



«АККРЕДИТТЕУ ЖӘНЕ РЕЙТИНГТІҢ
ТӘУЕЛСІЗ АГЕНТТІГІ» КЕМ

НУ «НЕЗАВИСИМОЕ АГЕНТСТВО
АККРЕДИТАЦИИ И РЕЙТИНГА»

INDEPENDENT AGENCY FOR
ACCREDITATION AND RATING

REPORT

on the Results of the Work of an External Expert Commission
to Assess Compliance with the Requirements of Standards for
International Accreditation of Educational Institutions in the
Healthcare Sector (based on WFME/AMSE/ESG)

INDEPENDENT AGENCY FOR ACCREDITATION AND RATING
External Expert Commission

***Addressed to
Accreditation
Board of IAAR***



REPORT

**on the Results of the Work of an External Expert Commission
to Assess Compliance with the Requirements of Standards for
International Accreditation of Educational Institutions in the Healthcare Sector
(based on WFME/AMSE/ESG)**

Erebuni Medical Academy Foundation

during the period from June 5 to 6, 2023

Yerevan, 2023

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(I) LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AMSE	Association of Medical Schools in Europe
C.B.Sc.	Candidate of Biological Sciences
C.L.Sc.	Candidate of Legal Sciences
C.M.Sc.	Candidate of Medical Sciences
C.P.Sc.	Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences
CBL	Case-Based Learning
CED	Catalog of Elective Disciplines
D.M.Sc.	Doctor of Medical Sciences
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EEC	External Expert Commission
EI	Educational Institution
EIOS	Educational Information and Organizational System
EMAF	Erebuni Medical Academy Foundation
EP	Educational Process
ESG	European Standards and Guidelines
FSC	Final State Certification
GEDI	Global Educational Development Institute
HCF	Health Care Facility
HR	Human Resources
IAAR	Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating
MESCS	Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports
MoH	Ministry of Health
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
Ph.D.	Doctor of Philosophy
RA	Republic of Armenia
RBL	Research-Based Learning
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
TBL	Team-Based Learning
TS	Teaching Staff
WFME	World Federation for Medical Education

(II) INTRODUCTION

In line with Order No. 100-23-OD issued on 27-Mar-2023, by the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR), an external expert commission conducted an assessment to determine the compliance with international accreditation standards for educational institutions in the healthcare sector (based on WFME/AMSE/ESG) (Order No. 150-22-OD issued on 21-Dec-2022).

The report of the External Expert Commission (EEC) includes an assessment of the presented educational institution's alignment with IAAR criteria, EEC recommendations regarding the further improvement of the educational institution, and the parameters of the institutional profile of programs.

Composition of the EEC:

- 1) **EEC Chair** – Elena Sergeevna Tulupova, Ph.D., Institute of Public Health and Medical Law, First Faculty of Medicine, Charles University (Czech Republic): *Offline participation.*
- 2) **IAAR Expert** – Professor Elena Alexandrovna Kiseleva, D.M.Sc., Head of the Department of General Dental Practice, Medical Institute of Kemerovo State University, Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation (Russian Federation): *Online participation.*
- 3) **IAAR Expert** – Narine Aslanyan, Candidate of Medical Sciences, Lecturer of “Propedeutics of Internal Diseases”, Armenian Medical Institute (Republic of Armenia, RA): *Offline participation.*
- 4) **IAAR Expert, Employer** – Karen Yurievich Mikaelyan, Deputy Head of the State Health Agency, Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia (MoH RA): *Offline participation.*
- 5) **IAAR Expert, Student** – Volodya Ghahramanyan, a fourth-year student specializing in “General Medicine”, Armenian Medical Institute (RA): *Offline participation.*
- 6) **IAAR Coordinator** – Malika Akhyadovna Saidulayeva, Project Manager, Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (Republic of Kazakhstan): *Offline participation.*

(III) PRESENTATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

The “Erebuni” Medical Academy Foundation (EMAF) is a non-profit organization established through voluntary contributions from its founder, operating without membership. It was founded on May 2, 2019, and operates in full compliance with the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, the Civil Code of RA, the Armenian Law on Foundations, international treaties of RA, the charter of the Academy, and other relevant legal provisions. The Foundation is recognized as a legal entity and is considered to be established by the law from the moment of its state registration. The Foundation holds a license authorizing it to engage in activities related to secondary and higher professional education:

1. Secondary professional education program, License No. 0144, issued by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports RA (MESCS RA), with an indefinite term starting from 08-Jul-2019
2. Higher medical education: N 0071, series M
3. Higher nursing education: N 0071, series M

Management bodies of the Foundation:

1. Board of Trustees of the Foundation, hereafter referred to as the “Board”
2. Executive Director of the Foundation, hereafter referred to as the “Rector”

The vision of EMAF is to establish itself as an educational institution of excellence, offering high-quality medical education; and to elevate national education to international benchmarks, providing students with education finely tuned to contemporary demands. This commitment will foster mobility and equivalence of diplomas.

The Academy offers a continuous and integrated educational program in “General Medicine,” and starting from the 2023-2024 academic year, it is planned to introduce a bachelor’s degree program in “Nursing”.

All the aforementioned programs are offered based on secondary/complete/general education, both for local and international students.

Relevant, objective, and unbiased information about the educational programs and

qualifications offered by the Academy is regularly shared in the form of photographs, video slides, and videos on the Academy's website: www.erebuniacademy.am. Moreover, there are active online groups for both faculty and students of the Academy, where a diverse range of informative materials regarding the educational process is accessible. Through a feedback system, every teacher, student, and parent has the opportunity to raise questions, share opinions, provide suggestions, or file complaints which are discussed and solutions are proposed by the respective department heads within the Academy.

As a result of the founder's investments, the Academy has established modern and comfortable conditions for effective educational processes. This includes the renovated and well-equipped classrooms of the Academy, the development of a solid material-technical infrastructure, the enhancement of laboratory facilities with necessary equipment and mannequins, and the establishment of a simulation room. To deliver the educational programs, a highly experienced teaching staff (TS) with academic degrees is engaged.

The majority of the Academy's TS consists of highly qualified, English-speaking professionals actively engaged in scientific research. The selection and professional development of the teaching faculty are considered integral components of strategic planning efforts.

To promote research activities among the TS, a variety of measures are taken. These include lectures, discussions, seminars, online webinars, and scientific conferences on highly relevant topics. These events are conducted by globally recognized educators from the Global Educational Development Institute (GEDI) in the United States.

The Chairman of the Academy's Board of Trustees, Dr. A. Kushkyan, a World Health Organization expert and a fellow of the American Honor Society of Nursing SIGMA THETA TAU, plays a pivotal role in fostering active collaboration between the Academy and these prestigious organizations.

Practical classes take place at various medical facilities within the city of Yerevan, with a particular focus on the Erebuni Medical Center – a multidisciplinary medical center located close to the Academy. This close collaboration stands as a prominent asset of our institution.

Within the Academy, there is an internal working group on Quality dedicated to fostering a culture of quality assurance. The effectiveness of their efforts is exemplified by the "Trust Rating" award from the National Trust Council in 2022, recognizing the Academy as a "Reliable Medical Institution." Additionally, in 2023, the Academy received the "Golden Laurel" award in the category of "Medical Academy of the Year." The Academy places great importance on strengthening feedback loops with both internal and external stakeholders, conducting analyses of opinions, recommendations, and the satisfaction levels of graduates and employer organizations.

In the academic year 2022-2023, the Academy will graduate its first cohort of students in the field of "General Medicine."

(IV) DESCRIPTION OF THE PREVIOUS ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE

The international institutional accreditation of the EMAF is being conducted for the first time.

(V) DESCRIPTION OF THE EEC VISIT

The work of the EEC was conducted in accordance with the approved Program for institutional accreditation at EMAF from June 5 to 6, 2023.

To ensure the effective coordination of the EEC's activities, an orientation meeting was held on June 4, 2023. During this meeting, responsibilities were assigned among the commission members, the visit schedule was refined, and consensus was reached on the selection of assessment methods.

To obtain objective information about the quality of education at EMAF and the overall university infrastructure, meetings were conducted with various key stakeholders, including Rector: Artur Arayevich Ikilikyan, C.L.Sc.; Vice-Rectors responsible for different areas of university activities: Alina Maksimovna Kushkyan, D.M.Sc. (Scientific Affairs) and Armida Khachikovna

Badalyan (Academic Affairs); heads of key structural units: Chief Accountant – Gayane Martunovna Shamiryan, Financial Analyst – Susanna Hovhannesovna Mamikonyan, HR Manager – Nvard Volodevna Nazaretyan, HR Specialist – Manya Araratovna Serobyan, Career Center Coordinator – Alisa Mihranovna Pashayan, Quality Assurance Officer – Varduhi Soghomonovna Avetisyan, C.M.Sc., Methodologist – Armine Ashotovna Sanosyan; Deputy Executive Director of Erebuni Medical Center – Zoya Yeghyayevna Ohanyan, D.M.Sc.; deans of faculties (schools): Dean of “General Medicine” faculty – Marina Frunzikovna Alexanyan, C.B.Sc., Dean of the “Nursing” faculty – Anahit Vachaganovna Melkonyan, C.M.Sc., Deputy Dean of the “General Medicine” faculty – Knarik Rafayelovna Mkhitarian, general practitioner; heads of departments: Head of the Department of Biomedical Subjects – Armine Aghvanovna Baghdasaryan, C.P.Sc., Head of the Department of Clinical Subjects – Kristina Rafayelovna Jamalyan, C.M.Sc.; faculty members, and students. In total, these meetings involved the participation of 69 representatives (see Table 1).

