necessary to:

- perform an analysis of the implemented program's effectiveness according to several criteria (relevance to needs, addressability, innovation of teaching methods, quality and relevance of content, applicability of acquired knowledge, etc.),
- consider improvement of lecturers' qualifications in the broad context of other mechanisms and approaches for ensuring the quality of education.

Develop recommendations aimed at increasing efficiency of the mentioned program /mechanism, as well as improving qualifications of the AS and ensuring the quality of education.

Only the participatory process involving direct stakeholders (lecturers) of the program can lead to significant improvement of the program, which will enable:

1) **Redefining philosophy of lecturer's professional development programs.** The prin ciple that the program is not only aimed at testing and supervising lecturers, but at counseling and capacity building, must be put into practice.

2) **To ensure active participation of direct (lecturers) and indirect (students) beneficiaries in the processes of development and review of the University's lecturers' qualification improvement program.**

   This will be possible if the process has a bottom up direction of development, i.e., development programs are drawn up in departments and faculties, and then included in the university curriculum.

3) **Develop incentive mechanisms** (e.g. salary supplement) to encourage participat on in training.

4) **Establish criteria for the selection of professors teaching within the program and ensure their transparency.**

The courses of the qualification improvement program are aimed at teaching modern approaches and methods of education, therefore, it is necessary to ensure the use of modern teaching methods.

2.6.6. Learning resources and student support

The University has sufficient funding to provide educational resources adequate to learning process and to support students.

Accordingly, rrelevant European standard offers the following guidelines:

1) Students need a variety of resources to support learning, starting from physical resources such as libraries and computer equipment to purely human support.

2) The planning, distribution, provision of learning resources, student support, and student centered learning and teaching should consider diverse needs of students (e.g., age, working learners, students with disabilities, overseas students).

3) Learning resources and other support services should be easily accessible to students and designed to meet their needs.

4) Universities should also constantly monitor, evaluate and improve effectiveness of their student support services.

Students support conditions and measures can be organized in different ways depending on the institutional context.

The internal QA system ensures relevance and availability of resources to initial objectives and student awareness of services.

In the process of providing support and services to students, administrative and technical staff are of decisive importance, so they must have appropriate competencies, conditions and opportunities for continuous improvement of qualifications.

Support services are particularly important in promoting student mobility.

The foremost learning resources can be grouped **as learning infrastructure, printed learning resources, electronic resources, web and audio-visual resources.**

Learning resources (libraries, reading rooms, technology equipped general and specialized classrooms, teaching and research laboratories, computer labs, free WiFi zones, tele communication platforms, e mail, guides, etc.) help students to successfully achieve the expected learning outcomes of the program or course, contribute to effective implementation of the edu cational process. Providing high quality learning resources and using them effectively helps students develop abilities such as applying, researching, organizing, analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, etc.

Planning and application of resources. The mere availability of learning resources does not mean that teaching and learning are supported unless these resources are fully utilized by students and faculty and their effectiveness is properly assessed.

To plan learning resources, it is necessary to evaluate the degree of their actual use by students and professors, as well as to have a regulated process of planning learning resources.

The main requirements for learning resource planning process are:

1) Identifying and assessing the resources needed for effective implementation of PEPs, which are carried out at the stages of licensing, approval, ongoing monitoring and periodic review of educational programs.

2) Considering characteristics of students and meeting their needs to the maximum.

3) Highlighting ways and methods of teaching, learning and assessment used in the University.

4) Paying attention to learning resource management and technical issues.

5) Adapting learning resources to their independent and effective use by students and teachers.

Learning resources are selected, coordinated and prepared to effectively support the implementation of educational programs. The planning of learning resources is carried out both at the institutional level and by educational units according to individual educational programs. Students, teachers, and administration have the opportunity to participate in planning and development of learning resources.

Requirements for learning resources. For the sake of effectiveness and continuous development of learning resources, administrative structures, technical services, and service personnel with sufficient numbers and professional abilities are needed, and the following basic requirements are presented to them:

- qualification requirements and functions of the structures responsible for learning resources and their service personnel are presented (job profile/position passport).
- professional development opportunities are provided to learning resource service personnel.
- when developing the educational programs, relevant educational unit consults with the structures responsible for the provision and development of learning resources.
- The University provides sufficient financial, human and material resources, for the maintenance and development of study resources and student support services.

Assessment of learning resources. The main purpose of evaluating learning resources is to find out how much they contribute to the achievement of the expected educational outcomes of educational programs or courses by students.The evaluation of learning resources should be included in the overall internal QA processes of the university.

The main forms of learning resource evaluation are:

1. **Questionnaire surveys that are used with different target groups.** This assessment method provides both qualitative and quantitative evaluations, enables student to express his satisfaction with the given resource by providing anonymous and individual feedback.

2. **Focus groups:** with the help of this assessment method, it is possible to find out what kind of learning resources a given target group needs, how existing resources can be improved, how much they are available and how they can be used in the best way. It provides an opportunity to obtain useful information both at the stages of resource planning and their application.

3. **Interviews** that allow accurate determination of student behavior in specific areas, such as student learning resource interaction; What percentage of students use this or that learning resource and the processes provided by it, which are missed and which cause difficulties? This method is more time consuming than others and, unlike surveys, students are less inclined to express themselves freely in the presence of another person, even if the interview is anonymous. Therefore, this method is less appropriate.

Student Support

Student support services are emphasized at the UTM. It's main target is to support comprehensive development of students and help them to achieve educational outcomes defined by the curriculum within specified time. They are professional and administrative services that guide and support students.

The University publishes and makes available to its applicants and students guidelines, booklets, and regulations that include information on the mission of ASU, admission conditions and procedures, student rights and responsibilities, educational programs and their graduation requirements, tuition fees and their discounting and payment procedures, attendance and other provisions related to dismissal from the university.

Applicants are informed about educational programs and awarded qualifications, and admission through the university's official website, Facebook social network.

Student support services of UTM are presented below.
1. Counseling of students, protection of students' rights (educational department, dean's office, study council, course advisor, external relations department).
2. Preparation for admission of applicants (Educational part, Department of External Relations).
3. Library services.
4. Social, cultural and sports programs (Student Council, Student Scientific Society).
5. Health services (Ambulatory).
9. Security service.

10. Information services (UTM official website, Facebook page).
11. Administrative support (structural departments).
12. Food point.
13. Support and adaptation programs for foreign students: obtaining temporary residence cards, ensuring students' residence as needed, etc (Department of External Relations).

Student support services planning. The university must systematically identify educational and individual needs of its students, plan and implement appropriate measures to meet those needs, with a focus on helping students to achieve their educational goals.

Requirements for student support services. Student support services and programs need to be regulated. The university should periodically and regularly evaluate the effectiveness of student support services, their relevance and adequacy to the requirements of educational programs and learning styles, taking the assessment results as a basis for further improvement and development of these services.

Quality student support services should:

- be delivered skillfully, gain students' trust,
- apply interpersonal, student friendly strategies and practices, demonstrating caring and individuality,
- demonstrate responsibility and effort to meet individual and diverse needs of students.

