

Partnership for Good Governance

Council of Europe and European Union

**Strengthening Integrity and Combatting Corruption in Higher Education in Armenia
Project**

**TOOLKIT TO ENHANCE TRANSPARENCY
AND ACCOUNTABILITY
IN GOVERNANCE OF
HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS
IN ARMENIA**

(Revised in May-June 2017)

Online version of this toolkit is available at <https://etags.emis.am>

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Introduction

The Toolkit aims to promote transparency and accountability among Armenian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and refers to university activities, processes, and policies in key areas of HEI's institutional governance, including governing boards; strategic planning; financial activity; human resources management; admissions, academic discipline, and student issues; and information management.

The Toolkit has been developed as a model for periodic institutional reporting in the area of higher education governance. It provides a template that universities may use to prepare a formal, standardised disclosure to the Government and the public. As universities prepare this document, the completion of sections of the template may be delegated to individual units within each university, pending final institutional review and certification. The document might also be prepared concurrently with other existing institutional activities such as annual reporting, accreditation, or auditing processes.

The Toolkit requests information in the areas of governance, using a template for universities to disclose information in a precise, organised, and publicly available format. The consolidation of this information in a single document can provide a new resource for stakeholders, promoting a clearer understanding of the efforts universities are making to ensure fair and rigorous financial management, implementation of institutional policies and procedures, and decision-making.

The intended users of this information are the stakeholders to which universities are ultimately accountable: the Government (if it is the founder of the HEI), the Ministry of Education and Science, ANQA (National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance); university staff, students, and their families; non-governmental organisations; the private sector; international partners; the media, and the Armenian society.

Toolkit to Enhance Transparency and Accountability in Governance of Higher Education Institutions of Armenia

1. Governing Boards

<p>1. Appointments to Governing Boards</p>	<p><u>Highest Governing Board (Board of Trustees/University Council)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Are following members of the highest Governing Board of your institution (e.g., Board of Trustees) elected by secret ballot? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representatives from the Professorial Staff (Yes/No) Student Representatives (Yes/No) For each of the following groups, please report the ratio of proposed candidates to available seats on the Board. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professorial Staff Student Representatives Is there a publicly disclosed, open, and/or competitive process for nomination and appointment of the following groups? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-elected members¹ of the highest Governing Board (Yes/No). If yes, Please describe the selection process. Non-elected members of the Academic Council nominated by the Rector (Yes/No). Please describe the selection process. Non-elected members of the Faculty Academic Council (such as representatives of other academic institutions and employers) (Yes/No). Please describe the selection process. Of the members of your Highest Governing Board, what percentage currently holds a political position? <p><u>Academic Council</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Are the elected members of the Academic Council of your institution elected by secret ballot²? Please report the ratio between proposed candidates and available seats for elected positions on the Academic Council.
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¹ Non-elected members include individuals properly appointed to the board by the Prime Minister or delegated Minister. The description of the nomination process should indicate whether there is an open or competitive process. For more details, please, look 3rd paragraph of description of “Governing Boards” Section of guidelines.

² Members appointed by position are excluded from this question.

	<p><u>Governing Body of Educational Scientific Units (Faculty, Institute, Center, etc.)</u></p> <p>7. Are members of the Faculty collegial Governing Body of your institution (e.g., Faculty Academic Council) elected by secret ballot³?</p> <p>8. Please report the ratio between proposed (nominated) candidates and available seats for elected positions on the Faculty Governing Body.</p>
<p>2. Governing Process</p>	<p>1. What percentage of agenda items proposed for consideration during the last academic year by each governing body was not adopted?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest Governing Board • Academic Council • Faculty Governing Body <p>2. Of the agenda items adopted by each governing body, during the last academic year what percentage received at least 20% of the votes in opposition?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest Governing Board • Academic Council • Faculty Governing Body <p>3. What opportunities are available to outside groups to provide input to each governing board? Please, describe the existing opportunities and best practice cases of your university in 2-3 sentences for each body</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest Governing Board • Academic Council • Faculty Governing Body <p>4. Do the elected members each governing body report or provide feedback to units or bodies that elected them? Please describe the existing regulations and/or best practice cases in 2-3 sentences for each body</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest Governing Board • Academic Council • Faculty Governing Body

³ Members appointed by position are excluded from this question

3. Outputs	<p>1. Summarize the three major decisions adopted by each governing board (Board of trustees, Academic council) in the current year (last 12 months), not including adoption of Strategic Plan, Annual Activity Plan, Budget and corresponding Implementation Reports (2-3 sentences per decision)⁴.</p>
4. Documentation	<p>1. Are the election documents (protocols) for the elected members of each of the following governing boards of your institution publicly available? (Yes/No). If yes, please, indicate the relevant website link.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest Governing Board • Academic Council • Faculty Governing Body <p>2. Are the names, credentials, and descriptions of the responsibilities of the selected board members published? ? (Yes/No)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest Governing Board • Academic Council • Faculty Governing Body <p>If yes, please provide the website address if these are published on a webpage.</p> <p>3. Is the basis (criteria) for selection⁵ for non-elected members of each of the following governing boards of your institution provided publicly? (Yes/No). Please provide the website address if these are published on a webpage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest Governing Board • Academic Council • Faculty Governing Body <p>4. Are the protocols/minutes of sessions and decisions reached by each of the following governing boards of your institution available? (Yes/No). Please provide the website address if these are published on a webpage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest Governing Board • Academic Council • Rectorate (Administrative/Executive Board) • Faculty Governing Body

⁴ For more details, please, look last paragraph of description of “Governing Boards” Section of guidelines.