Table 1: Information about staff and learners who participated in the meetings with IAAR EEC

Participant Category	Quantity
Rector	1
Vice-Rectors and Chief of Rector’s Office	2
Heads of Structural Units	8
Deans of Faculties	2
Heads of Departments	2
Instructors	24
Learners	30
Total	69

During the excursion, the EEC members had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the state of the material-technical base across different floors of the institution (1st floor – library, conference hall, biochemical laboratory, gym, dining room, classrooms 101 and 105; 2nd floor – administrative block: reception area, rector’s office, offices of vice-rectors for academic and scientific affairs, HR department office, financial department office, deans’ offices for the faculties of “General Medicine” and “Nursing”, quality control working group office, career center office, first-aid room, classrooms 201, 202, 203, 204, and 205; 3rd floor – anatomy room, physiology room, pathology room, pharmacology and clinical pharmacology room, microbiology room, preclinical rooms for pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, internal medicine, surgery, foreign language classroom, general chemistry laboratory, “Nursing” department office, simulation room, classrooms 301, 302, 303, and 304.

At the meeting between the IAAR EEC and the Academy’s task groups, the focus was on refining the university’s policy implementation mechanisms and providing further details on the specific information presented in the university’s self-assessment report. Throughout the accreditation period, practical sessions were attended, including those led by the following faculty members: Varduhi Sedrakovna Tarakchyan – Head of the Department of Social and Humanitarian Subjects; Armine Aghvanovna Baghdasaryan, C.P.Sc. – Head of the Department of Biomedical Subjects; and Kristina Rafayelovna Jamalyan, C.M.Sc. – Head of the Department of Clinical Subjects.

During their work, the EEC members visited several clinical internship centers for clinical disciplines, including the “EREBUNI” MEDICAL CENTER, the “EREBUNI” POLYCLINIC, and the “GRIGOR NAREKATSI” MEDICAL CENTER.

In line with the accreditation procedure, a survey was conducted, involving 20 faculty members and 20 students, spanning both junior and senior levels.

To verify the information presented in the self-assessment report, external experts requested and thoroughly analyzed the university’s working documentation.

As part of the scheduled program, the EEC, based on analysis results, formulated and presented the recommendations for enhancing the accredited educational institution during the meeting with the university’s management on 06-Jun-2023.

(VI) COMPLIANCE WITH INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

6.1. Standard: “Mission and Values”

Evidence Section

The Mission of the Academy is dedicated to preserving, strengthening, and enhancing the health of the population through the dissemination and application of state-of-the-art, innovative knowledge, and principles of clinical practice, as well as to the training of competent healthcare professionals who possess advanced expertise in the field of medicine, aligning with both national and global healthcare standards, for the betterment of society and the nation. The Academy’s mission encompasses all facets of activity, including education, research, clinical practice, and a national perspective. The Mission of the Academy is publicly available on the Academy’s website, contributing to improved management efficiency and the quality of administrative services.

The Academy’s development strategy is oriented towards ensuring the quality and effectiveness of all its endeavors – educational, scientific, clinical, and managerial – to enable its successful integration into the European Higher Education Area. Achieving this goal hinges on external factors such as envisioning and evolving academic structures to meet European standards and reforming the education system.

The interests of the Academy are encapsulated in the form of goals and tasks outlined in its Strategic Plan. The primary objectives of the Academy’s Strategic Plan have been carefully selected and approved, taking into account the requirements of the Academy’s mission and the feasibility of its implementation.

The Mission project undergoes thorough deliberation and receives approval from the Board of Trustees of the Academy. The development of the Academy’s mission involved active participation from both internal and external stakeholders, including administrative staff of the Academy, faculty, students, employers, representatives of higher healthcare authorities, and international partners. These stakeholders are integral to various Academy councils, where they have the opportunity to voice their opinions, offer recommendations, and contribute to the decision-making process.

Analytical Section

The EEC experts note that within the framework of the “Mission and Values” standard at EMAF, the work of the expert committee and the analysis of the presented documentation primarily reveal compliance with the standard’s requirements.

The analysis of EMAF’s activities concerning the criteria of this Standard, overall, indicates the presence of a development strategy within the institution that aligns with its mission and vision. The leadership actively takes a series of measures related to the targeted indicators of its activities, monitoring, and improvement.

EEC members observe that EMAF’s mission is communicated to stakeholders through announcements in the media, email distributions to all EMAF departments, faculty members, and students, as well as postings on departmental notice boards. However, during interviews with faculty members, students, and employers, the Mission and Vision were not consistently interpreted.

The educational processes at EMAF are designed based on the mission and in accordance with the requirements of the federal educational standard. These programs enable the preparation of competent medical professionals capable of engaging in various forms of professional activity: medical organizational and managerial, as well as scientific research.

This allows EMAF educational program (EP) graduates to choose career paths. When oriented towards a medical profession, they have the opportunity to work as dentists after obtaining certification or to continue their education.

The available material resources are used responsibly, with the aim of effectively fulfilling EMAF’s stated mission and goals. The EEC members highlight the importance placed on instilling proper behavior among students concerning their colleagues, faculty, administration, patients, and their relatives.

However, EEC members also note that EMAF stakeholders (students, employers and etc.) found it challenging to clearly articulate the Mission of the EP during interviews with the EEC members and provide specific examples of their personal involvement in the development of

EMAF's Mission and Vision.

During their visit and interviews, EEC members did not gain a comprehensive and detailed understanding of the specific activities undertaken by EMAF to discuss the mission and the ultimate outcomes of EP. Satisfactory scores were assigned by EEC members to those aspects that require heightened attention in meeting the standards.

Overall, concerning this Standard, the institution's activities align with the requirements outlined in the criteria.

Strengths/Best Practices

No strengths have been identified for this standard.

EEC Recommendations

1. Ensure that the mission, quality policy, and organization's vision of EMAF are effectively communicated to all stakeholders (due date – 01-Sep-2023).
2. EMAF's leadership is advised to consistently involve stakeholders in the development of the mission (due date – 01-Sep-2023).
3. EMAF's leadership is recommended to regularly (at least once a year) study, analyze, and document stakeholder opinions and suggestions regarding the mission, vision, and educational outcomes (due date – 01-Sep-2023).

EEC Conclusions based on Criteria

- *Strong* – 0
- *Satisfactory* – 5
- *Suggesting Improvement* – 0
- *Unsatisfactory* – 0

6.2. Standard: "Educational Program"

Evidence Section

The EMAF introduced its EP in the 2021-2022 academic year. Upon completion of the EP, graduates acquire a comprehensive set of knowledge, skills, and abilities that align with the requirements of both the humanities and natural sciences, encompassing general professional and specialized courses. They will engage in clinical practice, organizational, management, and scientific-research activities. As future healthcare professionals, they are committed to continuous professional development through ongoing medical education opportunities throughout their careers. Furthermore, EMAF alumni have the option to pursue further education through clinical residency and fellowship programs.

The EMAF ensures that students uphold their responsibilities to faculty members, patients, and their relatives, in accordance with the standards of professional conduct. The Academy fosters the development of strong communication skills among its students. The ultimate goal of the educational program is underpinned by the current and future needs of the healthcare system.

The EMAF offers continuous and integrated medical EPs specializing in "General Medicine" and "Nursing." These EPs are designed to align with the sixth and seventh levels of the National Qualifications Framework, equivalent to bachelor's and master's degrees.

The development of EPs at EMAF is a collaborative effort involving working groups including Scientific Council members, faculty educators, employers, and students. These programs are subject to coordination by the Academic Methodological Council and final approval by the Scientific Council. Thematic program discussions are conducted by professors during departmental meetings. The student council members are also involved in the program development process.

The EMAF's academic departments have considerable autonomy when it comes to determining the duration of academic semesters, managing the workload for medical-biological and behavioral sciences, shaping specialized professional disciplines, incorporating optional and elective courses, and ensuring alignment with national and international educational standards.

Our students participate in practical training within a diverse range of healthcare facilities, where experienced physician-instructors guide their learning journey. Due to the feedback system, medical

innovations will be integrated in the EP. This iterative process allows for the seamless integration of medical innovations into the curriculum.

Approximately 60% of the educational experience at EMAF is dedicated to hands-on practical training and clinical internship for students. Each student is provided with an “Internship Diary,” which is a localized and approved adaptation of practical manuals utilized in graduate medical institutions in the United States.

The educational process for senior students at EMAF is organized within specialized departments located in multi-profile clinics. These clinics cover a wide range of medical disciplines, including neurology, which houses centers for epileptology and stroke care, ENT, endocrinology, chemotherapy, and various other departments. Additionally, students gain practical experience at institutions such as the “Nairi” Medical Center, the Dermatology and Venereology Dispensary, the infectious diseases hospital, the “Alpha-Beta” Palliative Care Center, the Psychiatric Hospital, and the Practical Center for Forensic Medicine, etc. This approach provides students with exposure to diverse clinical cases, allowing them to acquire professional competencies in line with international standards.

The Academy remains committed to monitoring and ensuring the alignment of educational outcomes with global healthcare challenges. The curricula for “General Medicine” and “Nursing” programs incorporate a set of behavioral and social science disciplines that form the foundation for developing skills related to understanding demographic, cultural, and socio-economic factors. These disciplines foster effective communication, informed clinical decision-making, and adherence to ethical standards in practice. These specific disciplines include bioethics, medical psychology, public health, hygiene, epidemiology, social medicine, medical law, and the history of medicine.

Starting from the third year of their studies, the EMAF students study the following clinical disciplines, including internal medicine, general surgery, radiological diagnostics, neurology, general physiotherapy, phthiology, psychiatry, forensic medicine, family medicine, infectious diseases, oncology, obstetrics and gynecology, and pediatrics. Practical lessons are conducted in various multidisciplinary medical centers located in the capital, serving as training grounds for the Academy students, with which the EMAF has formalized partnerships.