Evaluation of student support services

The main purpose of evaluating student support services is to improve the quality of existing services. The evaluation is mainly aimed at finding out awareness of the services, their applicability, satisfaction with the services, and recommendations for further improvement.

Assessing these services should not be just an accountability exercise. It should assess not only student satisfaction, but also the effectiveness and usefulness of the services provided.

The evaluation should also identify how this or that support service has contributed to student progress and the achievement of expected learning outcomes and what improvement measures and steps should be taken.

A mixed methods approach is used to evaluate these services, allowing for both quantitative data using questions about awareness, applicability, and satisfaction, as well as qualitative data by including open ended questions at the end of the questionnaires, as well as using focus group method.

Consequently, general evaluation report of student support services is prepared, which contains both quantitative and qualitative analyses, comparing data with the results of previous evaluations.

Usage of evaluation results. According to the evaluation result improvement issues and program of corresponding measures are developed, which can be expressed both in the strategic development plan of the University and in the annual work plans of the units, clearly specifying dates of implementation and expected results.

Documentation Package of Learning Resources and Student Support Services

The following composition of their documentation package is validated for the purposes of proper use and continuous improvement of learning resources and student support programs.

1) Student guide with the description of support services offered.
2) Regulations on learning resources and student support services.
3) Register for recording complaints and suggestions regarding learning resources and student support services.
4) Information sheet on electronic information resources (electronic literature, case packages of courses, self assessment tests, etc.) available at the UTM.
5) Regulations on full or partial reimbursement of tuition fees for students and their conditions.
6) Statutory and regulatory documents regarding principles of student self government and activities of bodies.

2.6.7. Scientific Research Activities

The University contributes to the realization of research goals, projects and the achievement of expected results. There is a research tradition and culture, as well as mechanisms for validating research results.

The evaluation of the quality of scientific research activities includes the following areas:

- management of scientific research activities of UTM, long term strategy and short term plans, which express the interests and ambitions of the university in the field of scientific research,
- the level of internationalization of scientific and research activities,
- the scientific research potential of faculties, chairs, research centers and groups,
- the mechanisms of connection between scientific research activities and the educational process,
- opportunities for commercialization of research results,

- the number of research associates staff,
- the number of lecturers selected for research projects,
- student involvement in research work,
- scientific publications, number.

2.6.8. Information management

The university must ensure that it collects, analyses and uses relevant information for effective management of educational programs and other areas of activity.

To emphasize its social role, the university should constantly publish both quantitative and qualitative updated, impartial information about programs and educational degrees it offers. Various methods of information collection and analysis are used.

Reliable information is a necessary condition for decision making, as well as for finding out what is working effectively and what needs improvement. Planning improvement actions involving students and staff is emphasized.

The information system provides an opportunity to organize management of information provided to stakeholders and public about the quality of documents, university activities, and processes.

The university's mission, strategy, regulatory documents, guidelines, and collections of articles should be available to students, professors and other stakeholders.

Quality information systems include:
- student progress and achievement levels,
- the demand for graduates in labor market,
- student satisfaction with educational programs,
- student unity,
- access and value of educational resources,
- career growth of graduates,
- key indicators of evaluation of the university's activity /KPI/ etc.

2.6.9. Publicity and accountability

The university must publish clear, accurate, objective, urgent and accessible information about its activities.

The University should ensure that it collects, analyzes and uses relevant information that is useful to applicants, students, alumni, other stakeholders and the public in order to effectively manage its educational programs and other functions.

Therefore, the educational institution must provide information on its activities, including educational programs offered, their admission criteria, qualifications awarded, teaching, learning, assessment procedures, learning opportunities and graduate employment.

Public activities in universities are guided by two fundamental ideas.

    a. freedom creates obligations,

    b. autonomy creates accountability.

Public responsibility of universities, which is implemented in the form of publicity and accountability, is of fundamental importance. Publicity and accountability promote:

- increasing the quality of education,
- recognition of qualifications,
- mobility of students and faculty,
- increasing public confidence in the university's activities,
- strengthening intra university solidarity and trust,
- the development of knowledge based and research oriented education,
- improving statistical data analysis,
- increasing awareness of internal and external stakeholders,
- implementation of benchmarking,
- reduction of corruption risks.

The evaluation of the quality of publicity and accountability of the University's activities includes:

- results of public opinion studies on the university,
- the number and volume of materials published about the university,
- the operativeness of the dissemination of information about the university,
- evaluation of public relations   published materials, forms and means of information dissemination,
- the purpose of PR activities,
- lifelong learning system   continuing education and training courses, etc,
- the involvement of the university in state and public programs aimed at public needs.

2.6.10. Ongoing Monitoring and Periodic Review of Educational Programs

The university should conduct monitoring to ensure the achievement of the set goals and compliance with the needs of students and society, which will contribute to continuous improvement of the programs.

Stakeholders should be informed about any planned activities and the results obtained.

Monitoring and review of educational programs are aimed at their effective implementation, creation of a favorable environment for student learning and includes:

- program content within specific courses,
- mutual lectures and open lessons,
- teacher evaluation by students,
- regularly changing demands of society,
- students' academic load, progress,
- the effectiveness of student assessment,
- student support, learning environment, services and their relevance to the program's objectives.

It is important to involve external evaluators in the process of developing and evaluating the PEP, for example, consulting a graduate examination committee in the process of developing and evaluating the PEP can be helpful. To ensure impartiality, they cannot participate in the official approval of the PEP and be involved in the review committees.

Various investments can be made in the process of development and evaluation of the PEP:

- external consultancy can provide relevant information and guidance on the latest developments in the field,
- consultation of colleagues of other intra university professions,
- consultation provided within the framework of inter university agreements,
- current student feedback,
- alumni feedback,
- consultation of professional and employers' associations.
- continuous monitoring process, usually carried out at the end of the academic year to obtain relevant performance information, can consider, for example:
- reports of the final attestation committee,
- accreditation or other external body reports,
- feedback from staff and students,
- feedback from graduates and their employers,
- student progress and other relevant data,

- materials available to students: descriptions of the PEP,
- student guides, websites, etc.

Effective and consistent implementation of each assurance received from external and internal evaluations will meet student interests and address development needs of each employee and resource.

Educational program review is another QA mechanism. It is necessary to emphasize the main principle of continuous evaluation. Evaluation processes are not carried out separately.

A periodic review assesses the program's validity and relevance to labor market requirements, e.g.

- the impact of changes in the development and operation of the PEP, both overall and over time,
- constant availability of instructors and physical resources,
- the latest developments in research and experience, technological progress, teaching and learning within relevant field,
- changes made to external reference points, such as ANQA,
- changes in student demand, employer expectations and job opportunities,
- student progress and achievement data,
- student feedback.

2.6.11. External Quality Assessment

The educational institution must regularly undergo external quality assurance procedures in accordance with ESG.

The processes of external evaluation of the quality of university activities are carried out in accordance with standards, criteria and guidelines of the European Higher Education Area (ESG). External QA processes and procedures are aimed at verifying effectiveness of internal QA processes and serve as factors of development and realization of new opportunities, which also provide information to the public about the quality of the university's activities.

Educational institutions regularly undergo external QA procedures in accordance with the requirements of legislation. External QA is implemented in different ways, at different structural levels (educational institution, faculty, educational program).