⁵ The basis for selection may include competency, position, philanthropic, and others

2. Strategic Planning	
1. Preparation of Strategic Plan	<p>1. Does your institution have a strategic (development or activity) plan? (Yes/No)</p> <p>2. Please indicate which groups participate in the preparation of the strategic plan, and briefly describe (in one sentence) how each group participates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest Governing Board (Board of Trustees/University Council) • Academic Council • University Administration/Rectorate • Faculty • Staff • Students • Professional Organizations/Trade Unions • Alumni • Branches of the University [specify] • External Stakeholders [specify] • Other [specify] <p>3. Does your institution have formal policies, procedures, and/or regulations for adopting the strategic plan? (Yes/No) If yes, are there publicly available? (Yes/No) Please indicate the relevant website link where these documents may be viewed or provide them in an Annex. [Label the documents “Annex 2.1.3”]</p>
2. Strategic Priorities	<p>1. Please identify and briefly describe the main challenges (threats) and opportunities for your institution⁶</p> <p>2. Please list the top strategic priorities of your institution reflected formally in your current strategic plan. Please indicate whether each priority is new priority in the current strategic planning period. Please provide a target indicator (or target indicators) to be achieved for each priority by the end of the strategic planning period Please provide figures showing the financial allocations for each priority in the current year Budget Plan</p> <p>For each priority that is carried over from the prior strategic planning period, provide the target indicator (or indicators) from</p>

⁶ These needs may be defined formally or informally in university planning documents and stock-taking activities (such as SWOT analyses), and can reflect issues across the entire university or areas of need in specific units that are significant for the university overall.

	<p>the last strategic planning period and describe whether the indicator was achieved in that period.</p> <p>Please explain how each priority adopted in the current strategic plan aligns with a specific national or marz (regional) priority⁷ for Armenia [one to two sentences each]</p> <p>3. Does your institution formulate and utilize Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) at the following levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University-wide? (Yes/No) • Educational and research units? (Yes/No) • Administrative and other units? (Yes/No) • Quality Assurance/Monitoring Units • Studnet Organization (Student Council, Studnet Scientific Society) <p>For each level or unit, please, specify current officially defined KPIs (Indicators, assignment and completion dates) and describe relevant KPIs assignment process, how its fulfillment is monitored and evaluated (including already achieved results and evaluation of past similar KPIs completion, if available)</p>
<p>3. Implementation</p>	<p>1. Please describe how each of the following units of your institution generally has responded and initiated activities towards localization of strategic plan (e.g., strategies, programs, priorities, concept papers of the respective units) and how the progress is monitored⁸.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational-Scientific Units (Faculties, institutes, schools, etc) • Administrative units (Departments, divisions, etc.) • Quality Assurance/Monitoring Units • Student Organizations (Student council, Student Scientific Society, etc.) • Scientific-Research Units (if separate from Educational-Scientific Units) • Other (specify, e.g. clinics, branches, affiliated commercial units) <p>2. Do the educational-scientific units (faculties, schools, institutes) and/or Administrative Departments of your institution</p>

⁷ Your institution may cite any relevant government document or other authoritative source to demonstrate that a particular priority is also a national priority

⁸ This question emphasizes the importance of localization of HEI strategic plan by relevant units. It is important to clearly indicate HEI priorities and relative activities of units, as well as implemented monitoring and evaluation. Activities cited in the Activity Plans of the respective units may be offered as evidence of adoption of the priorities of your institution, provided the activities are relevant to the strategic priority

	<p>develop Strategic Activity Plans? (Yes/No)</p> <p>develop Annual Activity Plans? (Yes/No)</p>
<p>4. Outcomes and Reporting</p>	<p>3. Do the educational-scientific units (faculties, schools, institutes) and/or Administrative Departments of your institution develop Annual Activity Plans? (Yes/No)</p> <p>1. Please indicate progress, if any, your institution has made toward meeting each strategic priority in each of the following periods. Please identify the relevant target indicator(s) and provide specific data on the progress or achievement of the indicator(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last year indicators • Indicators 3 years ago⁹ • Indicators 5 years ago <p>2. Does your institution prepare a report on the implementation of the Strategic Plan (Yes/No)</p> <p>3. Does your institution prepare a report on the implementation of the Annual Plan (Yes/No)</p> <p>4. Do the educational-scientific units (faculties, schools, institutes) and/or Administrative Departments of your institution prepare a report on the implementation of their Strategic Plans (Yes/No)</p> <p>5. Do the educational-scientific units (faculties, schools, institutes) and/or Administrative Departments of your institution prepare a report on the implementation of their Annual Plans (Yes/No)</p>
<p>5. Documentation</p>	<p>1. Is the current strategic plan of your institution available online? (Yes/No) If yes, please provide the website address. Is the past strategic plan of your institution available online? (Yes/No) If yes, please provide the website address.</p> <p>2. Is the Report on Implementation of past Strategic Plan of your institution available online? (Yes/No) If yes please provide the website address.</p> <p>3. Are the current and past strategic plans of the educational-scientific units and/or administrative departments of your institution available online? (Yes/No) Please specify which unit and provide the website address (es), if posted online.</p> <p>4. Are the reports on the implementation of the past Strategic Plans of the educational-scientific units and/or administrative departments of your institution available online? (Yes/No) Please specify which units and provide the website address(es), if posted online.</p> <p>5. Is your annual Activity Plan of your institution available online? (Yes/No) Please provide the website address, if posted</p>

⁹ You may report “No data – newly adopted priority” for any newly adopted priority for which data are not yet available, e.g., a priority adopted during a strategic planning period in effect for less than three years

