

## Decision of fulfillment of the secondary condition of Institutional Accreditation of the Yerevan Haybusak University

07.01.2022

The Higher Education Assessment Council of the Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education decided the secondary condition to the Institutional accreditation decision of the Yerevan Haybusak University on 22.11.2019 is met and to leave in force the decision to accredit the Yerevan Haybusak University for 3 years.

Based on § 53 (3) of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) and to clauses 43.5 and 43.7 of the document "Guide to Institutional Accreditation" established on the basis of the authorization contained in § 38 (3) of the Higher Education Act and section 24 subsection 5 of the Statutes of the Education and Youth Board, the Higher Education Assessment Council of the Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education (hereinafter the Council) states the following:

1. § 53 (1) 2) of the APA provides that *an additional duty related to the principal regulation of the administrative act* and § 53 (2) 2) and 3) provide that *a secondary condition may be imposed on an administrative act: if the administrative act cannot be issued without the secondary condition or if the issue of the administrative act must be resolved on the basis of the administrative right of discretion*. On 22.11.2019, the Higher Education Assessment Council of the Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education (hereinafter the Council) adopted a decision to approve the accreditation report,<sup>1</sup> and to accredit Yerevan Haybusak University for three years, with the secondary condition that the Yerevan Haybusak University submits a report to the Council no later than 22.11.2020<sup>2</sup> on the rectification of the deficiency referred to in clause 14 of the assessment decision.
2. On 30.06.2021, the Council adopted a decision to establish a new secondary condition to the Institutional accreditation decision of the Yerevan Haybusak University that the Yerevan Haybusak University submits a report to the Council no later than 1.11.2021.
3. On 30.10.2021, the Yerevan Haybusak University sent the following documents to the Council: 1) Yerevan Haybusak University 2021-2025 Strategic Plan; 2) Yerevan Haybusak University Operational Plan for 2021/2022 academic year; 3)

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<sup>1</sup> The assessment report is an integral part of the decision and is available on the EKKA website.

<sup>2</sup>The assessment report is available on the EKKA website.

International Cooperation Agreements; 4) Academic mobility agreements; 5) Mantashov Entrepreneurs Union company members list.

4. EKKA involved the following members of the committee in the assessment of the fulfillment of the secondary condition:

Helen Thomas	Freelance Education Consultant, the UK
Jacques Lanares	University of Lausanne, Vice Rector, Switzerland

5. EKKA sent a preliminary report to the Yerevan Haybusak University on 16.12.2021, to which the University submitted a reply on 22.12.2021. On 30.12.2021, the Assessment Committee submitted a report to EKKA on the elimination of the deficiency described in the decision of the Council of 30.06.2021. The assessment was as follows:

Deficiency underlying imposition of the secondary condition	Assessment: <b>The secondary condition is substantially met</b>
<i>YHU should review and revise the strategic plan to reflect common practice so that it focusses on goals, high level objectives and KPIs for the five-year period. YHU should develop a separate operational plan that details the sub-objectives and activities with clear responsibilities, time frames and deadlines which can be reviewed on at least an annual basis. YHU must develop KPIs that are specific and measurable and that clearly relate to the goals.</i>	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The participative approach taken to the development of the new strategic plan.</li> </ul> <p><b>Areas of concern and recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Panel could find some links between the weaknesses identified in the SWOT analysis and items included in the Key Result Areas and Performance Targets; however, these were not always clear. It is recommended that YHU reviews how they have addressed the threats and weaknesses identified in the SWOT analysis in the development of the strategic plan.</li> <li>Some of the objectives do not easily lend themselves to the measurement of their achievement. It is recommended that YHU reviews the objectives to ensure that their attainment can be measured or clearly evaluated.</li> <li>The Panel gained a confused picture of objective 1.2.2 <i>Develop a student-centred education management</i>. YHU is recommended to review this objective and ensure that there is a shared understanding and that the associated targets are relevant to that understanding.</li> <li>The Panel found some inconsistencies and lack of clarity between targets and objectives within the operational plan</li> </ul>