QA is a continuous process that does not end only with providing external feedback, submitting a report or adopting follow up procedures.

Each time, taking into account the progress achieved after the last external QA procedures, mutual links should be established, preparation for the next procedure and appropriate follow up actions should be carried out within the scope of the institution.

3.7. Student involvement in QA Processes

Student participation in the University's educational processes and their content evaluation is one of the main requirements of the Bologna process. The involvement of students in the university's internal QA processes was highlighted both in the development of European standards and guidelines in 2005, and in the processes of their review in 2015.

Students are the main stakeholders of the university, and their degree of satisfaction with the services provided and expected results are important indicators in the processes of ensuring the quality of education.

To ensure student centered education and continuous improvement of the quality of education, the University emphasizes cooperation with students, and the involvement of students in the processes of ensuring the quality of education. QA specialists of the UTM meet regularly with students, present them QA processes and students' role in them. The information obtained as a result of contacts with students and timely raising of needs can guide the review of university's educational process, programs, and evaluation of effectiveness of learning and teaching.

The Student Council enables students to create conditions for their self expression in professional, creative, research and other areas. It also provides opportunities for students to participate, organize learning and other issues.

Students are allowed to participate in the management of the University, as well as in raising of their needs and timely response, organization of learning and other processes, to participate in seminars, forums and workshops organized by the University.

Their participation in the accreditation process of universities is emphasized, so one student must be included in expert groups.

Thus, student involvement in quality processes is important because:
- guarantees the fact that students' opinions are important in decision making at the university,
- creates a sense of ownership in students over their own education,
- students are allowed to express their opinion on teaching and learning, to contribute to the organization of education,
- encourages constructive debate about education services between different stakeholders and builds rapport between staff and students.

III. QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

3.1. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

I.   Basic Provisions

European ENQA standard.

Institutions should have a policy and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of their programs and awards. They should also commit themselves explicitly to the development of a culture which recognizes the importance of quality, and QA, in their work. To achieve this, institutions should develop and implement a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality. The strategy, policy and procedures should have a formal status and be publicly available. They should also include a role for students and other stakeholders.

1. The QA policy reflects the mission of the university and is closely related to the strategic plan and implemented processes.
2. The QA policy and procedures create necessary basis in the framework of which the university forms its QA system, assesses the effectiveness of its activities.
3. The internal QA policy extends to all functions and activities of the university that impact the maintenance and assurance of educational program standards, such as teaching, research activities, education support services, material and technical base, administration, public services and cooperation with employers.
4. The university assigns required human and material resources for the successful implementation of the QA policy.
5. The development, implementation and continuous improvement of internal QA policy is one of the priority tasks of the management staff of the university, which ensures competitiveness and stability of the university, taking into account satisfaction of the stakeholders in the market of educational services, scientific and innovative activities.

II. The aim of quality assurance policy

The main goal of the university's internal QA policy is the formation, dissemination and development of an internal quality culture in accordance with European standards and guidelines, and the implementation of appropriate mission in accordance with the strategic goals and objectives of the UTM.

III. Problems of internal quality assurance policy

The main issues of the UTM Internal Quality Assurance Policy are:
– Creation and improvement of a flexible quality management system of the university.

- Promotion of tools for periodical review and monitoring of professional educational program (PEP) at the university.
- Improvement of PEP content, expanding the conditions for ensuring the academic mobility of students and professors.
- Regular training of the University internal quality assurance specialists, expansion of their professional capabilities.
- Development and improvement of the quality monitoring system of university's AS activities, students' studies, and the activities of institutions providing educational services.
- Regular assessment of students' knowledge based on established standards and procedures.
- Organization of the process of continuous professional development of the AS, assessment of their professional knowledge, skills and abilities.
- Formation and continuous improvement of the information, material, technical and educational basis of the University.
- Cooperation with other leading universities to improve the QA system and introduce new educational technologies and programs.
- Providing regular information to the public about the quality of educational activities carried out by the university, publicity and transparency of quality assurance processes.
- Providing social support to employees and students of the university and ensuring their health and safety.
- Ensuring and coordinating the quality of provided educational services and research work.
- Establishing sustainable feedback relationships with university stakeholders, identifying their needs, studying requirements and conducting analysis.
- Creation and maintenance of a database on the quality of activities covering all areas of the university.
- Applying the principle of making decisions based on reliable and complete information and analysis.

IV. QA policy implementation mechanisms and expected results

The QA policy of the UTM is aimed at realization of educational and scientific goals of the beneficiaries (students, lecturers, administrative staff, graduates, employers, other organizations) and it is the basis of the university's activities and decision making. Regular performance discussions, assessments and revision of relevant indicators in relation to goals promote further improvement and development of educational programs.

Recording performance data periodically in documents is important for quality maintenance and improvement. Procedures ensure that decisions are made formally, regularly and consistently. The University should adopt appropriate policy to ensure that these activities are not bypassed by QA procedures.

The management of the university and all the staff are responsible for implementation of the quality policy, fulfillment of defined goals and creation of appropriate conditions.

The implementation of the QA policy implies the following results:

- Increase the responsibility of university staff at all levels of educational, scientific and administrative activities.
- Ensure stakeholder satisfaction with the quality of the university's educational services.
- Make transparent the process of quality management and assessment of educational services.
- To implement the idea of quality increase the labor motivation of the university community.
- Increase the university's reputation in the educational environment and labor market.

V. Internal quality assurance policy

Some general and specific principles are at the basis of the process of internal QA at the UTM. **General principles are:**

a. Transparency and publicity

According to this principle, internal and external stakeholders should be involved in decision making process in QA processes. The entire process of implementing QA processes, their quantitative and qualitative results and decisions made as a result of this process should be available to interested parties and / or internal and external stakeholders.

b. Accountability

In accordance with the established internal regulations, the units performing QA functions shall submit reports and/or analyses on the results of the work performed in the QA field as well as on the further actions at the UTM. They should be available to the internal and external stakeholders of the UTM.

c. Responsibility for the quality of the educational services provided

The main responsibility for the quality of the provided educational services lies with the university, in accordance with the requirements set by the RA educational legislation, in compliance with minimum educational standards.

d. *The* Continuosness of the QA procedures

According to the internal rules of the university, administration of the UTM, heads of corresponding units, other employees assure regular implementation of QA processes.

e. Periodical attestation of the quality of educational programs and qualifications provided

The university is obliged to regularly certify the quality of educational programs and qualifications that it provides to external and internal stakeholders. The quality of education is certified according to the procedure established by the RA Educational Legislation.

44

Special principles are:

a. **Decentralization of QA processes**

The professional chairs as well as relevant departments of the university based on the essence of functions are directly responsible for the QA processes of educational standards, PEP and qualifications.

b. ***QA centralized management***

QA centralized management operations are regulated at the UTM. All divisions of the university are guided by adapted assessment criteria.

c. Involvement of internal and external stakeholders in QA processes

The University must ensure the involvement of internal and external stakeholders in the QA processes, the responsibility of which lies with the UTM management as well as the managers of relevant departments.