	<p>online.</p> <p>6. Is report on the implementation of the Annual Plan of your institution available online? (Yes/No) Please provide the website address.</p> <p>7. Are the Annual Activity Plans of the educational-scientific units and/or administrative departments of your institution available online? (Yes/No) Please specify which units and provide the website address(es), if posted online.</p> <p>8. Are the reports on the implementation of the Annual Activities Plans of the educational-scientific units and/or administrative departments of your institution available online? (Yes/No) Please specify which units and provide the website address(es), if posted online.</p>
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<h3><i>3. Financial Management</i></h3>	
<p>1. Budget Planning</p>	<p>1. Does your institution prepare an annual Budget Plan? (Yes/No)</p> <p>2. Does each budget non-salary line in the annual Budget Plan reflect expenditures of less than 3% of the total non-salary expenditures¹⁰ of your institution? (Yes/No)</p> <p>Please report which budget lines, if any, reflect expenditures greater than 3% of total non-salary expenditures of the institution, and whether a further breakdown of these expenditures is provided in the budget plan.</p> <p>3. Does your institution prepare an Annual (by academic or calendar year) Activity Plan? (Yes/No)</p> <p>4. Is the Annual Activity Plan used as a basis for budget planning? (Yes/No) Please specify how.</p> <p>5. Does the Budget Plan contain financial allocations with a breakdown by program, project, and other activities? (Yes/No)</p> <p>6. Does the Budget Plan contain financial allocations with a breakdown by each organizational or structural unit? (Yes/No)</p>

¹⁰ **Non-salary expenditures** refers to all expenditures not related to salary for faculty, staff, or other personnel

	<p>7. Is there a justification¹¹ for each budget line in the Budget Plan? (Yes/No) Please provide details about the budget line justification process.</p> <p>8. Is the justification available for public viewing (Yes/No) Please specify how.</p> <p>9. Are allocations for the budget lines from prior year reported in the Budget Plan? (Yes/No)</p> <p>10. When is a Draft Budget Plan distributed through a webpage or other communication tool to the entire university community prior to the adoption of the budget?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Budget Plan is not presented to university community prior to the adoption Less than 10 days prior to adoption Form 10 to 20 days prior to adoption From 20 to 30 days prior to adoption More than 30 days prior to adoption <p>11. Is there a formal process for receiving comments from the university community on draft? If yes, please describe briefly.</p> <p>12. Please indicate which of the following governing bodies or structures discuss the draft annual budget plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rectorate (Administrative/Executive Board) • Academic Council • Faculty/Structural Unit Council • Student Organizations • Professional/Trade Union Organization • Other bodies (specify)
<p>2. Budget Implementation and Expenditures</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Does your institution develop a Budget Implementation Report? (Yes/No) Is it linked with the Report of Implementation of Annual (by academic or calendar year) Activity Plan? (Yes/No) If yes, please describe briefly how it is linked What percentage of the total non-salary expenditures is reported with a breakdown of the expenditures?

¹¹ The **justification for each budget line** expenditures may provide a calculation of Unit Price x Quantity; for utilities data from the previous year may be used taking into account significant new circumstances expected in the upcoming year. A justification for all other expenditures should be linked with Annual Activity Plan measures (relevant goods or activities). These calculations and accompanying explanations may be posted as an appendix to the budget prepared by institution.

	<p>4. Please indicate the amount of salary paid to each group of employees of your institution (report these figures as a percentage of overall salary expenditures) and provide salary ranges (minimum and maximum salary) for each group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching (Professorial) Staff • Research Staff • Educational Support Staff • Administrative • Technical • Other (please specify) <p>5. Does your institution publish a methodology for setting salaries? (Yes/No) If yes, please provide this documentation. [Label the document “Annex 3.2.5.”]</p> <p>6. Is this methodology based on labor market demands? (Yes/No) Please specify which staff positions consider labor market demands.</p>
3. Revenues	<p>1. What percentage of the total revenue your institution comes from the following sources?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government • Undergraduate student tuition and fees • Masters student tuition and fees • PhD student tuition and fees • Postgraduate and extension program fees • Scientific activities • Grants and Donations • Other (please specify)
4. Documentation	<p>1. Is procurement documentation (announcements, competition results)¹² available online? (Yes/No) Please specify.</p> <p>2. Is the staff list of your institution posted on the web page of your institution? (Yes/No). If yes please indicate the relevant website link where it is published. If no, please, provide a copy of the document in an Annex. [Label the document “Annex 3.4.2.”]</p>

¹² **Procurement documentation** should include information on bidding procedures and other relevant documentation in compliance with RA Procurement Law and related regulations.

4. HR Management

Academic Staff

1. Does your institution have a webpage publishing announcements of job openings for the following positions?
 - Research positions (Yes/No)
 - Teaching (professorial) positions (Yes/No)
2. What percentage of open (vacant) faculty (research and teaching) positions was posted publicly¹³ over the last twelve months?
3. Please indicate the percentage of published open positions over the last twelve months for which there were two or more applicants:
 - For Research positions
 - For Teaching (professorial) positions
4. What percentage of staff hired into temporary/interim/short-term positions were eventually appointed to permanent/long-term positions over the last three years?
5. Does your institution publish announcements (through public or internal channels) of newly hired staff?

1. Hiring

Administrative, support, technical and other staff

6. Does your institution develop formal job descriptions or Terms of Reference (ToR) that are adopted by the rector or relevant authority for administrative, support, and technical positions? Please provide a sample job description for each job type in Annex 4.1.6. and indicate the percentage of staff positions in this specific group which do have ToRs.
 - For administrative staff
 - For educational support staff
 - For technical staff
 - Other (please, specify)
7. Of all new non-academic staff (administrative, educational support, technical, etc) hired, what percentage of open positions was hired through open public competition? Please, provide figures for the last three years.