Starting from the fourth year of their studies, the EMAF students engage in practical training at various multidisciplinary medical centers. During this period, they gain hands-on experience by conducting medical examinations, collecting patient histories, familiarizing themselves with diagnostic methods, and performing various medical procedures under the supervision of experienced physician-instructors.

Analytical Section

The EEC experts note that in the substantive part of the working EPs of all disciplines at the EMAF, regional and national characteristics, as well as the current state of medical science and practice, are taken into account.

Clinical department professors at EMAF work in clinical settings and in healthcare facilities in Yerevan, which ensures a close interconnection between EMAF and the field of practical healthcare. This enables students to participate in the work of teams of specialists in providing various types of dental care.

The EEC members emphasize that practicing physicians actively participate in the education of EMAF students.

The workload of the “General Medicine” EP at EMAF is 300 credit units, regardless of the form of educational technologies applied. This includes all types of classroom and independent student work, internships, and time allocated for quality control of program implementation and elective courses. The volume of the EP in the full-time format, implemented in one academic year, is 60 credit units.

During interviews with students and TS, the EEC members identified the absence of a Catalog of Elective Disciplines (CED), necessitating increased efforts from the departments in this direction and active involvement of all stakeholders (students, TS, employers, representatives of practical healthcare, and graduates) in the development of the CED at EMAF.

The results of interviews with focus group representatives revealed that EMAF does not actively utilize teaching and learning methods based on modern adult learning theory.

No documentary evidence was found for the regular (at least once a year) conduct and

documentation of competency assessment of graduates, as well as the use of the obtained results as a feedback tool to improve the EP.

The EP model at EMAF in the program does not include a paradigm based on integrated learning results, organ systems, or diseases, i.e., elements of modular design.

Limited participation of a wide range of stakeholders (representatives of clinical departments, practical healthcare specialists) in collegial advisory bodies was identified, along with their active involvement in discussing the CED.

There was no evidence of the regular modification of the specialty EP based on feedback from the public (posting information and conducting surveys on the website and in the media).

Satisfactory scores were given by EEC members for those points that require increased attention when complying with the standards. The EMAF has planned activities for these points and included them in the plan.

Strengths/Best Practices

No strengths have been identified for this standard.

EEC Recommendations

1. It is recommended that the EMAF management regularly conducts and documents the competency assessment of graduates (at least once a year) and uses the obtained results as a feedback tool to improve the educational program (due date – 01-Sep-2023).
2. It is recommended to incorporate teaching and learning methods based on modern adult learning theory into the educational process at EMAF and regularly provide professional development for TS in these teaching and learning methods (due date – 01-Sep-2024).
3. It is recommended to gradually modernize the EP model at EMAF, based on integrated learning results, organ systems, diseases, and modular design (due date – 01-Sep-2024).
4. It is recommended to regularly involve stakeholders (representatives of clinical departments, practical healthcare specialists) in collegial advisory bodies and engage them in discussions about the CED (at least once a year) (due date – 01-Sep-2024).
5. It is recommended to regularly modify the specialty EP based on feedback from the public (posting information and conducting surveys on the website, in the media, etc.) – at least once a year (due date – 01-Sep-2024).

EEC Conclusions based on Criteria

- *Strong* – 0
- *Satisfactory* – 4
- *Suggesting Improvement* – 3
- *Unsatisfactory* – 0

6.3. Standard: “Assessment of Learners”

Evidence Section

The assessment policy at EMAF aligns with the Academy’s Mission and is communicated to all stakeholders, including students, teachers, and parents. Ongoing assessment of knowledge, skills, and abilities is conducted during theoretical and practical sessions through methods such as testing, practical checklists, and solving situational tasks developed by department faculty.

Intermediate assessment is conducted through exams and credits at the end of each subject cycle. After completing the EP, students undergo the Final State Certification (FSC), and upon successful completion, they are awarded the qualification of a medical doctor.

A procedure of students’ knowledge, abilities, and skills assessment is implemented at the Academy. Students who do not pass the assessment and exams have the right to retake the intermediate assessment twice within the timeframe set by the Rector.

The number and timing of exams and credits are determined by the curriculum of each specialty, and the composition of examination committees is approved by the Academy’s Rector. The Academy is in the process of developing an electronic version of exams to ensure objectivity and validity in assessment.

The methods used for assessing knowledge, skills, abilities, and communication allow adequate evaluation of students. Students are familiarized with assessment criteria within the framework of their rights and responsibilities. Student assessment is carried out through both formative and summative methods. Formative assessment occurs during the learning process to check whether the student has grasped the material taught. Through student's feedback, an instructor identifies strengths and weaknesses in the learning process and plans and improves teaching methods. The number of exams and credits is regulated by the study plans, with each subject, based on its importance, typically ending with an intermediate assessment in the form of testing or an exam. In each session period, students take between 2 to 4 exams, with intervals of approximately 3 days between them. Student performance data are recorded in the student progress and attendance logs.

Considering the abovementioned, the Academy is gradually transitioning to a student-centered education system, promoting the development of individual educational needs, preferences, and abilities of the students. This provides an opportunity to conduct individual EPs in line with international standards.

The internal quality assurance system provides up-to-date information about the quality of the Academy's activities for internal and external stakeholders, ensuring transparency:

- Representatives of partner organizations are invited to the meetings of the Academic Council.
- Meetings and discussions are organized with faculty and students.
- The Academy's website www.erebuniacademy.am provides the opportunity for both internal and external stakeholders to express their opinions and track the progress of the Academy.

Theoretical and practical sessions held at training facilities are broadcast live on the Facebook pages of the EMAF.

- Presentation of students' performance in different specialties and courses, as well as highlighting information about the Academy's achievements.

The results of the survey conducted at EMAF during the EEC visit show that 49% and 33% of respondents "fully agree" and "partially agree," respectively, with the statement that continuous assessment (seminars, tests, surveys, etc.) reflects the course content. Regarding the assessment criteria used by teachers – 48% fully agree, and 32% partially agree. As for the perception that teachers objectively assess students' achievements, 41% fully agree, and 39% partially agree.

The EEC recommends the use of assessment methods based on criteria and reasoning, as well as specialized exams, taking into account the specifics of medical education (direct and indirect observation of operational and communicative skills, Mini Clinical Evaluation Exercise (Mini-Cex), assessment at the workplace, etc.).

Analytical Section

The student assessment system at EMAF is continuously reviewed by department heads and is an open environment for the incorporation of new assessment methods. However, there is a need to utilize a broader range of assessment methods and formats based on their "utility assessment," which includes a combination of validity, reliability, impact on learning, acceptability, and efficiency of assessment methods and formats, using modern software. Reviewing sample test-based tasks for senior students revealed a prevalence of tasks requiring low cognitive levels and identified defects in the tasks developed in the test format.

The EEC experts note that EMAF needs to document and assess the reliability and validity of assessment methods, which requires the implementation of appropriate software and quality assurance processes according to existing assessment practices.

The EEC experts also emphasize the need for EMAF to implement new assessment methods in line with the needs and contemporary trends in medical education. It is recommended to establish a clear relationship between assessment and learning and ensure an appropriate balance between formative and summative assessment. This will allow for more effective management of student learning and assessment of academic progress, as well as the establishment of rules for progress assessment and their relationship to the assessment process.

The EEC experts further recommend that EMAF ensures the timely provision of specific, constructive, and fair feedback to students based on the results of formative and summative assessments. It is also advised to document the assessment process using appropriate assessment forms and to widely use a variety of models and methods for obtaining feedback. During interviews with the

EP heads at EMAF, TS, and students conducted by the EEC, it was noted that there is some misunderstanding among participants in the focus groups regarding these issues.

Satisfactory ratings were given by EEC members for those points that require increased attention to comply with the standards. Measures for these points have been scheduled by the university and included in the plan.

Strengths/Best Practices

No strengths have been identified for this standard.

EEC Recommendations

1. It is recommended that the EP heads optimize the student assessment system using methods that are oriented toward the degree of achievement of learning outcomes, taking into account international best practices (due date – 01-Sep-2024).
2. The EP heads are advised to regularly use and document a wide range of assessment methods and formats based on their “utility assessment,” which includes a combination of validity, reliability, impact on learning, acceptability, and efficiency of assessment methods and formats (due date – 01-Sep-2024).
3. The EP heads are recommended to provide training for TS on summative and formative assessment and ensure an appropriate balance between formative and summative assessment during the implementation of educational programs, with progress monitoring at each stage of the curriculum (due date – 01-Sep-2024).
4. The EP heads should develop a system (create a local regulatory act) to ensure that the assessment process and methods are open to external expert scrutiny (due date – 01-Sep-2024).

EEC Conclusions based on Criteria

- *Strong* – 0
- *Satisfactory* – 2
- *Suggesting Improvement* – 6
- *Unsatisfactory* – 0

6.4. Standard: “Learners”

Evidence Section

The Academy implements its admission policy based on the regulations approved by the Government of the Republic of Armenia No. 597 issued on April 26, 2012. The entrance exam is organized and conducted by the “Assessment and Testing Center.” The unified exam is conducted using a testing method with subject programs approved by the MESCS RA. Examination tasks and knowledge assessment criteria are determined by the knowledge testing center. Certificates are issued to applicants who have passed the unified exam, indicating the scores obtained in the unified exams. Entrance exams are evaluated on a 20-point scale, with scores of 7.5 and above considered passing. The admission competition is held by the republican admission committee, chaired by the Minister of MESCS RA, Zhanna Andreasyan. Any changes in the admission procedure are reviewed by the Scientific-methodological Council and approved by the Rector. Admission for the 2022-2023 academic year did not take place because the license for activities was issued later.

Student self-management at the Academy is carried out through student public organizations. One of these organizations is the Student Council, which operates based on the approved Charter by the Rector and has its own work plan.