VI. QA policy assessment mechanisms

The university's QA system can be effectively implemented, monitored, assessed and developed due to effective quality management and assurance policy.

The productiveness of the quality policy is assessed based on the bodies responsible for relevant processes, department performers, self analysis, discussion of reports and internal and/or external audit reports, expert conclusions, qualitative research, analysis, during which considerations and recommendations for revision and improvement are formed.

The assessment of the UTM's quality of processes is carried out by appropriate toolkits. The basis for the selection of quality assurance and management toolkits is working materials developed by the RA National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance (ANQA) as well, the self analysis criteria and standards of the institutional capabilities of educational institutions.

The active and full involvement of the university's internal and external key stakeholders is one of the guarantees of effectiveness in quality assessment process.

VII. QA policy improvement actions and mechanisms

The university should conduct regular monitoring, discussions and analyses on the effectiveness of the quality assurance process, the formation of quality culture and continuous development issues. If the institution has not achieved its goals, then improvement plans should be developed including appropriate measures in them.

Continuous quality improvement comprises three main activities: setting goals and standards, evaluating activities in accordance with those standards, and improving further performance. It is

formed by the comprehensive quality management principle, i.e. planning, performing, checking, acting and improving, which confirms for itself and its stakeholders that the highest possible standards have been achieved in all spheres of activities. Thus, improvement activities may include:

- continuous improvement of operating mechanisms based on the monitoring of processes aimed at the main areas of activity and opinions received from internal and external stakeholders, increasing efficiency,
- regular recording, analysis, discussion and evaluation of operational data of key importance for quality assurance and improvement,
- monitoring implementation of strategic plans, assessing the results according to spheres of activity, reviewing plans if necessary, carrying out improvement plans,
- regular analyses of the educational environment in terms of educational and research quality processes, observing current situation and actions aimed at improvement and obstacles, as well as initiatives and intentions for further development,
- regular review, improvement, and efficiency increase of the university's educational, scientific, administrative and organizational procedures,
- formation of quality culture, continuous development, ensuring smooth process of quality institutional and program management,
- accounting the importance of the end result for the assessment of each sector performance,
- taking into account the influence of external factors, short term and long term assessment of challenges, risks, threats and implementation of appropriate reformative activities,
- benchmarking, assessment of the state of existing programs and reformative activities in accordance with national and international standards of quality assurance and management,
- assessment of the results of individual sectors or institutional activities based on internal and external expert conclusions and implementation of appropriate improvement programs.
- **Review of policies and procedures of the quality area**

  All policies and procedures must be reviewed every five years.

  The review can also be done at any time needed.

  The review should include consultation with stakeholders who use the policy, examination of compliance requirements between policies and positions/procedures, discussion of policy content, and assesion of policy implementation.

  The review can be completed without making any changes, with minor corrections, correction of the main points, or canceling the document.

  At the end of the review, the person responsible for the review must inform all departments about the changes.

VIII. Final Provisions

UTM's QA policy is approved by the Academic Council of the University.

A proposal to change the quality assurance policy of UTM can be made by:

a) the rector of the university,

b) the commission for quality assurance under the scientific council,

c) the vice rector for quality assurance.

3.2. Methodological guide for the managers of the PEPs

The development of the PEPs implies the solution of the following three important problems:

1. What should students learn (learning outcomes)?
2. How should they learn it (teaching and learning methods)?
3. How to find out the achievement of learning outcomes (assessment forms)?

Educational program goals

The following principles should be used as a basis for defining the educational goal/s of the program:

1. the educational program must have an easy to understand, clearly defined goal,
2. the capabilities and advantages of the program participant must be demonstrated,
3. the goals can also be accepted as a general formulation of learning outcomes,
4. the objectives should be consistent with the University's mission, EQF, NQF, as well as the sectoral framework of qualifications.
5. Listing 6 7 objectives is sufficient to present the plan. When formulating them, it is recommended to use words such as develop, provide, support, inform, familiarize, prepare, promote, support and similar words.
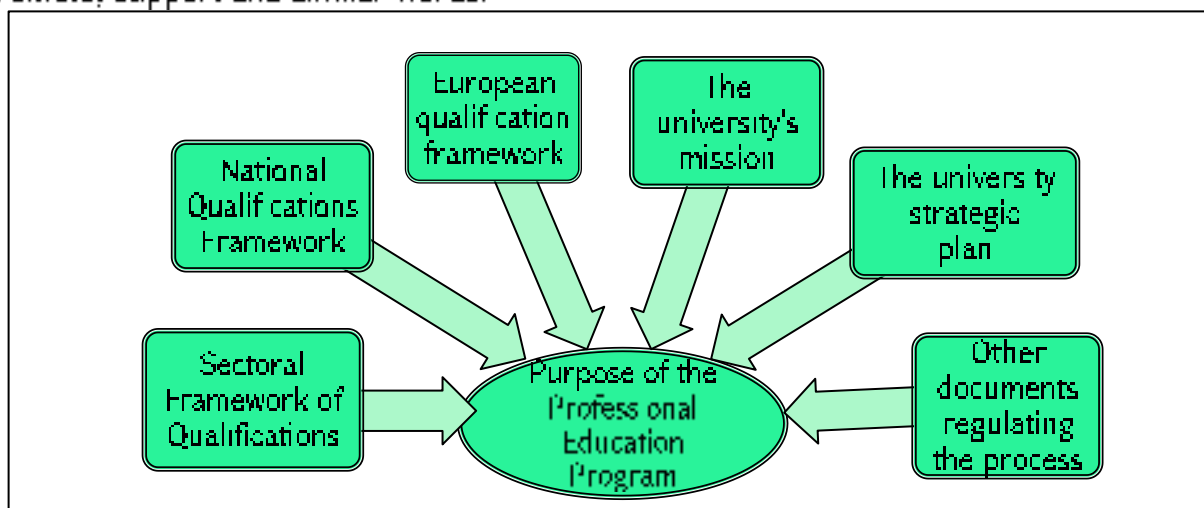
Formulation of educational outcomes of the program

By learning outcomes we mean what the learner should know, understand and be able to do at the end of the educational program. Learning outcomes must be verifiable and measurable. To formulate them, the following principles should be used:

1. the formulation of learning outcomes should be at a minimum level,

2. for learning outcomes, the academic year must be indicated,

3. the learning outcomes achieved must be assessed,

4. the program is considered successful if the learner has mastered all learning outcomes.

The educational outcome of the program includes:

- o Professional knowledge
- o Practical professional skills
- o General abilities

The implementation of the learning outcomes cannot be assessed directly during the study, most of them are assessed at the end of the study, during the final certification. It should be noted that the achievement of some learning outcomes can be confirmed by the current practices. Learning outcomes 8 11 are preferred to introduce the general principles and characteristics of the program.

Formulation of the educational outcomes of the courses

When formulating the educational outcomes of the course, the following principles should be kept in mind:

- o to write in future tense,
- o define 4 6 learning outcomes that should be measurable, easily understandable,
- o the learning outcomes of the course must meet at least the minimum threshold,
- o the link between the achievement of the outcomes and the assessment must be discernible,
- o should describe what the learners can do as a result of the learning,
- o to receive a passing grade, the learner must master all of the specified learning outcomes.