¹³ Temporary/interim positions to fill immediate vacancies without a formal posting may be excluded from this calculation if the position is subsequently opened to a competitive hiring process after five months of the temporary/interim hiring; if the position is not posted formally after five months, it should be included in the calculation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year _____ indicator _____ • Year _____ indicator _____ • Year _____ indicator _____ <p>8. Does your institution publish announcements (through public or internal channels) of new hired non-academic (administrative and educational support) staff? (Yes/No) Indicate which types of positions are published and not published</p> <p>9. Please indicate the percentage of published open positions over the last twelve months for which there were two or more applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For administrative positions • For educational support positions • For technical positions • Other (please specify) <p>10. Has your institution developed formal procedures for hiring of non-academic staff [Yes/No]. If yes please indicate the relevant website link or provide a copy of the document in an Annex. [Label the document “Annex 4.1.11.”²⁷]</p> <p><u>Limitations for academic and non-academic staff</u></p> <p>11. Does your institution have term limits (number of years per term, number of terms) for managerial positions (e.g., dean, head of chair)? [Yes/No] If yes, please, specify for each position, and provide examples when this rule was imposed.</p> <p>12. For what positions do you have age limitations? [Indicate the position(s) and age limit]</p>
<p>2. Job Review and Professional Development</p>	<p><u>Academic Staff</u></p> <p>1. Does your institution provide a professional development and/or training process for teaching (professorial) staff? (Yes/No). If yes, please, describe the process</p> <p>2. Does your institution provide a professional development and training process for non-teaching academic staff (educational support staff)¹⁴? (Yes/No) If yes, please, describe the process in one paragraph.</p> <p>3. Does your institution allow staff members to satisfy the requirements for professional development and/or training through</p>

¹⁴ These may include training in publishing articles, course on teaching methods, etc.

<p>programs that are offered outside of your institution? (Yes/No). If yes, please, describe the process in one paragraph.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Does this include professional development and training programs outside Armenia? (Yes/No) 5. What percentage of current teaching staff has not passed the professional development and/or training process for last 5 years or longer? 6. Of the teaching staff that did not pass the professional development and/or training process for last five years and longer, how many are still employed (as lecturers or in other positions) in the university? <p><u>Administrative, support, technical and other staff</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Does your institution have a professional development and/or retraining process? If, yes, please briefly describe the process for each job category (two to three sentences) 8. Does your institution have a professional attestation process for non-academic staff? If, yes, please briefly describe the process for each job category. 9. Of the staff that did not to pass the obligatory professional development and/or retraining process or attestation¹⁵, how many were terminated from employment at your institution? <p><u>Regulations of Premiums and Bonuses</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Does your institution have formal regulations governing the award of all premiums and bonuses paid out by your institution? (Yes/No). Please specify (mention all type of payments practiced) and provide links to relevant documentation where available¹⁶ or provide a copy of the document in an Annex. [Label the document “Annex 4.2.10.”] 	
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¹⁵ This may include an interview and preparation of a report or similar to the civil service attestation process.

¹⁶ Besides the salary envisaged by staff list the bonuses, premiums and other extra payments may be used which assignment is desired to be as regulated as possible.

5. Admissions, Student Assessment, Academic Discipline, and Student Feedback	
1. Admissions	<p>1. Are the application procedures and criteria for admission to the following programs in your institution published? Please provide a relevant website or a copy of these documents. [Label the documents “Annex 5.1.1.”]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Bachelor’s Programs? (Yes/No) • For Masters’ Programs? (Yes/No) • For PhD Programs? (Yes/No)
2. Student Assessment, Retention, and Completion	<p>1. Does your institution publish examination procedures? Please provide a sample in a relevant website or a copy of the document. [Label the document “Annex 5.2.1.”]</p> <p>2. Does your institution publish grading criteria? Please provide a sample in a relevant website or a copy of the document. [Label the document “Annex 5.2.2.”]</p> <p>3. Does your institution provide students with a list of examination questions? Please provide a sample in a website or in copy of the document. [Label the document “Annex 5.2.3.”]</p> <p>4. Does your institution utilize anonymous grading? (Yes/No)</p> <p>5. How many students were expelled from your institution in the past year, on the following grounds? Past three years? Past five years?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For failure to pass academic requirements • Due to unpaid tuition fee • For behavior <p>6. What percentage of student candidates for graduation failed the state graduation examination (for public institutions, where state graduation examinations are applied) and/or graduation paper defense?</p>
3. Academic Violations and Disciplinary Proceedings	<p>1. Does your institution publish handbooks and policies on plagiarism and other academic violations? (Yes/No)</p> <p>2. Does your institution publish handbooks and policies on grievance and redress procedures? (Yes/No)</p> <p>3. What mechanisms does your institution utilize to identify academic integrity violations (e.g. online antiplagiarism programs)?</p> <p>4. Has your institution adopted a code of ethics? Please provide documentation through a website or copy. [Label the documents “Annex 5.3.3.”]</p>