The most active students representing different courses of the Academy are included in the Student Council, and the President of the Student Council is nominated and elected from among its members. The Council discusses matters of interest to students, coordinates student initiatives, defends students’ rights, provides social support, and participates in monitoring the quality of educational services by collecting and analyzing student opinions.

The Student Council ensures student involvement in the Academy’s management and decision-making processes related to the learning process. The Student Council holds meetings at least four

times a year. Teachers and students interested in the agenda items can participate in these meetings. Students are involved in various Academy councils and commissions and participate in the decision-making process.

The Academy compiles an admission plan for applicants, which is submitted to MESCS RA for approval. The Academy's licensing package contains sufficient information about the existing contracts with the teaching staff of the EMAF, the educational resources, the number of classrooms and laboratories, the library, and training facilities.

To determine the number of enrolled students, it is important to have a material-technical base capable of accommodating 150 applicants per year. Currently, the Academy has 194 international students, the majority of whom are citizens of India, as well as students from the Philippines, Bangladesh, Iran, Korea, and 24 local students. The staff of the Center for International Relations and Careers at the Academy is in constant contact with the MoH RA, embassies of different countries, and are informed about the high demand for doctors in the local and international labor markets. In the coming years, monitoring of the number of enrolled students is planned, as the Academy's higher education program has only one year of history. A significant place in studying the educational needs of students is given to the analysis of sociological surveys conducted among them. Surveys are conducted every semester and cover the following components:

- The modernity and attractiveness of the Academy's educational environment
- Sufficient classroom and material-technical base of the Academy
- The level of professional and pedagogical abilities of the TS
- Opinions regarding practical activities at the bases
- Opinions regarding assessment criteria, objectivity, and impartiality
- The availability of an anonymous box for raising issues, complaints, and suggestions on free topics.

Analytical Section

At the EMAF, the requirements outlined in the IAAR "Learners" standard are fully met, except for the choice of elective disciplines.

The EMAF establishes the relationship between student selection, mission, EP, and the desired quality of graduates. The main criterion for passing the competition is the total competitive score, which is calculated as the sum of points for each entrance examination, as well as for individual achievements.

During interviews with students and EP graduates, the EEC members found that students have the opportunity to express their opinions and wishes regarding their participation in decision-making, ensuring academic quality and other professional, financial, and social issues during meetings with department heads and the dean's office. All issues raised and discussed at these meetings are resolved in a timely and appropriate manner.

The results of student surveys at EMAF showed high levels of satisfaction (over 90%) in terms of the relationship and accessibility of the dean's office, the accessibility and responsiveness of the university's leadership, support with educational materials during the learning process, accessibility of personal counseling, financial and administrative services, the level of accessibility of library resources, the quality of services provided in libraries and reading rooms, existing educational resources, the usefulness of the organization's website in general and faculties in particular, the clarity of procedures for applying incentive and disciplinary measures, the overall quality of EPs, teaching methods in general, and the quality of teaching.

Satisfactory ratings were given by EEC members for those points that require increased attention to comply with the standards. Measures for these points have been scheduled by the university and included in the plan.

Strengths/Best Practices

No strengths have been identified for this standard.

EEC Recommendations

No recommendations.

EEC Conclusions based on Criteria

- *Strong* – 0
- *Satisfactory* – 6
- *Suggesting Improvement* – 0
- *Unsatisfactory* – 0

6.5. Standard: “Academic Staff/Instructors”**Evidence Section**

The TS is selected based on their relevant professional education and qualifications, which is considered one of the strategic issues in selecting the TS of the Academy. The policy and procedures for organizing competitions to fill vacant teaching positions, recruitment, and dismissals are regulated by the RA Labor Code, orders, and regulations of the MESCS RA. This process is also governed by the Academy’s Charter, the “Disciplinary Rules” document and contracts concluded with the TS.

- The educational block of humanities and social sciences has 8 instructors.
- The educational block of medical and biological disciplines: 13 instructors, including 2 C.M.Sc. and 1 associate professor.
- The educational block of clinical disciplines: 26 instructors, including 4 D.M.Sc. and 4 C.M.Sc.
- The educational block of courses in preventive medicine: 3 instructors.
- The educational block of elective courses: 4 instructors, including 1 C.M.Sc.

The share of instructors teaching humanities and social sciences is 14.8%. The share of instructors teaching medical and biological disciplines is 24%, clinical disciplines – 48.1%. Preventive medicine lectures constitute 5.5%, and instructors teaching elective subjects account for 7.4%. The balance of TS is maintained and determined in accordance with the educational plans and the structure of subjects, allowing the successful implementation of EPs.

The Academy’s personnel policy for hiring and selecting TS ensures equality and the existence of vacant positions in the Academy, guaranteeing equal opportunities and an objective assessment of professional qualities, as political views, race, nationality, gender, age, and religion do not influence hiring decisions.

Announcements about competitions are publicly available on the Academy’s website. The selection of academic staff meeting the qualification requirements for positions is carried out by the collegial governing body of the Academy – the Academic Council.

The personnel policy implemented by the Academy includes the evaluation of various forms of activity by TS – academic, scientific, and clinical.

The TS will have the opportunity to publish the results of their research in the Academy’s scientific journal “Medical Bulletin” during the 2023-2024 academic year. After being hired, instructors undergo a probationary period and, as novice educators, they receive the necessary educational and methodological assistance. After acquiring sufficient and necessary professional and pedagogical skills, they are employed on a permanent basis. Over the next 3 years, the educational and methodological department of the Academy will develop the teaching skills of young instructors.

The Academy has a procedure for evaluating the effectiveness of instructors’ work. Requests to instructors are regularly reviewed in accordance with educational and pedagogical requirements. Students also participate in these processes by filling out surveys regarding the professional and pedagogical abilities of instructors.

Reports submitted by departments on their work and shortcomings, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of departments, are regularly discussed at meetings of the pedagogical council.

Analytical Section

The EEC experts have noted the following at the EMAF:

- A balance of academic staff/instructors in basic biomedical sciences, behavioral and social sciences, and clinical sciences is maintained for adequate implementation of the EP.
- Criteria for the admission and selection of TS, including scientific, pedagogical, and clinical qualifications of candidates, have been developed.

- Monitoring of the responsibilities of academic staff/instructors involved in teaching social-humanitarian, basic biomedical sciences, behavioral, social, and clinical sciences is provided.
- Institutional conditions for the financing of staff and the efficient use of resources are taken into account.

The EEC experts state that the instructors involved in the implementation of the EPs:

- provide quality educational services to prepare qualified healthcare professionals;
- conduct their own scientific research and integrate it into both the educational process and clinical practice;
- engage in social and educational activities aimed at developing the socio-personal qualities of future dentists;
- evaluate the quality of student preparation through ongoing, intermediate, and final assessments using assessment tools developed within the departments;
- participate in the selection of healthcare facilities for student training and practical internships;
- provide consultative and scientific-practical assistance to healthcare institutions;
- integrate simulation teaching methods into the educational process;
- develop and implement new educational and methodological materials into the educational process;
- participate in the implementation of academic mobility programs.

The EMAF has not yet implemented a policy for the recognition of academic activity, with a focus on teaching, research, and clinical qualifications, through institutional and government awards, promotion, and/or awards in the form of bonuses. Clinical activities and the results of scientific research are used in teaching and training at the EMAF.

Despite the satisfaction of both TS and students with the conditions of work and studying at the EMAF, EEC members note that the TS interviews and surveys have identified the results and wishes of the respondents regarding the imbalance of the academic workload per semester (“sometimes” – 10% and “often” – 39%); overcrowding of study groups (“sometimes” – 11% and “often” – 47%); inconvenient class schedules (“sometimes” – 14% and “often” – 42%), which were also observed during the practical classes attended during face-to-face attendance and at individual clinical centers where training is conducted by the EP.

The EEC experts also note that, based on interviews with TS and students, as well as an analysis of the content of working EPs for disciplines and face-to-face practical sessions, the educational process at the EMAF is dominated by teaching and learning methods focused on memorization (reproduction) and understanding of educational material. Elements of clinical case analysis and patient care under the supervision of clinical mentors (in senior courses) are also used. Assessment methods that do not reflect all the competencies planned in the EP are used, as noted in the EEC recommendations for Standard 2, “Educational Program.”

Most of the TS and students at the EMAF are not adequately oriented in the field of teaching and learning methods such as Team-Based Learning (TBL), Case-Based Learning (CBL), Research-Based Learning (RBL), project-based learning, etc.

The widespread adoption of modern teaching methods in the educational process at the EMAF will allow students to immerse themselves in a safe quasi-professional environment, simulate real clinical situations based on the rich clinical experience of the TS, consider and analyze diverse complex clinical cases from the perspective of an integrated interdisciplinary approach, and develop communication skills, clinical thinking, research skills, and teamwork skills starting from the early years of study.

The implementation of modern educational technologies in the educational process will require TS at the EMAF to master assessment methods such as assessing the cognitive, operational, communicative, and research components of students’ competencies, the ability to independently search for and analyze information, and the skills of working in a professional and interdisciplinary team. This need should be addressed through the development and implementation of modern assessment methods and tools that are successfully used in the global medical education community.

Strengths/Best Practices

No strengths have been identified for this standard.

EEC Recommendations

1. Develop and implement a policy for the activities and development of TS at the EMAF, guaranteeing recognition of academic activities with a focus on assessing teaching, research, and clinical qualifications (due date – 01-Sep-2023).
2. Organize professional development for the EMAF TS on the use of modern educational technologies and assessment methods in the educational process (due date – 01-Sep-2023).
3. Expand the range of teaching methods at EMAF, taking into account best international practices (TBL, CBL, RBL, etc.) (due date – 01-Sep-2024).