Let's introduce Bloom's taxonomy, which enables the formation of measurable outcomes.

Bloom's taxonomy

	Level	Ways of Aware	Corresponding verbs (The list is not complete)
Knowledge A	٠.	Knowledge (remembring for certa n facts or data)	Express, realize, select, reproduce, measure, determine, display, enumerate, name, recall, record, assert, etc.

	2.	Understanding (ability to coordinate facts/data to make sense)	Determine, define, present, formulate, explain, contrast, describe, discuss, recognize, justify, select, point out, illustrate, classify, etc.
Abilities	3.	Application (using knowledge in the context of a task or problem)	Predict, select, evaluate, find, demonstrate, use, construct, calculate, apply, demonstrate, illustrate, practice, teach, perform, etc.
	4.	Analysis (the ability to break down information into component parts or meanings in order to understand the relationships or meanings of the parts)	Compare, contrast, match/contrast, break down/break apart, distinguish, analyze, calculate, test, identify, separate, solve, etc
Skills	5.	Synthesis (the ability to combine information or facts in new ways for a better or more comprehensive understanding of a problem or issue)	Combine/combine, bring together, summarize, organize/coordinate, infer/conclude, project, suggest, reformulate, discuss, derive, interpret, generalize, etc.
	6.	Assessement (ability to draw conclusions based on available information and evaluate them)	Evaluate, support, contrast, compare, select, criticize, decide, compare, evaluate, conclude, infer, hypothesize, defend, etc.

The choice of teaching and learning methods, the principles.

The following principles can be used as a basis for choosing learning and teaching methods:

1. Learning and teaching methods should maximize the achievement of learning outcomes by students.

2. Learning and teaching methods should take into account the needs of students with different levels of ability.

3. Learning and teaching methods should provide opportunities for group work, and promote student activity and independent practice.

4. Learning and teaching methods should provide feedback between students and lecturers.

The choice of teaching methods is aimed at assessing the achievement of learning outcomes, as well as contributing to their achievement through feedback.

Assessment methods are chosen based on the following principle: how can it be checked whether the student has achieved this or that end result? The achievement of the final results of the PEP is verified during the final certification. The staff responsible for the PEP must design the assessment rubric in detail, define how and what will be assessed during the certification.

Learning resources. for the successful implementation of any ПEP, adequate human resources, educational infrastructures, material technical base for educational and research activities are necessary.

Lecturer and educational support staff. for the implementation of the proposed program, the university must be provided with the necessary qualification and number of teaching and educational support staff.

Educational materials. The list of basic textbooks, training manuals and other educational materials /all curriculum, print and electronic textbooks, electronic devices, instructional materials, lesson plans, teacher guides, workbooks, tests/ necessary for conducting the courses should be presented in the ПEP's.

Technical means. includes technical means of information, audio visual, laboratory equipment, video poster.

Educational spaces. Adequate classroom spaces should be provided to students at all stages of the program implementation. Lecturers also need to be provided with adequate spaces to prepare for lectures and meet with students.

Organization and management of internship. The ПEP also defines a number of professional capacity building and skills development practices considered to be the most important program component, which must be carried out at an appropriate level.

Curriculum with credits and subject list. The curriculum of the ПEP is presented through a plan map, which shows the process of achievement of educational outcomes and their connection with the subject programs. On the curriculum map, the horizontal lines indicate the subjects and the vertical columns indicate the expected educational outcomes. In the cross section of the latter, a note is made, which indicates the given result and the relevance of the subject program.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

NAME OF THE COURSE	
TYPE OF COURSE	
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	
THE FORM OF TRAINING	
PROFESSION	
PROFESSION	
FACULTY	
COURSE	
ACADEMIC YEAR	
CREATOR	
PHONE	
E-MAIL	
CHAIR	
CLINICAL BASE	
HEAD OF CHAIR	

Course Volume

Year	Semester	Credit	Academic week	Weekly hour	Total hour	Total class. hour	Lecture hour	Pract. Lab. hour	Individual work hour	Lecturers' consultation	Examination	Test
II												
III												
Total												

1. **PRECONDITION.** As a basis for mastering the course, you need the following knowledge, skills and abilities, which have been developed through the school curriculum:
2. **Knowledge:**
3. **Abilities:**
4. **Possessions:**

2. BRIEF CONTENT OF THE COURSE

3. GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE

4. EDUCATIONAL FINAL RESULTS. At the end of the course the student should:

5. LITERATURE

6. ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS	ՄԻԱՎՈՐ
Attendances	16
Assessment of knowledge acquisition, abilities and skills	70
Independent individual work	14
7. ASSESSMENT SYSTEM /RATING / SYSTEM	

Mark	Assessment Point	Assessment letter

The manager of the PEP must request course descriptions for the given PEP from the chairs teaching subjects provided by the curriculum.

Career opportunities for graduates. students should get clear information about the internships from the educational program. The educational program should provide opportunities for careers and continuous education for graduates. In other words, connection with the labor market should be visible in the program. There is a need to conduct both quantitative and qualitative research among employers and graduates. At the same time, employers should be involved in the development of educational programs.

Using software guides. educational programs must meet internal and external standards that are presented in the program specification. External guides are:
1. RA law on higher and post graduate professional education.
2. State educational standards of higher education.
3. Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area.
4. National and sectoral frameworks of RA higher education qualifications.
5. Requirements and instructions (if any) of professional organizations, legislative and regulatory bodies of the sector.
6. Program Accreditation Criteria of ANQA's.
7. Educational programs of leading universities abroad and other relevant documents.

The University's strategic plan, university regulations related to educational programs, and other official documents can serve as internal guidelines.


The structure of educational programs of the specialty

Procedures on new academic programs, courses and modules development and approval should include clear and comprehensive process, which alleges that following is discussed and described:
- concept and objectives of the academic program,
- compliance of the academic program with the institution's mission and strategic plan,
- objectives, subject and modules of the academic program,

- intended learning outcomes of the program as well as of each course and of the course module,
- compliance of the plan with stated objectives and intended learning outcomes .
- learning mode/ full-time, part-time, distance/ and load expressed by ECTS credits,
- teaching and learning methods in compliance with learning outcomes,
- connection with other programs of the institution
- issues related to future employment (employment opportunities),
- program management issues,
- program compliance with needs of Armenian, European and international labor market,
- the involvement of required human resources,
- required information resources,
- the impact of the program on the development of TLI's logistical infrastructure,
- attraction of required financial resources,
- environmental analysis of similar or related programs offered by other TLI's,
- demand of the program by students,
- discussions on the academic program among relevant stakeholders and professional circle,
- fair, well-grounded and standards' corresponding embedded mechanisms of student assessment,
- student advocacy mechanisms in case of termination of TLI's activities,
- sufficient mechanisms of students' admission, progress and transfer, diploma supplement in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework and the like.