	<p>5. How many disciplinary cases were brought in the following periods?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior year • Prior three years • Prior five years <p>How many of those cases resulted in disciplinary sanctions against the student? How many of those cases resulted in disciplinary sanctions against faculty or staff? How many cases were appealed? How many cases were overturned through appeal?</p> <p>6. How many appeals were made to revise the results of examinations (or retake examination) that are administered during the last academic year (regular examinations)? How many times were the grades increased?</p> <p>7. How many appeals were made to revise the results of the state examinations (for public/state institutions where state graduation examinations are applied) or graduation paper defense? How many times were the grades increased?</p> <p>8. How many students were expelled due to a violation of the Code of Ethics during the last academic year?</p> <p>9. How many cases of plagiarism and other violations of the Code of Ethics were reported by students the last academic year?</p> <p>10. Does your institution publish information on disciplinary proceedings and outcomes¹⁷?</p> <p>11. Does your institution provide information to students on procedures for appeal and other administrative issues? (Yes/No)</p>
<p>4. Student Feedback</p>	<p>1. What opportunities to students have to provide formal feedback on their academic experience? Can this feedback be given anonymously? Please provide samples of surveys and questionnaires. [Label the documents “Annex 5.4.1.”]</p> <p>2. Please report the aggregate indicator on student satisfaction (result of relevant surveys) for the last 3 years along with relevant explanations¹⁸. Year _____ Aggregate Indicator _____ Explanations _____</p> <p>3. Does your institution publish a report on student feedback? Please provide documentation through a website or copy of the document. [Label the document “Annex 5.4.3.”]</p>

¹⁷ Such information can be disclosed in compliance with laws on privacy (e.g., removal of names and other identifying information). These may be published internally (through e-mail to the university community or intranet).

¹⁸ Your institution may report this information in a manner most suitable to its current practices, however, aggregate ratings indicating satisfaction level, along with a brief explanation of ratings and survey methodology, are encouraged.

6. Information Management

1. Has your institution appointed an official responsible for provision of freedom of information at your institution? If yes, please specify. Please also indicate the designated staff member serving as point-person for compliance with the Law on Information Freedom.
 2. Does your institution publish information required by the Law of Freedom of Information on a webpage? Particularly, does your institution arrange and publish all documents on a webpage or webpages related to the following:
 - Corporate status of the university
 - Services provided to the society
 - Decisions of governing bodies
 - All internal regulations (e.g, competitions, statutes, tuition fee reduction policies)
 - Orders of the Rector (excluding personalized orders)
 - Financial information
 - Dates and times for reception of citizens
 - Prices and price-formation order for services provided
 - Other [specify]

Please provide the relevant website address(es)
 3. Do you publish the materials listed in section (2) above in Armenian? Other languages [specify the language or languages for each category]?
 4. Are the webpages of your institution translated into multiple languages? [Specify languages and categories]
 5. Does your institution operate an internal network (intranet). For staff (Yes/No)? For students? (Yes/No). If yes, please, indicate the types of information that is exchanged on this network¹⁹ and provide brief description of the system.
 6. Does your institution utilize a university e-mail system for staff? For students? For alumni? Do each these groups receive a dedicated university domain address?
 7. Does your institution routinely send news and information to students and staff through e-mail? Please indicate the types of information, frequency, and groups to whom the information is disseminated.

1. Information Management Capacity and Access

¹⁹ These may include internal orders, periodic reports on disciplinary board activities, etc.
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	<p>1. Does your institution publish the following information on tuition fees? Is this information available internally or externally? Please provide the relevant information for each item.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment dates • Available tuition deductions • Eligibility for postponing payment²⁰ • Eligibility for paying in installments²¹ • Availability of campus and work study opportunities <p>2. Does your institution publish information on graduates detailing employment statistics and other post-placements? Please provide the relevant information.</p> <p>3. Does your institution collect information on students in the following areas?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with disabilities (Yes/No) If yes, please specify the percentage of students. • Students from disadvantaged backgrounds (Yes/No) If yes, please specify the percentage of students. • Students' region of origin (Yes/No) If yes, please specify the percentage of students. <p>4. Does your institution publish and disseminate information to students on accommodations for students with disabilities? Please specify.</p> <p>5. Does your institution publish and disseminate information to students on the following internationalization activities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for scholarships for study abroad (Yes/No), If yes, please specify. • Opportunities for student exchange (Yes/No), If yes, please specify • Opportunities for study abroad for credit (Yes/No), If yes, please specify <p>6. Does your institution publish information to students on eligibility and procedures for internal mobility? Please, specify.</p> <p>7. Does your institution provide information to students on student rights, appeals procedures, and other administrative processes? Please specify.</p> <p>8. Does your institution provide information to students on research opportunities (involvement in scientific research projects, groups, etc.) and criteria for selection? Please specify and provide relevant website addresses where available.</p> <p>9. Does your institution accept and respond to electronic communication from students and the public? Please, specify, provide some statistics and indicate the webpage addresses.</p>
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2. Key Information

²⁰ This may include exceptions to payment deadlines given to students awaiting a scholarship decision

²¹ This may include arrangements made to accommodate civil servants receiving social funds on periodical basis

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● E-mails to the Rector. (Yes/No) If yes, please, provide the address which is used for communication and provide statistics for last year. ● E-mails to the Deans (Heads of educational units). (Yes/No) If yes, please, provide the addresses, which are used for communication and provide statistics for last year. ● Questions and Answers tool on webpage. (Yes/No) If yes, please, provide the address which is used for communication and provide statistics for last year. ● Social Networks (Facebook, Twitter) tools. (Yes/No) If yes, please, specify which pages/accounts are used for communication and provide statistics for last year. ● Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section of the webpage. (Yes/No) If yes, please, specify corresponding address. ● Other (Yes/No) [specify].
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Guidelines on Toolkit to Enhance Transparency and Accountability in Governance of Higher Education Institutions in Armenia

The toolkit consists of the below-mentioned six main parts, which are divided into several sections with each section having a number of questions/indicators. The relevant questions or indicators of the toolkit are selected based on the result of various surveys, which identified certain potential corruption risks in corresponding areas of HEI governance. The provided information in regards to toolkit indicators will ultimately bring to the reality where various internal and external stakeholders and generally the public are able to get corresponding information, actively participate in decision making process or effectively react to the decisions taken by various governing bodies and evaluate the implemented projects.