EEC Conclusions based on Criteria

- *Strong* – 0
- *Satisfactory* – 3
- *Suggesting Improvement* – 3
- *Unsatisfactory* – 0

6.6. Standard: “Educational Resources”**Evidence Section**

Medical organizations serving as clinical bases for the EMAF have the necessary modern material and technical resources to train students in providing all types of dental care in accordance with the current Procedures for the Provision of Medical Care in the respective profiles, which is confirmed by the presence of a license. In clinical facilities, students, under the supervision of instructors, can jointly use medical equipment and tools to develop professional competencies in such areas as Practical Skills Acquisition and Professional Experience.

The leading multi-profile clinical base of the Academy is the “Erebuni” Medical Center, where practical classes are conducted for many disciplines. The center is located in close proximity to the Academy, which is a significant advantage for students. Continuous efforts are made at the center to improve the quality of medical care by not only incorporating the latest advancements in medicine: diagnostic rooms are updated, and the center is equipped with the latest high-quality diagnostic equipment, but also by paying significant attention to enhancing the professional level of the center’s doctors, who frequently participate in both national and international conferences and congresses, incorporating the knowledge and innovations they gain into their daily activities. They also present reports, in the form of presentations, to both the center’s medical staff and Academy students.

A new “Emergency Hospital” department has been opened at the “Erebuni” Medical Center, fully compliant with international standards for providing emergency medical care to the population. Students, together with their instructors, participate in all stages of patient admission, examination, medical procedures performed in the department, and patient discharge or transfer to specialized departments. All documentation at the “Erebuni” Medical Center is in electronic form. Students, along with instructors who have personal access to all patient-related information, can monitor changes in a patient for whom they have provided a preliminary diagnosis and then discuss the patient’s final diagnosis together with the instructor, comparing it with their preliminary diagnosis.

In the “Emergency Hospital” department, two rooms are designated for students, located at the end of the Emergency Hospital where students can change, rest, take breaks, etc.

During the visit to the “Erebuni” Medical Center, the head of the oncology department, Dr. H.K. Kzhdryan, was attending an international congress in the USA. Under the leadership of Dr. H.K. Kzhdryan, the “Erebuni” Medical Center successfully operates a globally recognized system for reviewing and discussing complex cancer patients with the involvement of experienced physicians of various profiles: both diagnostic and therapeutic. This system, known as the “Tumor Board,” ensures that each patient is treated individually, with a treatment plan tailored specifically to them. Dr. H.K. Kzhdryan has also engaged fifth-year students of the Academy in her research on “Modern Methods of Breast Cancer Treatment” and “Principles of Surgical Treatment of Colorectal Cancer.”

Oncologist Dr. R.A. Barikyan introduced the EEC to the chemotherapy department, which

included both inpatient rooms and outpatient areas for patients who came in on specific days for chemotherapy sessions. All rooms were equipped with multifunctional beds and infusion devices. To prevent hair loss (alopecia) during chemotherapy, patients are provided with a device (ORBIS) that is placed on their heads. The department also had a lecture room intended for academic classes with Academy students. They attend morning rounds with instructors and are present during all procedures performed in the department.

The EEC was also shown the mammology department, which was located on the same floor. The department was equipped with the latest generation mammography machine from General Electric and a modern ultrasound machine from SIEMENS.

The educational process at EMAF is supplemented with a stage of simulation-based training, making extensive use of patient replacement and patient-centered technologies. According to the survey of the EMAF instructors conducted during the EEC visit, 91% of respondents evaluated the sufficiency and accessibility of necessary scientific and educational literature in the library as either “very good” or “good.” Furthermore, 94% of respondents evaluated the level of conditions created, taking into account the needs of different groups of students, as positive.

According to the results of a survey of EMAF students conducted during the visit of the EEC, the sufficiency and accessibility of library resources was assessed positively (“very good” and “good”) by 94% of respondents; the quality of services provided in libraries and reading rooms – 96%; satisfaction with existing educational resources – 93%; available computer classes and scientific laboratories – 89%; and the provision of dormitories for students – 68% of respondents.

Based on the analysis of the survey results, it has been determined that EMAF provides sufficient opportunities for sports and other leisure activities (86%); the equipment and facilities for students are safe, comfortable, and modern (81%). Positive evaluations in terms of providing equal opportunities for all students have been received from 84% of respondents.

Analytical Section

The EEC experts state the fact that, within the framework of the “Educational Resources” standard at EMAF, through the work of the expert committee and the analysis of the provided documentation, EMAF continuously improves the learning environment for students through regular updates, expansion and strengthening of the material-technical base, which corresponds to the development of healthcare and medical education practices (recognized as a strength under Standard 6.2).

The EEC members note that EMAF provides the necessary resources for the successful implementation of the EP by enabling students to gain clinical experience, including sufficient number of scientific and research facilities, categories of patients; long-term contractual relationships with the medical organizations. EMAF implements a form of practical training in the form of internships.

The EEC members state that, based on the survey during the EEC visit, EMAF instructors point out certain issues in educational activities (responses “sometimes” and “often”), which include a weak Internet signal (10% and 47%); delayed receipt of information about some events (7% and 35%); and the absence of interactive teaching tools in certain classrooms (13% and 27%).

Based on interviews with TS responsible for teaching disciplines at EMAF, EEC experts have identified a need for greater support from the EMAF administration in promoting the interests and research efforts of staff in the field of medical education.

Satisfactory ratings were given by EEC members for those points that require increased attention to comply with the standards. Measures for these points have been scheduled by the university and included in the plan.

Strengths/Best Practices

EMAF continually improves the learning environment for students through regular updates, expansion, and strengthening of its material-technical infrastructure, which aligns with the developments in healthcare and medical education practices, including a simulation center and the presence of its own clinics.

EEC Recommendations

Organize and provide access to virtual and physical information resources throughout the

EEC Conclusions based on Criteria

- *Strong – 1*
- *Satisfactory – 5*
- *Suggesting Improvement – 1*
- *Unsatisfactory – 0*

6.7. Standard: “Quality Assurance Policy”

Evidence Section

The organizational structure of EMAF, its processes and decision-making policies are clear and consistent with its mission, goals, objectives, and support institutional efficiency. The management system of EMAF involves the participation of stakeholders, including the healthcare sector, and reflects the responsibility of academic leadership.

The main educational, scientific, and administrative structural unit responsible for implementing the EP as well as managing all types of activities of the departments involved in educating students within the EP is the faculty’s dean’s office. The primary goals of the faculty’s activities include fulfilling the mission and objectives set for EMAF in preparing highly qualified, competent dental healthcare specialists who possess modern methods and technologies.

EMAF has its own management system that contributes to achieving its mission and goals, supports institutional efficiency and integrity, creates and maintains an environment for learning, conducting research, and creative activities, an effective performance monitoring system, developed in accordance with international standards, is in operation.

The EEC members state that the EMAF administration:

- ensures the fulfillment of the state healthcare order, employers’ requirements, and the training of medical professionals;
- coordinates the process of developing EPs;
- ensures the implementation of standard and working curricula;
- exercises control over the proper documentation of student admissions by the admissions committee for first-year students or transfers between institutions;
- participates in the preparation and organization of regular and ceremonial events;
- participates in the development of the class schedule and exercises control of readiness of departments for the start of the academic year;
- organizes the educational process and ensures quality control of student training;
- appoints group supervisors in junior courses and clinical mentors in senior courses;
- provides data on the number of students at the faculty, their performance, to the rector, administration of the institute, planning and financial department, accounting, and other EMAF departments;
- organizes and controls students’ educational and production training practice and conducting tests and exams;
- manages academic leave, handles student expulsions and reinstatements, and makes decisions regarding students repeating the course;
- collects information about the academic performance of faculty students with subsequent analysis and discussion in meetings of the Council, academic council, and rectorate;
- implements a set of measures to make up for missed classes and facilitates the appeals process;
- organizes and ensures oversight of all activities assigned to departments;
- prepares assessment materials for the final state examinations of graduates;
- organizes discussions on healthy lifestyles and ethical education for students, as well as visits to theaters, museums, and exhibitions;
- assists in the organization of sports and cultural events for students;
- manages student accommodation in dormitories and monitors living conditions.

The top management of EMAF follows a consistent policy of making changes within the university, initiates discussions about the changes with the employees, students, and other interested

parties. To analyze the internal and external environment, a monitoring system for both external and internal factors is established and in operation, “SWOT analysis” method (analyzing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) is applied. During the analysis, careful consideration is given to the external and internal factors that influence strategic decisions affecting the functioning of EMAF (legislation, funding, stakeholders, consumers, competitors, technologies, suppliers, personnel, and the potential of internal resources).

Analytical Section

EMAF independently manages its financial and economic activities; its financial autonomy is aligned with the principles of accountability to society for the quality of all activities related to professional training, scientific research, and the provision of services with the effective management of financial resources and state assets.

Resource allocation is carried out based on the specific characteristics and needs of the EP, the nature of the educational discipline, conditions for practical and laboratory sessions, the necessity of involving standardized patients, and other relevant factors. The established policy is in accordance with legislative acts, ensuring the institutional autonomy of EMAF.

During the interview process, it was noted that responsibility for the development and management of the EP rests with the academic authorities.

The implementation of the EP is carried out by the management and academic staff of EMAF, as well as individuals engaged under civil law contracts.

The EEC members have observed that at EMAF, the responsibility for implementing the EP and achieving its final goals and outcomes lies with the rector, vice-rector for academic affairs, dean’s office, and the educational-methodological department.

During an online discussion with focus groups, feedback from interviewees indicated that EMAF periodically conducts assessments of its academic management regarding the achievement of its mission and final learning outcomes.