Cycles of educational program design, development, implementation and continuous quality improvement processes
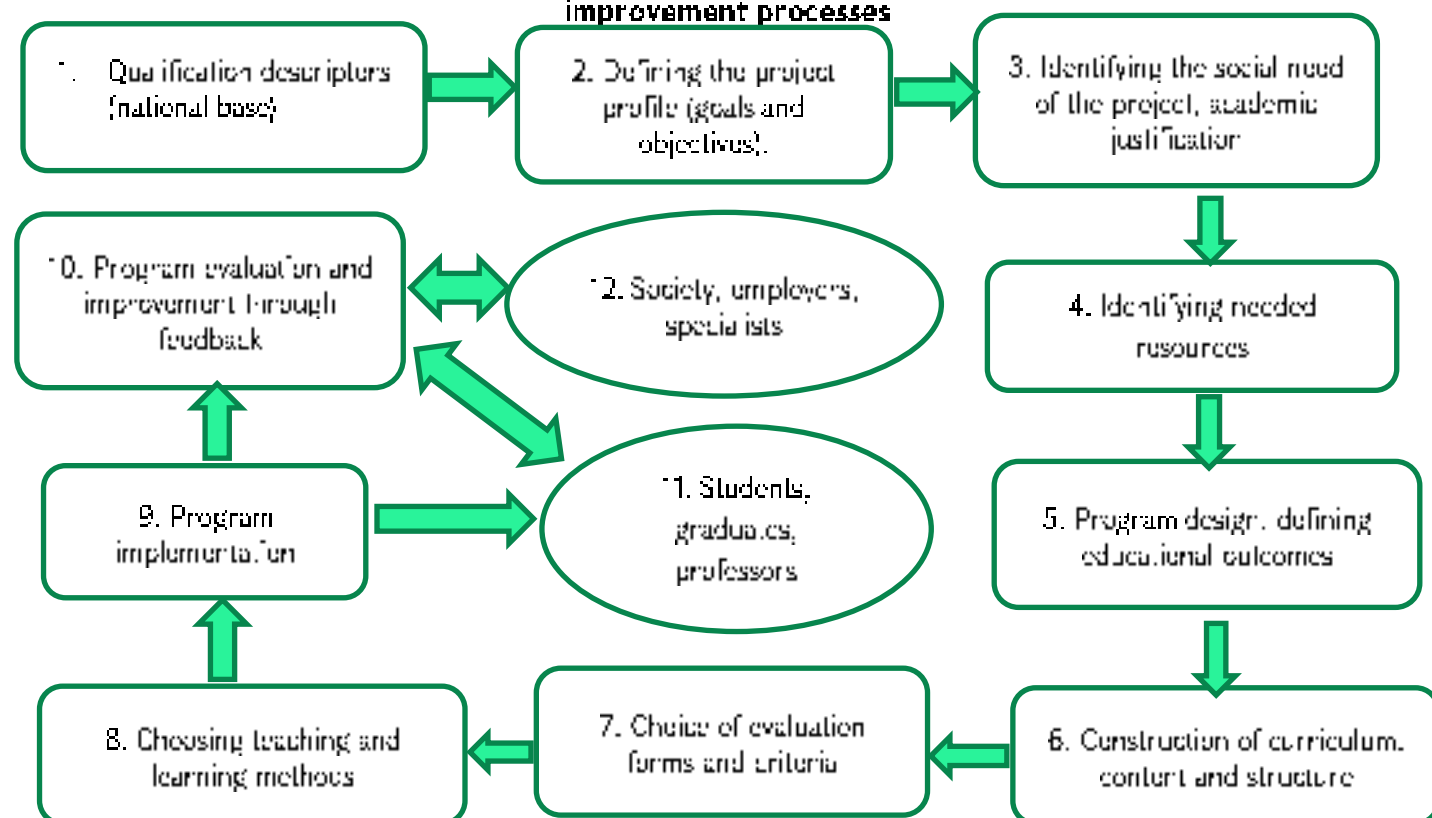
1. INTRODUCTION

University of Traditional Medicine (hereinafter referred to as the UTM) is guided by the RA Law on Higher and Postgraduate Education, National Qualifications Framework and the principles of compliance with the quality of education and labor market requirements.

Current monitoring of education programs assume periodic review and self assessment, which contributes to the formation of further strategic directions and the improvement of the educational process.

The main purpose of the periodic review is to ensure the efficiency and quality of the educational programs. The University quality review processes should promote and encourage the efficiency and quality of the education programs at all levels, ensure their compliance with the mission of the UTM and the education program.

The objective of the monitoring and periodic review is to examine and assess education program, obtained education final results, the teaching methodology used and its effectiveness, the assessment system, the availability of the resources, identify the strengths and weaknesses of the education program and elaborate a plan of action for the further development of the education program.

In order to achieve the above goals and objectives, the review process assumes the following stages:

1. Designing self assessment processes, defining and implementing the schedule.
2. Developing of improvement actions program, according to the self assessment results.
3. Self assessment results and action program discussion.
4. Improvement actions program implementation.
5. External Assessment.

An important stakeholder of this procedure is the internal and external stakeholders of the UTM: faculty staff, current students and potential students.

Following provisions are applied within this procedure framework:

1. *Education program monitoring:* The monitoring of the education program implies a regular review of that through the information obtained via feedback and relevant data.
2. *Education program review:* The revision of the education program implies a periodic in depth study of all its components.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim and objectives of the education program monitoring and current review are:
- Supporting in improving the quality and standards of the educational program and process.
- Ensure the modernity of professional education programs.
- Providing academic standards and quality of teaching and education by maintaining and improving the process.
- Assess the level of educational learning outcomes achieved by students.
- Predict the possible demand of the educational programs.
- Ensure compliance with the program of current and potential students', employers' requirements.
- Ensure the availability of relevant activities and programs to disseminate best practices and correct omissions.

3. APPROACHES

Monitoring and review of educational programs should:
- provides development and improvement,
- be involved in continuous quality assurance processes,
- encourage team approach to organization processes,
- involve in processes all stakeholders of the educational programs.

4. PRINCIPLES

The education programs monitoring and review should:
- be documented and fact based,
- be implemented in a reasonable time period,
- not repeat other monitoring and review processes,
- be implemented in the mutual support atmosphere,
- create an opportunity for all stakeholders to demonstrate critical and analytical approach,
- be properly organized and transparent,
- apply clear and justified criteria.

5. ORGANIZATION AND FREQUENCY OF THE PROCESS

5.1. **The** monitoring of the educational programs.

    5.1.1. **The** monitoring of the educational programs is carried out at least two years after the launch, by the head of the professional educational program.

    5.1.2. The head of the professional educational program elaborates the monitoring schedule and the working team for each academic year.

    5.1.3. The monitoring is carried out through checking classes, consultations with the students and professors, and through the study of information received through questionnaires from students and lecturers.

    5.1.4. The head of the professional educational programsubmits a report on the worked done in the end of each academic year. The report should involve the analyzed information, statistic data, recommendations, remarks and achievements, as well as ways of improvement.

    5.1.5. The decision on the report, if necessary, can be heard at the next Academic Council's meeting at the end of the next academic year.

5.2. **Education programs' review**

    5.2.1. The current education review is carried out every 3-4 years. In some cases the revision of an educational program may be postponed based on the the substantiation of the chair head managing the educational program of the revised profession.The decision to postpone should be submitted to the dean of the faculty and approved by the latter.