1. Governing Boards
2. Financial Management
3. Strategic Planning
4. Human Resources Management
5. Admissions, Student Assessment, Academic Discipline and Student Feedback
6. Information Management

The toolkit includes various questions, which often require YES/NO answers; there are also a number of questions which require a brief description (maximum 1-2 paragraphs) or the provision of existing internal documents. At the same time the proposed questions can be considered as criteria for indicating effective governing models, transparent attitudes towards decision making processes, an open and democratic decision making environment, active participation of university community members (academic staff, students, administrative staff, etc.), unbiased approaches, and accountability of the institution to the public, etc. Therefore, the relevant questions of the toolkit serve both as indicators for transparency/accountability and as guiding principles for university administrators to ensure this transparency/accountability.

Description of Toolkit Sections

1. Governing Boards

The highest governing body of the HEIs in Armenia is the Board of Trustees (if the HEI has the status of Foundation) or the HEI Council (if the HEI has the status of State non-commercial organisation). In both cases there are procedures and regulations governing the formation of these bodies. Some members are elected (representatives of professorial staff and students) and some members can be nominated (appointed) by authorised persons²² and in both cases it is very important to provide wider public transparency and accountability.

The toolkit reflects the importance of the election process of members of HEI governing bodies, and particularly ensures competitive election by secret ballot (number of proposed candidates is more than available seats). In the case of faculty councils the HEI should provide the average ratio between proposed candidates and available seats.

²² Regulation of Formation of the Council of Higher Educational Institution, RA Government Decision No. 975-N, 23.06.2005.

The open and competitive process for the nomination (appointment) of members of the HEI Governing Bodies can be ensured by announcing an open call for expression of interest, publication of selection criteria (e.g. preliminary division of seats among various profiles: Ministry official, educational expert, representative of economy sector, employer, etc.) and justification of the decision taken by presenting short profile summaries (2-3 paragraphs of text) for each nominated member.

The democratic process of the work of collegial governing bodies requires the active participation of its members and constructive dialogue. A unanimous (or almost unanimous) decision making process in HEI governing bodies does not indicate real democratic governance. The indicator on the number of taken decisions which had at least 20% opposing votes is included in the toolkit to detect the variety of votes and discover the existing democratic decision making process in collegial governing bodies. In the case of faculty councils the HEIs should provide average figures among all faculties (or analogous units).

The substantial opportunity for outside groups (members of HEI community who are not a member of governing body or external stakeholders) to provide the input for the Governing boards is emphasised in the toolkit. These opportunities includes open sessions, opportunities for the media to be present, web broadcasting of sessions, participation in sessions with deliberative voice rights, obligatory discussion of written proposals, special question and answer sessions and other opportunities for specific outside groups.

The indication of major decisions adopted by each governing body in the current year, except the adoption of annual/strategic plans, budget and relevant reports, will support providing content-wise accountability of the governing bodies. If there are no such specific decisions, the HEI in their answers can point out separate fragments from the above-mentioned exception documents²³. The availability of outputs of the work of governing bodies and Rectorate²⁴, including Reports (Minutes/Protocols) and final decisions though the HEI's web site and/or internal communication channel is an important element to provide public transparency and accountability.

2. Strategic Planning

The strategic planning process of the HEI's activity is considered a key element to provide transparency and accountability and the process for its preparation, implementation, evaluation and reporting is of vital importance to ensure its effectiveness.

The relevant parts of toolkit consider the participation of various internal and external stakeholders in the process of preparation of the strategic plan, which often can be formalised by specific regulations. There are a variety of options (working groups of governing bodies, discussion in separate units, inputs for student, alumni and professional organisations, etc.) and the HEI should provide a brief description of the process with reference to specific evidence if available.

²³ The answer for this question and relevant comments should be provided by the rector of HEI and/or chair of highest governing body of HEI.

²⁴ Consultative body under the Rector envisaged by HEI statute; discusses HEI activity issues between the Sessions of HEI Governing Bodies.

The next important element for strategic planning is the selection of priorities and the provision of measurable target indicators to allow evaluation of the progress achieved. Priorities should also align with national priorities, declared in relevant government documents or other authoritative sources, and explanations for each HEI priority should provide evident compliance with national ones.

The toolkit reflects the importance of use of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which are measurable values that demonstrates how effectively an organization or separate unit operates. It can be applied university-wide or used on the level of separate unit, it can have short-term (less than 1 year) or long-term (2-5 years) nature.

The toolkit envisages the distribution of strategic and annual plans among faculties (schools) and/or administrative departments by the development and adoption of corresponding plans for relevant units, allocation of funding to units, setting up indicators for their activities, development of implementation report of units' strategic and annual plans. The progress is measured also by the dynamics of targeted indicators (current year, last 3 year, last 5 years).

The availability through the HEI's website and relevant units' (faculties/administrative departments) strategic and annual plans, as well as the reports on their implementation is emphasised by the toolkit.

3. Financial Management

Generally, it is recommended that the detailed standards or guidelines for financial management processing specific to HEIs are developed determining all aspects of financial management of HEIs. However, the main, important principles and methodologies of proper financial management are considered in this toolkit, which are considered important from a transparency and accountability point of view to address some corruption risks and strengthen anticorruption policy. In particular, the existence of an annual budget²⁵ for a HEI is considered as a first step and a very important factor. However, the existence of a budget itself does not necessarily mean that the expected level of transparency has been provided.