Based on the survey conducted during the EEC visit, completely satisfied with the attitudes of EMAF management towards instructors were 75% of respondents; attitude towards immediate management – 82%; relations with colleagues at the department – 92%; degree of participation in management decision making – 69%; relations with students – 84% of respondents. With recognition of successes and achievements from the administration were completely satisfied 80% of TS; with support for suggestions and comments – 75%; with activities of the university administration – 73%; with terms of remuneration – 70% of respondents. With the working conditions, list and quality of services provided at the university were satisfied 71% of TS; with labor protection and safety – 73%; with change management of university – 75% of respondents. 50% of TS were completely satisfied with the provision of the social package; organization and quality of food at the university – 61%; organization and quality of medical services – 68% of respondents.

The EEC experts note that EMAF should develop and implement a policy for using expertise in the development of teaching methods and the assessment of knowledge and skills in the EP, for example, a group of independent experts (from among the advanced teaching staff), as teaching and instructional methods lag behind the capabilities of the university’s material-technical base.

The EEC experts also recommend that EMAF’s management carry out a set of measures to conduct expertise in the field of educational assessment and research in the field of medical education including the study of theoretical, practical, and social questions, since no convincing evidence has been obtained from the ongoing research and expert work during interviews with EMAF TS.

Satisfactory ratings were given by the EEC members on those items that formally comply with the standards.

Strengths/Best Practices

No strengths have been identified for this standard.

EEC Recommendations

1. Develop and implement EMAF Policy on the use of expertise in development methods of teaching and assessment of learning outcomes (due date – 01-Sep-2023).

2. Develop and implement EMAF Policy in the field of development and expertise of EP (due date – 01-Sep-2023).
3. Carry out a set of measures to develop expertise in educational assessment and research in medical education as a discipline that includes the study of theoretical, practical and social issues in medical education (due date – 01-Sep-2024).
4. Promote the desires and interests of EMAF employees in conducting research in medical education (on an ongoing basis).
5. Organize advanced training for EMAF TS on the use of educational process of examination, taking into account medical, scientific, social and psychological aspects (due date – 01-Sep-2023).

EEC Conclusions based on Criteria

- *Strong – 0*
- *Satisfactory – 0*
- *Suggesting Improvement – 5*
- *Unsatisfactory – 0*

6.8. Standard: “Management and Administration”

Evidence Section

The organizational structure, processes, and decision-making policies of EMAF are clear and consistent with its mission, goals, objectives and support institutional efficiency. The EMAF management system involves the participation of all stakeholders, including the healthcare sector and reflects the responsibility of academic management.

EMAF has its own management system that contributes to achieving its mission and goals, supports institutional efficiency and integrity, creates and maintains an environment for learning, conducting research, and creative activities, an effective performance monitoring system, developed in accordance with international standards, is in operation.

The university’s top management implements a consistent policy of changes within the institution, initiates processes of discussion of the changes with employees, students, and other stakeholders. To analyze the internal and external environment, a monitoring system for both external and internal factors is established and in operation, “SWOT analysis” method (analyzing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) is applied. During the analysis, careful consideration is given to the external and internal factors that influence strategically important decisions affecting the functioning of EMAF (legislation, funding, shareholders, consumers, competitors, technologies, suppliers, personnel, and the potential of internal resources).

Regular self-assessment is carried out as part of the annual self-examination of the Academy, and through internal audit, which regulates internal activities and is created to analyze and evaluate the functioning of the organization.

The main objectives of internal audits at the EMAF are: compliance assessment requirements of internal regulatory documents, international and national standards; providing the organization’s management with reliable data on the quality of implementation educational, research and other processes; performance analysis corrective and preventive actions to eliminate identified inconsistencies.

Analytical Section

EMAF independently manages its financial and economic activities; its financial autonomy is aligned with the principles of accountability to society for the quality of all activities related to professional training, scientific research, and the provision of services with the effective management of financial resources and state assets.

To discuss the main issues of organizing educational and educational-methodological work in the Dean’s Office of the Faculty of Dentistry there is an EMAF Council.

Resource allocation is carried out depending on the specific needs and characteristics of the EP, the nature of EMAF’s academic disciplines, the conditions for practical and laboratory classes, the necessity of involving standardized patients, and other factors. The existing policy is not in conflict

with Armenian legislation, ensuring the institutional autonomy of EMAF.

During an online conversation with focus groups, it was revealed that EMAF periodically conducts assessments of academic management regarding the achievement of its mission and the results of education. However, there were significant challenges in obtaining responses regarding the periodic monitoring and assessment of EP for continuous improvement, both in terms of the monitoring process itself and the adequate evaluation of the EP.

Based on the survey conducted during the EEC visit, completely satisfied with the attitudes of EMAF management towards instructors were 75% of respondents; attitude towards immediate management – 82%; relations with colleagues at the department – 92%; degree of participation in management decision making – 69%; relations with students – 84% of respondents. With recognition of successes and achievements from the administration were completely satisfied 80% of TS; with support for suggestions and comments – 75%; with activities of the university administration – 73%; with terms of remuneration – 70% of respondents.

Satisfactory ratings were given by EEC members for those points that require increased attention to comply with the standards. Measures for these points have been scheduled by the university and included in the plan.

Strengths/Best Practices

No strengths have been identified for this standard.

EEC Recommendations

It is recommended to develop and implement a Regulation on monitoring and evaluation of EP for continuous improvement of the EP (due date – 01-Sep-2023).

EEC Conclusions based on Criteria

- *Strong* – 0
- *Satisfactory* – 7
- *Suggesting Improvement* – 1
- *Unsatisfactory* – 0

6.9. Standard: “Continuous Update”

Evidence Section

EMAF is a dynamically developing and socially responsible educational institution where procedures for continuous monitoring and improvement of fundamental operational processes have been developed and implemented.

Monitoring of the implementation of the core EP includes: 1) a self-assessment procedure; 2) surveys of interested parties to identify requirements for learning outcomes; 3) feedback from employers; 4) results of all types of practical trainings.

Documentation of discrepancies and drawbacks in the work of departments, the faculty as a whole is carried out during internal and external audits. Following the results of audits, with the aim of eliminating the causes of identified discrepancies and preventing their recurrence, the departments develop corrective and preventive action plans. At the end of the academic year, all departments, councils, and committees prepare reports on the results of plan execution and processes of EMAF. These results are analyzed by the faculty’s dean’s office and the Academy’s management to make decisions for future periods, as well as are reflected in the overall strategic development plans of EMAF.

For the successful implementation of the EP, it is necessary to adequately equip the departments and structural units of EMAF that are involved in educational activities with material, technical, informational resources (having suitable classrooms, office equipment, and the necessary tools and equipment, etc.), human resources.

Annually, before the start of the academic year, an order is prepared for the preparation of the Academy for the new academic year. At the end of the calendar year, a plan for the material and technical supply of the EP is developed based on requests from structural units and departments, used for financial planning for the upcoming period. The financial planning department creates a funding

plan for all processes related to program implementation. All departments keep records of material-technical resources. A significant number of resources have been allocated to the development of the Educational Information and Organizational System (EIOS) to facilitate the implementation of the program in a remote format. Conducting scientific research by both TS and students of the program also requires certain financial expenditures, which are reflected in EMAF's procurement plan.

The process of updating educational resources of EMAF is carried out in accordance with changing needs, the development of scientific-research directions in medicine, innovative surgical techniques, treatment of various diseases, as well as socio-economic requirements of the labor market in the field of medical services, which involves updating the program, introducing new mandatory and elective disciplines, offering electives based on prospective and in-house research, as well as global trends in the study of the field.

The dynamic adjustment of educational resources at EMAF is based on new trends in basic, clinical, behavioral, and social sciences, taking into account the morbidity, mortality, and overall health status in society, as well as the government's objectives, the profile of specialists, and the correction of incorporation of new knowledge contributes to improving socio-economic indicators and the quality of life, both nationally and globally.

The EMAF educational process is organized using modern technologies. Many classrooms are equipped with interactive boards and equipment necessary for video conferencing.

One of the important tasks of the EMAF in the near future is to establish compliance of activities with international standards, through integration of higher medical education, scientific-research work and qualified clinical activities in the educational process; harmonization of traditions of national medical school with international standards in medical education.

Analytical Section

After analyzing the provided documents and conducting interviews with focus group participants, the EEC members have concluded that EMAF, as a dynamically developing and socially responsible institution of higher medical education, should initiate procedures for regular review and revision of the curriculum, learning outcomes/competencies, assessment, and the learning environment. It is essential to carefully review the functions of structural-functional units and process maps, document, and address deficiencies, considering that EMAF continually allocates resources for continuous improvement.

The SWOT analysis of EMAF, taking into account the established traditions, values, and corporate culture of the institution, needs critical reevaluation.

Answers to questions regarding the EP renewal process at EMAF during the interviews in focus groups were obtained in insufficient volume as the EP renewal process should be based on prospective research, analysis, and assessment; analysis of modern literature on medical education.

The EP managers at the EMAF need to annually adjust the elements of the EP and their interrelations in accordance with advancements in the field of biomedical, behavioral, social and clinical sciences, changes in demographic situation and health status/morbidity structure of the population and socio-economic and cultural conditions, and the adjustment process will ensure the inclusion of new relevant knowledge, concepts and methods while removing outdated ones.

The EEC members recommend developing clear assessment principles and methods for conducting and number of exams in accordance with changing learning outcomes and methods of teaching and learning, since in the process of interviews with students mainly oral and written surveys, testing and solving situational problems were mentioned.

Satisfactory ratings were given by EEC members for those points that require increased attention to comply with the standards. Measures for these points have been scheduled by the university and included in the plan.

Strengths/Best Practices

No strengths have been identified for this standard.

EEC recommendations

It is recommended to carry out a stage-by-stage adaptation of the EP model and methodological approaches, taking into account modern theories in medical education, adult education methodology,

and active learning principles (due date – 01-Sep-2024).