	<p>which made it difficult to see how see how the overall operational plan would provide departments with clarity for developing their own plans and reporting. It is recommended that YHU reviews the operational plan 2021-2022 so that it is clear and consistent and thus facilitates the development of departmental plans that can be monitored, and which can feed into the overall evaluation of the operational plan.</p> <p><b>Opportunities for further improvement</b></p> <p>It is suggested that YHU could usefully review how they have used all aspects of the SWOT analysis to ensure that the full benefit of the SWOT is realised and make it clearer how the SWOT analysis informs the strategic plan.</p>
<p>Deficiency underlying imposition of the secondary condition</p>	<p>Assessment: <b>The secondary condition is partly met</b></p>
<p><i>YHU must further develop a strategic approach to the development of its research capacity which clearly articulates priority areas and serves as a basis for identifying key objectives and related KPIs. YHU should include the requirement to undertake research in the contracts of full-time academic staff.</i></p>	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General improvements in conditions for research including the development of infrastructure, training in research methods, time for research in staff contracts and bonuses for publication.</li> <li>• A well-established process to assess bottom-up research projects.</li> </ul> <p><b>Areas of concern and recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The links between the research activities and the strategic objectives are rather loose as they mostly refer to multiple objectives. YHU is recommended to review this link and ensure it is unambiguous and realistic.</li> <li>• It was clear to the Panel, both from the documents and discussions, that YHU has not defined priority areas of research. YHU is recommended to develop a strategy for research which clearly identifies the key priority areas for research and to ensure that these are widely disseminated across the University. The number of key priority areas is likely to be few.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although research is included as a weakness in the strategic plan SWOT analysis, there was no evidence of a specific SWOT analysis for research. It is recommended that YHU undertakes a SWOT analysis focused on research as a first step in developing its research strategy.</li> <li>• YHU undertakes an annual revision of its research plans which, given the time needed to elaborate research projects and publish or apply their results, hampers research. YHU is recommended to reconsider the annual revision of research plans and develop a monitoring process that is consistent with the needs and demands of research.</li> <li>• The expectation for staff to publish appears to be rather weak and it is not clear what level of publication staff should be aiming for. YHU is recommended to strengthen the requirements for publication and to specify what the expectations are in terms of the level of the journals.</li> </ul> <p><b>Opportunities for further improvement</b></p> <p>YHU maintains a list of 51 institutions with which it holds cooperation agreements. YHU should identify those institutions which are active in YHU's key research areas and prioritize those agreements.</p>
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6. Taking into account that the shortcomings listed in the secondary condition have been substantially or partly eliminated, the Council

**DECIDED:**

To deem the secondary condition imposed on the institutional accreditation decision adopted on 30.06.2021 at Yerevan Haybusak University to be met and to leave in force the decision to accredit the Yerevan Haybusak University for 3 years.

The decision was adopted by 13 votes in favor, 0 opposed.

7. A person who finds that the decision of the Assessment Council has violated his or her rights or restricted his or her freedoms may file a challenge pursuant to the procedure provided for in the Administrative Procedure Act. The challenge shall be submitted to the Assessment Council of EKKKA within thirty (30) days after the

person who filed the challenge became aware of or should have become aware of the contested act.

The Assessment Council shall send the challenge to the challenge committee of the Assessment Council of EKKA, which shall submit a written, impartial opinion to the Assessment Council on the reasoning of the challenge within five (5) days of receipt of the challenge. The Assessment Council shall resolve the challenge within ten (10) days of receipt, taking into account the reasoned position of the appeal committee. If the challenge needs to be further investigated, the Assessment Council may extend the term for reviewing the challenge by up to thirty (30) days.

Challenging of a decision of the Assessment Council of EKKA is possible within thirty (30) days as of its service by submitting an appeal to the Tallinn Courthouse of the Tallinn Administrative Court pursuant to the procedure provided for in the Administrative Procedures Act.

**Hillar Bauman**  
**Secretary of the Council**