The detailed representation budget and proper justification of relevant articles²⁶ especially are very important both for transparency and effective management points of view. Salary related expenses (main salaries, overtime wages, bonuses, rewards, vacation payments, etc²⁷.) are derived from staff lists and human resource policy instruments (bonuses, rates, social packages, etc.), and non-salary expenses require relevant descriptions and based on their nature may require specific programme based approaches as well.

A detailed breakdown of the budget is selected as an important criteria and 3%²⁸ of the total non-salary expenditures is chosen as a maximal threshold for the specific budget article. Some

²⁵ The term "budget" is used as a generic term to refer to HEI financial document indicating estimate annual (financial year) incomes and expenditures.

²⁶ The term "budget article" is used conditionally. Generally the budget consists of annual incomes and expenditures which itself has to be divided into various sections, which often is called article (it can be called item or line as well). The articles itself can be divided into sub-sections (sub-articles, sub-lines, sub-items) which in terms of this toolkit also can be also considered as budget articles.

²⁷ The List of salary and equivalent payments are defined by RA Government 853-N dated on 08.08.2013.

²⁸ This 3% indicator is chosen complementary and it can be decreased from year to year

expenditures can obviously increase this 3% threshold (for example utility services expenditures), but it is obvious that it can be further divided by the particular type of service or other criteria. It is more important that even in case of large (more than 3%) budget articles, there is a further distribution to corresponding sub-articles. If all budget articles (or their relevant sub-articles) are less than 3% of the total non-salary expenditures then the HEI can provide a positive answer to the relevant question.

The justification of budget articles as an important criterion is understood by both descriptions of activities (derived from Annual Action Plan²⁹ reflecting strategic (long-term) programs and other documents) and provision of relevant calculations (for example, in the case of equipment it can be the title and main technical parameter of equipment, expected quantity and price per unit). The previous year's actual expenditures can be used as justification for specific budget articles only, including for unpredicted expenses. The justification of budget income articles leads to some projected or forecasted estimations that HEI administration has to deal with and describe in annual activity plan or other relevant documents. The budget justifications are presented with main budget document.

The proper Reporting System of HEI is strongly linked with planning documents and correspondingly, the Reports on Implementation of Strategic (long-term) Development Programmes, Annual Activity Plan and Annual Budget³⁰ provide a framework for overall monitoring and evaluation. Similar to justification of budget articles, the expenditures can be reported with proper detailed breakdown reflecting corresponding parts of the Report on Implementation of Annual Activity Plan.

Transparency and accountability in finances require both active community involvement and the availability of all relevant documents through a web page and/or internal communication channels. Wide participation of various HEI bodies and organisational units, internal and external stakeholders (academic councils, student organizations, faculty councils, professional/trade union organisations and employers, etc.) in budget drafting and discussion, will provide the opportunity to influence on proper decisions and ensures an open and transparent budget planning process. All relevant draft and final documents (including a staff list³¹, procurement documents, and invoices) have to be available either through HEI web page or other on-line/offline sources in due time.

4. HR Management

HEI staff is divided into 2 main parts: Academic and Non-Academic Staff. The academic staff in its turn consists of 2 main subgroups – teaching (all categories of professorial-teaching staff) and research staff (all categories of scientific-research staff). The non-academic staff is

²⁹ The term “Annual Activity Plan” is used as a generic term to refer to a document describing the main priorities, tasks and activities (including timeframe, responsible organisational units) planned for coming year and adopted by relevant HEI Governing body. The adoption of Annual and Strategic Programs by highest governing bodies of HEI is often directly envisaged by their statutes.

³⁰ Report on Implementation of Annual Budget is used as a generic term to refer a financial document providing the Report on implementation or fulfillment of estimate annual (financial year) incomes and expenditures.

³¹ The RA Law on Freedom of Information considers HEIs as information holders (Article 3) and stipulates to publish annually organizational staff lists (position titles and relevant salaries) along with other documents (Article 7). Many Armenian HEIs have the status of foundations and according to RA Law on Foundations the Board of Trustees of Foundation approves the staff list and this information as well as all other decisions of the Board of Trustees should be open to the public.

mainly constituted from administrative³², educational-support³³ and technical staff³⁴; in some special cases non-academic staff may include also personnel of university clinics (doctors, nurses, etc.), secondary and high schools, industrial enterprises and other subsidiary units. The toolkit questions on HR Management envisage relevant questions for both academic and non-academic staff.

The important components of HR management such as open and competition-based hiring professional development, training activities for almost all staff categories are emphasised in the toolkit. Proper and open announcement of vacant positions considers publications which took place for at least two months before selection, with at least one re-posting, on an institutional webpage (special section for job announcements) and other sources (e.g., newspaper, job boards such as jobfinder.am/careercenter.am). A special question on 2 or more candidates per position underlines the real competitive hiring process.

The publishing of announcements on newly hired staff members, including those who have renewed their position term through public and/or internal channels is recommended by the toolkit to provide appropriate publicity of the hiring process and the proper welcome of new community members.

The next important step for HR management in HEIs is the availability of detailed Terms of Reference³⁵ (ToR) for each non-teaching/non-research employee (mainly for administrative, support and technical positions). A sample of ToR for each group/type of positions should be attached.

The existence of an overall HR policy with detailed internal regulations and procedures is a very important factor for transparent HR management. Internal regulations should determine the procedures for the selection of employees (preliminary adoption of criteria, formation of selection independent (composed from representatives of various HEI units) commission, interviews, applicant's evaluation (marks per criteria), formal documenting of the selection process and final selection decision, etc.). The existence of a formal selection procedure and its obligatory application for all administrative (non-teaching) positions is covered by the relevant toolkit question.