EEC Conclusions based on Criteria

- *Strong – 0*
- *Satisfactory – 5*
- *Suggesting Improvement – 0*
- *Unsatisfactory – 0*

(VII) OVERVIEW OF STRENGTHS/BEST PRACTICES FOR EACH STANDARD

Standard: “Mission and Values”

No strengths have been identified for this standard.

Standard: “Educational Program”

No strengths have been identified for this standard.

Standard: “Assessment of Learners”

No strengths have been identified for this standard.

Standard: “Learners”

No strengths have been identified for this standard.

Standard: “Academic Staff /Instructors”

No strengths have been identified for this standard.

Standard: “Educational Resources”

EMAF continually improves the learning environment for students through regular updates, expansion, and strengthening of its material-technical infrastructure, which aligns with the developments in healthcare and medical education practices, including a simulation center and the presence of its own clinics.

Standard: “Quality Assurance Policy”

No strengths have been identified for this standard.

Standard: “Management and Administration”

No strengths have been identified for this standard.

Standard: “Continuous Update”

No strengths have been identified for this standard.

(VIII) OVERVIEW OF QUALITY IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Standard: “Mission and Values”

1. Ensure that the mission, quality policy, and organization’s vision of EMAF are effectively communicated to all stakeholders (due date – 01-Sep-2023).
2. EMAF’s leadership is advised to consistently involve stakeholders in the development of the mission (due date – 01-Sep-2023).
3. EMAF’s leadership is recommended to regularly (at least once a year) study, analyze, and document stakeholder opinions and suggestions regarding the mission, vision, and educational outcomes (due date – 01-Sep-2023).

Standard: “Educational Program”

1. It is recommended that the EMAF management regularly conducts and documents the

- competency assessment of graduates (at least once a year) and uses the obtained results as a feedback tool to improve the educational program (due date – 01-Sep-2023).
2. It is recommended to incorporate teaching and learning methods based on modern adult learning theory into the educational process at EMAF and regularly provide professional development for TS in these teaching and learning methods (due date – 01-Sep-2024).
 3. It is recommended to gradually modernize the EP model at EMAF, based on integrated learning results, organ systems, diseases, and modular design (due date – 01-Sep-2024).
 4. It is recommended to regularly involve stakeholders (representatives of clinical departments, practical healthcare specialists) in collegial advisory bodies and engage them in discussions about the CED (at least once a year) (due date – 01-Sep-2024).
 5. It is recommended to regularly modify the specialty EP based on feedback from the public (posting information and conducting surveys on the website, in the media, etc.) – at least once a year (due date – 01-Sep-2024).

Standard: “Assessment of Learners”

1. It is recommended that the EP heads optimize the student assessment system using methods that are oriented toward the degree of achievement of learning outcomes, taking into account international best practices (due date – 01-Sep-2024).
2. The EP heads are advised to regularly use and document a wide range of assessment methods and formats based on their “utility assessment,” which includes a combination of validity, reliability, impact on learning, acceptability, and efficiency of assessment methods and formats (due date – 01-Sep-2024).
3. The EP heads are recommended to provide training for TS on summative and formative assessment and ensure an appropriate balance between formative and summative assessment during the implementation of educational programs, with progress monitoring at each stage of the curriculum (due date – 01-Sep-2024).
4. The EP heads should develop a system (create a local regulatory act) to ensure that the assessment process and methods are open to external expert scrutiny (due date – 01-Sep-2024).

Standard: “Learners”

No recommendations.

Standard: “Academic Staff /Instructors”

1. Develop and implement a policy for the activities and development of TS at the EMAF, guaranteeing recognition of academic activities with a focus on assessing teaching, research, and clinical qualifications (due date – 01-Sep-2023).
2. Organize professional development for the EMAF TS on the use of modern educational technologies and assessment methods in the educational process (due date – 01-Sep-2023).
3. Expand the range of teaching methods at EMAF, taking into account best international practices (TBL, CBL, RBL, etc.) (due date – 01-Sep-2024).

Standard: “Educational Resources”

Organize and provide access to virtual and physical information resources throughout the Academy for 100% of students and TS (due date – 01-Sep-2023).

Standard: “Quality Assurance Policy”

1. Develop and implement EMAF Policy on the use of expertise in development methods of teaching and assessment of learning outcomes (due date – 01-Sep-2023).
2. Develop and implement EMAF Policy in the field of development and expertise of EP (due date – 01-Sep-2023).
3. Carry out a set of measures to develop expertise in educational assessment and research in medical education as a discipline that includes the study of theoretical, practical and social issues in medical education (due date – 01-Sep-2024).
4. Promote the desires and interests of EMAF employees in conducting research in medical education (on an ongoing basis).

5. Organize advanced training for EMAF TS on the use of educational process of examination, taking into account medical, scientific, social and psychological aspects (due date – 01-Sep-2023).

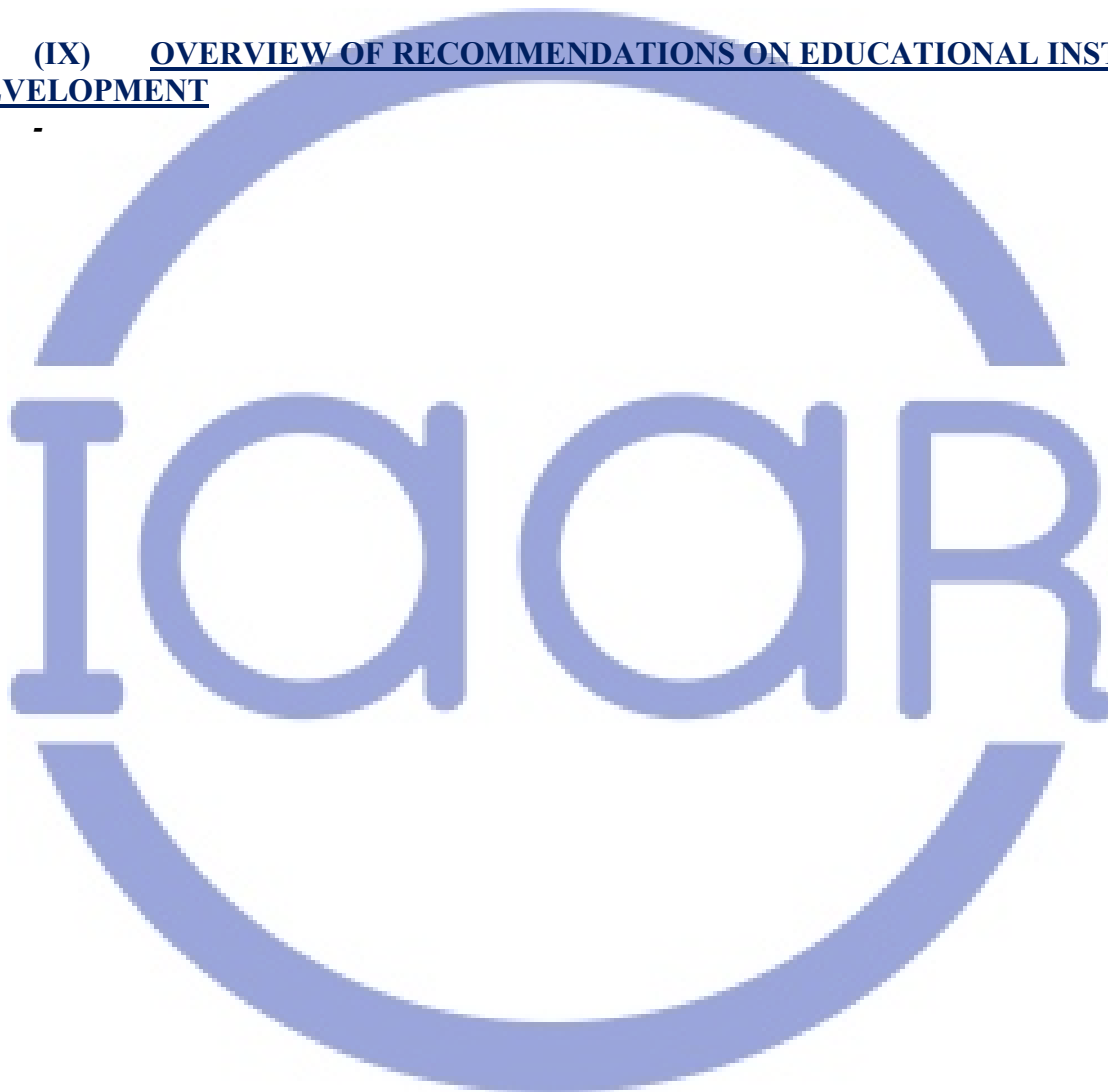
Standard: “Management and Administration”

It is recommended to develop and implement a Regulation on monitoring and evaluation of EP for continuous improvement of the EP (due date – 01-Sep-2023).

Standard: “Continuous Update”

It is recommended to carry out a stage-by-stage adaptation of the EP model and methodological approaches, taking into account modern theories in medical education, adult education methodology, and active learning principles (due date – 01-Sep-2024).