    5.2.2. A month before the start of the review process the Quality Assurance Head informs the UTM's Rector. By the order of the rector a notification is sent to the responsible subdivisions about the start of the educational programs review process.

    5.2.3. Before the start of the review process, the Quality Assurance Department's Head organizes a consultation with the relevant members of the Chair, on the educational programs procedures, processes and required documentation review.

    5.2.4. As a result of the consultation, the review schedule is developed and the responsible persons are defined.

    5.2.5. A report is being prepared to carry out the review of the educational program which summarizes annual reports of previous years and other documents related to review of educational program and is presented to the Quality Assurance Commission for study.

5.2.6. The dean of the faculty, based on the above report, organizes discussions with students, graduates of the last two years, lecturers and the organization of the educational process with the participants. Employers and external experts from the field of expertise may also be invited as needed.

5.2.7. As a result of the studies, the head of the professional educational program prepares the report on the results, the proposed draft of educational programs and the action plan.

5.2.8. The proposed changes and measures are classified:

- Essential: Educational program suspension or further reconstruction.
- Desirable: Generally there are no drawbacks, but it is desirable to take measures to improve the quality of the educational process.
- Exemplary: There are no deficiencies in the educational program organization and as best practice is guaranteed for dissemination.

5.2.9. The head of the professional educational program submits the above mentioned documents to the QA committee adjunct to the Scientific Council to make a decision.

5.2.10. After making a decision by the Quality Assurance Committee adjunct to the Scientific Council, the head of the professional educational program organizes a summarizing meeting to discuss further steps and implement a plan of action.

Quality Assurance Policy of the University Academic Staff

1. The Main Factors of the Formation of the University AS, Tenure and Promotion.

The planning and classification of the teaching staff is carried out in such a way that all educational programs and courses should be provided a sufficient number of qualified lecturers, and form necessary resources for the provision of educational programs and continuous renewal and modernization. In that sense, the following main factors are important:

- The approved procedure for the formation of the university's academic staff and the precise processes for its implementation, which include the selection and appointment of personnel as well as tenure.
- Defined criteria for personnel selection: professional education, qualification, specialization and their relevance to the subject field of teaching, work experience and availability of pedagogical skills, academic degree, title, etc.
- The competitive selection of the academic staff, which is guaranteed to be carried out through a detailed study of the documents certifying that they meet the competition criteria

and the results of the interview and the determination of a further possible trial period (or only through the first two).

- Appointment of new employees is carried out in accordance with the work characteristics established for different kind of academic staff's categories (assistant, lecturer, associate professor, professor).
- Promotions are not carried out automatically. Promotion decisions are based on the assessee's teaching performance, professional development, research publications, his contribution to the work of the chair, and service to the academic community.
- It is necessary to assess the academic staff member not only based on his past performance, but also his potential concerning the future.
- In order to make fair decisions about promotion, the university takes into account the results of professional development, audience (student's evaluation of the lecturer) and partner assess, evaluations of the administrative staff, comments, as well as services rendered to the academic community.
- The responsibility of evaluating the candidate for promotion belongs to the vice rector, with whose guarantee it is handed over to the rector. The latter, in his turn, submits the recommendation letter to the scientific council for final approval.
- The norms of remuneration of the academic staff and the mechanisms of their definition should take into account the level of professional qualification of the employee and encourage the continuous improvement of teaching quality.

2. The Assessment of the Academic Staff's Activity

In the process of assuring the quality of higher education, a paramount importance is given to the staff of the university, their knowledge, abilities and skills, the management of which is one of the most important issues of the strategic planning of the university. From this point of view, the university, with the aim of effective staff management, should have full awareness of his own human potential, its knowledge, abilities, skills, personal, professional, organizational about qualities and competencies to ensure the continuous development and quality improvement of its activities. Therefore, it is necessary to correctly assess and satisfy the individual needs of human potential in accordance with the needs of the given educational institution, and to provide everyone with equal opportunities to continuously learn and develop.

As famous economist E. Appelbaum states: "People show good progress and high performance when they have or can develop necessary knowledge and skills, receive right incentives and exhortations, have the ability to make joint decisions and have opportunities to participate in the administration of the given organization".

The assessment of the lecturer's activity is one of the main mechanisms of internal quality assurance and continuous improvement of the university, the purpose of which is to promote the professional development of the academic staff, the quality of teaching, educational methodical, scientific research and creative activities, proper organization of the extracurricular activities conducted with students.

The academic staff is assessed in three main areas:

- teaching and educational activity,
- scientific research activity,
- public and administrative activities.

The assessment of the academic staff is carried out with the participation of four main stakeholders involved in the educational process: students, the evaluated lecturer, fellow lecturers and with the immediate supervisor's participation, with the help of the established evaluation criteria, the results of which are summarized and discussed then.

The assessment of the activities of the teaching staff is carried out in a multilateral format by including all the main components of the educational environment, ensuring the objectivity and impartiality of the assessment.

In order to obtain the most reliable assessment results, both individual (self assessment, assessment by the immediate supervisor) and collective (assessment by partners or by students) methods of assessment are used.

The self-assessment format includes activities performed by the lecturer to analyze and evaluate his working conditions and environment, as well as to identify the environmental factors hindering the improvement of his educational performance.

The assessment of the immediate supervisor (for example, the head of the department) is the assessment of the performance and efficiency of the lecturer, during which the work discipline of the lecturer, the ability to cooperate in the team, teaching methods and quality, individual work with students, results of research activities are analyzed.

Partner assessment is performed by those members of the academic staff of the educational department where the assessing lecturer teaches. The assessment is carried out by means of mutual class visits of fellow lecturers, listening to lectures by the immediate supervisor and the study of the document package justifying the performance of the lecturer.

As we've already mentioned above, one of the methods of collective assessment is questions asked by students (semesterly or annually), which summarize the results of the courses they attended. The content of the questions included in the questionnaires gives an opportunity to assess both the level of the lecturer's scientific knowledge and his abilities to effectively transfer that knowledge to the students.

In 2012, UTM introduced the system of student inquiries regarding the quality and effectiveness of teaching. The results of the student survey are used to:

- support lecturers in analyzing and developing their teaching approaches and applied methods,
- promote and encourage, as well as for the purpose of tenure of professors.

The results of the multifaceted assessment are summarized in one common document, which gives a generalized (quantitative and qualitative) picture of the lecturer for the given period of assessment. After summing up the results, the academic staff of the university adopts various administrative decisions based on it, and these results are the basis for the continuation or termination of the lecturer's employment contract, career development or official growth, targeted for training or improvement, as well as for material incentives or rewards.

3. Motivational System of the AS

The purpose of the motivational system of the University AS is to promote professional development of lecturers, to improve teaching skills and professional abilities, the activation of scientific research work, extracurricular and consulting work with students, study methodical and scientific methodical work, active participation in the functioning of the university and its units and increasing their efficiency. In other words, the motivational system is completely aimed at the continuous improvement of the performance of the AS.

4. Rewards

The basis of the reward mechanism is the performance and professional qualification of the employee, the importance of human ability and purposeful encouragement. Rewards as work activity stimuli differ in their impact types and characteristics. The forms of promotion are: moral, socio psychological, administrative, material forms of promotion and self promotion.