The employer should ensure a professional development process for employees and this process should be provided by relevant HR policy documents. This process includes periodical professional retraining and other activities for academic staff as well as for other staff categories. HR policy should also envisage periodical attestation of non-elective employees. At the same time those who do not pass the retraining process or attestation should terminate employment at the HEI or his/her further employment should be seriously reconsidered by top management.

³² top-managers, senior and junior managerial staff, supervisors, inspectors, specialists and assistants of administrative units and other administrative staff positions .

³³ heads of training laboratories, senior laboratory technicians, laboratory technicians, assistants of educational units, librarians, etc.

³⁴ staff providing the functionality of engineering-technical infrastructure of university campus (utility services, communication, security) as well as operation of transportation, maintenance and other services, including manufacturing infrastructure.

³⁵ The Term of Reference is a conditional title of the document describing the duties and tasks of the employee, his/her responsibilities, subordination, knowledge, skills and other issues related to the particular position. The terms Job Description or Position Passport are often used instead of ToR in HR management of Armenian public and private organizations, including HEIs.

5. Admissions, Student Assessment, Academic Discipline and Student Feedback

The publication of detailed application procedures and criteria for admission to HEI Bachelor's, Master's and PhD programs is considered as a first important step towards the provision of transparency and accountability for the admission process. The HEI should report on admissions which take place outside of the centralised (organised by the Government) admission process.

Student assessment processes may vary among HEIs, but the adoption and publication of the examination process and grading criteria, as well as the provision of a complete list of examination questions or sample tests (when appropriate) using anonymous grading are highlighted in the toolkit. The percentage of students expelled due to failure to pass academic standards and failed to pass state graduation examination (if the practice of state examination is applied) is asked by the toolkit.

The code of ethics, special handbooks and policies providing comprehensive explanations and clarification on plagiarism and other academic violations, introducing mechanisms to identify them, presenting detailed regulations and procedures for subsequent penalties, as well as introducing effective opportunities for grievance and redress are covered by toolkit questions. The existence of plagiarism and other non-ethical cases are subject to proper disciplinary procedures, which can have consequences (disciplinary sanctions) both for students and HEI employees, including exclusion from the HEI. The cases can always be appealed and sometimes overturned through appeal, which is a part of an important university unique environment. The publishing of information on disciplinary proceedings and outcomes, if necessary with the removal of names and other identifying data is an important part of the whole process. The provision of information and data on the above-mentioned issues is requested in the Toolkit.

6. Information Management

The RA Law on Freedom of Information (FOI law) as well as the RA Government Decision on "Registration, Classification, and Storage of Information developed by or delivered to information holders, as well as the definition of order of provision of Information or its copy by State and Local Self-governing bodies, State Organizations and Institutions" No. 1204-N dated on 15.10.2015 (hereafter Government Decision on FOI Law) formed the logic and content of many questions of this section.

The Government Decision on FOI Law establishes that the head of an information holder or an official appointed by an information holder is responsible for the freedom of information in their respective institution. At the same time the FOI Law envisages that the information holder should annually publish, including through the web page, information related to its activities (the list of required questions is presented in article 7, point 3 of the FOI Law).

The webpage of the institution and its availability in other languages as well as other information channels (internal network for staff and, students, corporate e-mail system, newsletters, etc.) are outlined in toolkit questions to identify any corporate communication potential. The answer on the availability of the webpage in other languages should be

specified by providing the categories of information (webpage menus) which are supported in particular languages.

The publication of information on tuition fees, and particularly opportunities for reductions, to postpone payment or to pay in several instalments are especially important and the provision of information on these specific issues, means the publication of detailed regulations, eligibility of students and exact deadlines. The toolkit also encourages HEIs to develop graduates' employment and post-placement statistics, as well as collect information on vulnerable students (students with disabilities, poor students, originating from rural areas, etc.)

The answers on dissemination of information to students on opportunities to study abroad or be involved in exchange programmes (e.g. special section of the webpage dedicated for student international opportunities, regular newsletters, etc.) should be specified by indicating the tools applied for this task and the relevant webpage addresses, if available. The information on student internal mobility should include a HEI internal formal document regulating how students can get credits from other Armenian HEIs or other educational institutions, and practical guidelines on how the process can be initiated and implemented. The information on student rights, appeals procedures, and other administrative processes may also include both HEI internal legal acts adopted by governing bodies of HEI and practical guidelines for the practical implementation of a particular right (e.g. often the rights are formulated in a declarative style and the exact actions in this regards are not provided). The answers on information on student rights, appeals procedures, and other administrative processes should be specified by indicating the internal legal acts and other documents (guidelines, advice, practical handbooks, etc.) and by relevant webpage addresses, if available.

The electronic communication tools (e-mail communication, questions and answers through webpage specific instruments, social networking tools etc.) are emphasised by relevant toolkit questions and their proper functionality will enhance transparency and accountability in the HEIs activities. Statistics for such communication and relevant web addresses must be specified.

This Toolkit aims to promote transparency and accountability among Armenian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and refers to university activities, processes, and policies in almost all main key areas of HEI's institutional governance. It mainly includes various Yes/No questions, which serve both as indicators and guiding principles for HEI administrators to ensure transparency and accountability. The intended users of information referred in Toolkit are the stakeholders to which universities are ultimately accountable: Government, Ministry of Education and Science, HEI community, civil society institutions, private sector and Armenian society in general.

ENG

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organization. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

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