(IX) OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION DEVELOPMENT



Appendix 1. Evaluation table “INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE PARAMETERS”

№ p\p	№	Evaluation Criteria	EI Position			
			Strong	Satisfactory	Suggesting Improvement	Unsatisfactory
Standard 1. MISSION AND VALUES						
The educational institution must:						
1	1.1	have a published statement outlining the EI’s mission, values, priorities and goals		+		
2	1.2.	bring the mission of the EI to the attention of stakeholders and the healthcare sector		+		
3	1.3	describe the EI’s mission, values, educational goals, research functions and interrelations with healthcare services and communities		+		
The educational institution should:						
4	1.4.	ensure compliance of the EI mission with the institutional strategy		+		
5	1.5.	ensure the participation of TS, learners and other interested parties in the development of the mission of the EI		+		
Total of the standard			0	5	0	0
Standard 2. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM						
The educational institution must:						
6	2.1	have procedures for the development and formal approval of EP at the institutional level. Programs must be designed in accordance with established objectives, including the principles underlying the EP model used, the relationship between components and expected learning outcomes		+		
7	2.2	ensure that qualifications resulting from EPs are clearly defined, explained, and correspond to a certain level of the national qualifications framework		+		
8	2.3	determine the expected learning outcomes that learners must master before graduation, as well as the expected learning outcomes for EP structural units (disciplines/modules)			+	
9	2.4	when developing EP, ensure that the EP objectives are consistent with the institutional strategy and that there are clearly defined expected learning outcomes; participation of learners and other stakeholders in the development of EP; unhindered progression of the learners in the process of mastering the EP; determining the expected workload of learners (for example, in ECTS); providing opportunities for internship (where necessary)			+	
10	2.5	ensure that the EP content includes the necessary sections to prepare students for their role in practical healthcare and for their subsequent further training		+		
The educational institution should:						
11	2.6	use educational strategies and teaching methods that ensure learners achieve expected learning outcomes			+	
12	2.7	ensure that EI design choice is related to the mission, intended outcomes, resources and context of the EI		+		
Total of the standard			0	4	3	0
Standard 3 ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS						
The educational institution must:						
13	3.1	define, approve, and publish a learner assessment policy, which is implemented through a centralized system of multiple coordinated assessments corresponding to the final learning outcomes. The learner assessment policy is communicated to all interested parties.			+	
14	3.2	provide an assessment system that regularly provides learners with effective feedback, identifies their strengths and weaknesses, and helps them consolidate their learning. This formative assessment is linked to educational strategies that ensure that all learners have the opportunity to realize their potential.			+	
15	3.3	implement student-centered learning processes in their programs to encourage learner to take an active role in the joint construction of the educational process, student assessment should reflect this approach			+	
16	3.4	provide a system of assessment on which decisions about progress and graduation are made. Summative learning assessments use a wide range of assessment methods and formats depending on their “utility assessment”, which includes a combination of validity, reliability, impact on learning, acceptability and effectiveness of assessment methods and format.			+	
17	3.5	use the results of learner assessment to improve the work of academic staff, structural units of EP (disciplines/modules), EP, educational institution		+		
The educational institution should:						

№ p/p	№	Evaluation Criteria	EI Position			
			Strong	Satisfactory	Suggesting Improvement	Unsatisfactory
18	3.6	ensure that assessment policies with centralized system that guides and supports its implementation will entail the use of a variety of summative and formative methods leading to the acquisition of knowledge, clinical/practical skills and behavior required for a doctor/specialist			+	
19	3.7	ensure that the evaluation system policy corresponds to the mission of the EI, its specific educational outcomes, available resources and the context of the EP			+	
20	3.8	regularly evaluate learners in disciplines (modules) and clinical internships in order to provide feedback that guides their learning, promotes early identification of underperforming learners and improvement opportunities		+		
Total of the standard			0	2	6	0
Standard 4. LEARNERS						
The educational institution must:						
21	4.1	have a publicly available policy that sets out the objectives, principles, criteria, selection and admission processes of learners		+		
22	4.2	have pre-defined, published, and consistently applied rules governing all periods of the student “life cycle”, i.e., admission, performance, recognition and certification		+		
23	4.3	provide learners with accessible and confidential academic, social, psychological and financial support services, as well as career guidance		+		
The educational institution should:						
24	4.4	take into account the relationship between the number of learners (including international students) and the resources, facilities and infrastructure available for their adequate education, issues of equality and diversity, rules for re-application, deferred admission and transfer from other educational institutions when developing policies		+		
25	4.5	pay attention to selection requirements, selection stages, mechanisms for submitting proposals, mechanisms for filing and receiving complaints in the process of selecting learners		+		
26	4.6	offer and provide support to learners in developing academic skills, managing physical and mental health, personal well-being, financial management and career planning		+		
Total of the standard			0	6	0	0
Standard 5. ACADEMIC STAFF/INSTRUCTORS						
The educational institution must:						
27	5.1	have a sufficient number of qualified TS necessary for the introduction and implementation of the EP, taking into account the number of learners, style of teaching and learning		+		
28	5.2	have objective and transparent processes for recruitment, professional growth and development of all staff that ensure the competence of the instructors		+		
29	5.3	implement the stated policy of continuous professional development of its TS			+	
The educational institution should:						
30	5.4	determine a policy regarding the recruitment of academic staff, including consideration of the number, level of qualifications of academic staff necessary to provide planned EP to the expected number of learners, distribution of TS by profile, qualifications, and experience			+	
31	5.5	by recognizing the importance of teaching, develop clear, transparent, and objective criteria for hiring, appointment, promotion, dismissal of employees and follow them in their activities		+		
32	5.6	by providing opportunities for career advancement and professional development for instructors, encourage research activities to strengthen the link between education and research, innovative teaching methods and the use of advanced technologies			+	
Total of the standard			0	3	3	0
Standard 6. EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES						
The educational institution must:						
33	6.1	ensure the availability of sufficient, accessible and fit-for-purpose learning resources and learner support services		+		
34	6.2	have appropriate and sufficient resources to ensure learners receive the necessary clinical/practical training	+			
35	6.3	ensure adequate access to virtual and physical information resources to support the mission of the EI and EP			+	
36	6.4	provide education with appropriate attention to the safety of the learning environment and patients, including observation of learners’ activities in clinical/production settings		+		

№ p/p	№	Evaluation Criteria	EI Position			
			Strong	Satisfactory	Suggesting Improvement	Unsatisfactory
The educational institution should:						
37	6.5	when distributing, planning and providing educational resources with support services, take into account the needs of various groups of learners (adults, working people, part-time students, foreign students, people with disabilities) and take into account the trends of student-centered learning		+		
38	6.6	ensure that all resources are accessible and relevant to learning objectives, and that learners are informed of available services		+		
39	6.7	ensure that the administration and specialized services have a key role in providing support services		+		
Total of the standard			1	5	1	0
Standard 7. QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY						
The educational institution must:						
40	7.1	have a quality assurance system that covers the educational, administrative and research components of the EI's activities			+	
41	7.2	have a published quality assurance policy as a part of its strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, with the involvement of external stakeholders			+	
42	7.3	have a process and outcome monitoring program that includes the collection and analysis of data on key aspects of the EP to ensure that the educational process is carried out appropriately and to identify any areas requiring intervention, and data collection is a part of the administrative procedures in connection with admission of learners, assessment of learners and completion of education			+	
The educational institution should:						
43	7.4	define policies and procedures as the basis of a logical and consistent system of quality assurance of the EI, official status and be accessible to the general public			+	
44	7.5	ensure that the quality assurance policy reflects the relationship between research, teaching and learning and takes into account both the national and intra-institutional context, supporting the organization of the quality assurance system; structural units of the educational institution, management, TS and learners performing quality assurance responsibilities; processes to ensure academic reputation and freedom, processes to prevent intolerance of any kind and discrimination against learners and instructors; participation of external stakeholders in quality assurance			+	
Total of the standard			0	0	5	0
Standard 8. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION						
The educational institution must:						
45	8.1	have a defined governance structure for teaching, learning, research, and resource allocation that is transparent and accessible to all interested parties, consistent with the mission and functions of the EI and ensures its sustainability		+		
46	8.2	ensure that it collects, analyzes and uses relevant information to effectively manage its activities and its EPs		+		
47	8.3	have policies and procedures for engaging or consulting learners and instructors on key aspects of educational activities and the EP management process		+		
48	8.4	have appropriate and sufficient administrative support to achieve its teaching, learning and research goals		+		
49	8.5	inform the public about its activities (including programs). The information provided must be clear, reliable, objective, relevant and accessible.		+		
The educational institution should:						
50	8.6	determine mechanisms for collecting and analyzing information about activities, EPs and use the obtained data in the work of the internal quality assurance system			+	
51	8.7	develop a policy and a review process to ensure adequate and effective administrative, personnel and budgetary support for all EI activities		+		
52	8.8	provide information about activities, including EPs being implemented, expected learning outcomes of those EPs, assigned qualifications, teaching, learning, assessment procedures, passing scores and educational opportunities provided to learners, as well as the information about employment opportunities for graduates		+		
Total of the standard			0	7	1	0
Standard 9. CONTINUOUS UPDATE						
The educational institution must:						

№ p\p	№	Evaluation Criteria	EI Position			
			Strong	Satisfactory	Suggesting Improvement	Unsatisfactory
53	9.1	monitor and periodically evaluate programs to ensure that they achieve their purpose and meet the needs of learners and society. The results of these processes should lead to continuous improvement of the EPs. All stakeholders must be informed of any planned or undertaken action regarding the EPs.		+		
54	9.2	undergo external quality assurance procedures in accordance with European standards and recommendations on a regular basis		+		
The educational institution should:						
55	9.3	include the evaluation of the EP content in the monitoring, periodic assessment, and revision of the EP, taking into account the latest scientific achievements in a specific discipline to ensure the relevance of the taught discipline; changing societal needs; learner workload, performance, and graduation rates; the effectiveness of learner assessment procedures; learner expectations, needs, and satisfaction with the EP; the educational environment and support services, and their alignment with program goals		+		
56	9.4	regularly evaluate and revise the EP with the involvement of learners and other interested parties and publish the changes made		+		
57	9.5	regularly participate in external quality assurance procedures which, where necessary, consider the requirements of the legislation under which they operate		+		
Total of the standard			0	5	0	0
TOTAL			1	37	19	0