In the current reward system in the field of higher education, rewards are given to employees for excellent performance of work duties, effective implementation of duties, for increasing efficiency, as well as for innovations in work and other achievement and for active participation in research and public works.

In RA universities, including UTM, the reward is announced by the rector's order and the university staff is informed about it. The Scientific Council also has the authority to reward the employee. The types of awards of lecturers, the grounds for awarding them, jurisdictions and mechanisms are defined in the order of the university.

Every lecturer should realize that in practice he has the right to be rewarded for his effective work and to receive management's praise. Thus, the existence of motivational and reward

mechanisms and their application in the university system enable each member of the staff to develop his potential and strive for higher performance. By creating such an environment, the educational institution not only provides its employees with the opportunity for professional self expression, but also contributes to increasing the quality and efficiency of education, strengthening its reputation in the competitive field.

5.Refresher Training and Development

Refresher training is the process of developing those skills of employees, which are necessary to carry out current activities, and professional development of the employee is aimed at the development and improvement of knowledge and skills for the implementation of current and future jobs.

Professional improvement is a continuous dynamic process, which is aimed at ensuring progress of the employee's activity, development and improvement of his knowledge, abilities, skills, as well as supporting the stability of the educational institution, fulfilling strategic goals and long term plans. So retraining is defined as one of the components of professional development, which has a clearly defined term and a certain direction, determined to the development of specific knowledge, abilities and skills.

Science is always prospering and, as many scientists rightly state, "50% of knowledge becomes obsolete in five years", so universities should continuously provide their employees with opportunities to comprehend contemporary knowledge of the field, updating and renewing the stock of its own knowledge.

Refresher training and professional development are of strategic importance for those institutions who observe human potential as the most valuable resource and the most important investment in the processes of continuous advancement of their activities.

The professional growth of the employees is directly related to the effective realization of the university's objectives, therefore, the university should be proactive and consistent for the continuous learning and professional growth of its staff providing favorable environment and conditions. It should adopt flexible incentive systems for employees that will motivate them to discover their own potential and intangible assets as much as possible and exert all efforts to satisfy both personal and university needs as well as further improvement of needful pursuits.

Eventually, universities also expect appreciation of the investments made in retraining and professional growth of their human resources in the form of relevant theoretical and practical knowledge, the application of which will be primarily aimed at solving strategic problems most fruitfully.

Thus, by appraising and appealing human and professional potential of its employees, as well as by introducing mechanisms to promote professional progress of employees, the university can ensure high performance indicators and outline advanced development outlooks.

Hence, the evaluation of the AS activity is carried out in accordance with the mission and goals of the UTM with clearly defined and published procedures and standards, which are posted on the official website of the university.

1. Regulations for organizing, conducting and assessing lectures at the University of Traditional Medicine.

2. Procedure and questionnaire for surveying and assessing lecturers' needs.

3. Regulation and questionnaire for evaluating the effectiveness of the studies.

4. Norms for calculating teaching load of the AS.

5. Regulations on the training of teaching assistants and AS.

6. Incentive procedures for professors of UTM.

Benchmarking Implementation Policy and Procedure

One of the UTM's dominant objectives is strengthening its competitiveness and providing admirable education. In recent years, the use of a new tool for assessing quality of education has been widely spread in international practice, i.e. benchmarking. Benchmarking in the field of higher education implies a study of greatest strategies of various universities, a comparative analysis of advanced practices in order to increase beneficial investment of the university's inner and outer markets of educational services.

The UTM's implementation of benchmarking of educational and management processes provides an opportunity to evaluate effectiveness and relevance of the decisions made, along with guaranteeing continuous growth of the university. In recent years, the university has successfully cooperated with various international organizations, therefore, sufficient prerequisites for productive benchmarking and exchange of experience have been created.

This document illustrates the results of the UTM's benchmarking procedure made through comparative analysis. It was arranged based on the Law of the Republic of Armenia on Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education as well as the development strategy of UTM and European quality assurance criteria and standards.

The key purpose of the benchmarking policy is to determine the competitiveness of the UTM, the best methods of work, to find out weak sides, appropriate mechanisms for ensuring the quality of education and systems of departments through the study and comparison of national and international experiments, identifying best practices.

The main issues of benchmarking policy of UTM are:

1. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the university through a performance analysis (SWOT analysis).
2. Taking into account the opinions and expectations of internal and external stakeholders, identify the processes that should take place.
3. Study the processes of the best universities implementing benchmarking.
4. Collect relevant information from educational institutions for the purpose of benchmarking.
5. Analyzing the benchmarking data of leading universities, new methods and technologies to localize and invest in educational and management processes of the university.
6. Make the obtained materials a reference point when implementing a new benchmarking.

The principles of benchmarking are:

1. compliance with the strategic goals and objectives of the UTM,
2. maintaining confidentiality during the exchange of information, using only in accordance with the purposes of benchmarking,
3. retention of copyright information developed during benchmarking.

The main forms of benchmarking applied by the university.

- **Internal benchmarking.** combination of activities of university departments, identification and dissemination of foremost experience (necessary for monitoring and ensuring internal quality assurance system).
- **Inter-university benchmarking.** study of the activities of similar universities, introduction of certain criteria, best practice methods (it is important to determine what similarities the university has with other universities, perform a comparative analysis and, if necessary, introduce the best practices of other universities, taking into account limitations and peculiarities of the university activities).

Benchmarking procedure

- **Choice of field of conduct.** it is necessary to carry out studies to find out what process of the university is subject to transformation: educational, scientific processes, educational programs, etc.
- **Determination of benchmarking type.** internal or intercollegiate.

- **Selection of a benchmarking partner organization.**
- **Those responsible**: appointment of specific sector officials, preparation and approval of a schedule plan (goals, tasks, implementation dates and action plan, necessary resources).
- **Study of a benchmarking plan.**
- the purpose and tasks of benchmarking,
- implementation dates and action plan,
- availability of resources for implementation,
- benchmarking methodology (questionnaires, interviews, working visits, etc.),
- scope of the project,
- benchmarking object or process indicators that are subject to measurement,
- project managers and coordinators.

Implementation of benchmarking. Study and analysis of common greatest exper ence of selected universit es.

- Before the start of benchmarking, the department implementing it, presents information about the planned benchmarking to the vice rector of the university with appropriate justification.
- The need for financial resources for the application of benchmarking process should be coordinated with the rector of the UTM in advance. If necessary, an estimate is drawn up and submitted to the rector beforehand.
- The above mentioned package is sent to the quality assurance committee in order to get an opinion on compliance with the strategy, development and quality assurance issues of the UTM.
- On the basis of a positive opinion, after receiving a written consent from the QUC, a Memorandum is signed with the cooperating institution/institutions: the subject/subjects of benchmarking, the framework of the exchanged information, the representative of each institution. on their competences.
- The benchmarking process should be recorded by the UTM's QUC.

Presentation of results in the form of a report.

Based on the combination and comparison of information, a record and report is drawn up on the results of benchmarking and received data.
The report is submitted to the QUC for discussion and approval.
As a result of benchmarking, a modernization plan is drawn up.

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