DOCTORAL PROGRAM SELF-EVALUATION

STATE ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS OF ARMENIA
(Name of the Institution)

Fine Arts, Decorative and Applied arts, Design
ԺԵ.00.03
(Name and code of the specialty)

36 ISAHAKYAN street, YEREVAN 0009, ARMENIA
(Address of the Institution)

YEREVAN 2019

Composition of the self-assessment working group

Name, Surname	Position	Responsibility in the group
Mkrtich Ayvazyan	Vice-rector for Education and Science	Head of the group Responsible for the discussion on the gathered data and preparation of the self-evaluation report.
Ruzanna Minasyan	Head of Teaching and Learning Methodology Unit	Responsible for the discussion on the gathered data and preparation of the self-evaluation report.
Yelena Baytalyan	Senior specialist at Teaching and Learning Methodology Unit	Responsible for the discussion on the gathered data and preparation of the self-evaluation report.
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CONTENT

ote: *each standard should be assessed separately (e.g. 1.1; 1.2; 1.3…)*

1. Institutional strategies

The Higher Education Institution's (hereinafter HEI) research strategy is in concord with its mission and goals.

Please mention the research ambitions of the HEI and describe the formation of research strategy reflecting the ambitions of the HEI in research.

The research of State Academy of Fine Arts of Armenia (SAFAA) is reflected in the mission, which clearly defines Academy's ambitions for implementing PhD program, preparing leading specialists in the field and developing art research (see Academy's mission, Appendix 1). Development of the research field is also a part of Academy's Strategic plan 2017-2021; it is specified in Goal 3, which sets up the definition of research priorities, improvement of PhD program and promotion of internationalization, capacity building of research staff, as well as provision of interconnection between research and teaching (see Appendix 1). For the effective implementation of the above mentioned, SAFAA developed Research Strategy 2019-2022, which summarizes the institution's ambitions in the field of art research in the directions of art research development and provision of academic environment for a researcher (see Appendix 2).

Thus, SAFAA wants to be an institution promoting the dissemination of scientific thought and national culture through art research and interconnection between research and learning.

1.1 HEI has a research strategy that is adopted at the institutional level of the HEI, represents the institution's mission and its goals for research.

SAFAA developed research strategy 2019-2022, which defines concept and value of art research, reflects the institution's research priorities and the environment Academy provides for implementation of research and academic program. Research strategy stems from SAFAA mission and Goal 3 of SAFAA strategic plan 2017-2021.
Goals of the research field are as follows;
   ➢ to promote development of scientific research,
   ➢ to provide leading researchers in the field of art,
   ➢ to promote the development of art research in Armenia.
Research strategy first of all defines research priorities and special features. It should be mentioned that SAFAA research works have also creative nature and its specifications.
These are;

   ➢ **Practical-applied research**: This type of research refers to creative areas - painting, sculpture, graphics, design and applied arts. In these areas, the goal of the research is to deepen recognition of materials and tools, develop professional mastery, adopt and develop methods of fine arts, promote creative imagination and

study all these in the context of fine arts.

> **Scientific-theoretical research**: This type of research mainly refers to study of art and art history. The goal of the research is to study art works and development of art and humanity thinking in historical process. It includes research of facts in fine arts, content, style and form standards of its creation, as well as research in art schools, on their mutual cooperation and input in art according to centuries, civilization-cultural units and individual artists. Special attention is given to the study of Armenian art and art theory considering them in the context of regional and worldwide art and culture.

Research strategy also defines the body that regulates/coordinates the sphere, which is Research Center. The main functions and responsibilities of the Center have been developed separately: it includes regulation and coordination of SAFAA research field and academic program. Founded in 2014 within the framework of Veritas grant program, the main aim of the Center was to develop a scope of functions, research strategy defining the priorities and directions in the field of art research ensuring their connection to the mission and strategic goals of the institution.

Using these approaches will enable the institution:

> to conduct more targeted, coordinated and centralized research,
> to become specialized in the mentioned areas that will ensure the institution's competitiveness in art research at international level,
> to prepare more qualified professionals in art research,
> to ensure the link between creative-performance programs and theoretical art research,
> to promote development of research in creative-performance programs that is an current international requirement.

Thus, SAFAA has a clearly defined research strategy, which reflects Academy's research ambitions and priorities, are based on the mission and promote implementation of the strategic goals.

1.2 Research strategy reflects the needs of the internal and external stakeholders and includes ethical concepts.

In SAFAA the issues for maintaining ethical standards are fixed in Academy's integrity regulations (see Appendix 3).

While developing SAFAA research strategy the priority was given to the provision of healthy research environment, which includes the maintenance of ethical standards adopted by SAFAA and assures inclusive approaches. SAFAA research strategy excludes any form of plagiarism

while conducting research and guarantees equal conditions for researchers.

The views of the faculty, current researchers and well as experts in the field were taken into consideration while developing the research strategy. It is of great importance to mention that SAFAA, being involved in VERITAS and C3QA programs, has been actively engaged in discussions on directions for development of art research in Armenia and study of the European experience, due to the meetings with representatives of the Armenian art universities SAFAA figured out art priorities and current challenges, compiled a list of possible solutions and represented to the C3QA colleagues. As a result of the feedback received from the target group, the research goals in the field of art have been figured out, the priorities have been separated and practical- applied research and scientific- theoretical research have been clearly defined, which are reflected in the research strategy and new academic program.

1.3 HEI has formal mechanisms and procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of research strategy and to further improve it.

The effectiveness of any process at SAFAA is assessed according to "SAFAA Regulation on departmental annual planning, implementation, evaluation and improvement" /see Appendix 4/. Research activities are reflected in the quarterly and annual reports of the coordinating body, i.e. Research Center. The effectiveness of works is assessed according to "SAFAA Regulation On Departmental Annual Planning, Implementation, Evaluation and Improvement".

In addition, the investment of SAFAA internal quality assurance system of the research field is in the process. Academy has been active in the field of research during the recent years being engaged in grant programs (VERITAS and C3QA) due to which revision of the PHD program and investment of the internal quality assurance system have been implemented. Taking into consideration the fact that the works towards the investment of internal quality assurance system is still in the process, SAFAA has commenced the development of mechanisms for quality assurance of the research field. The handbook for Research quality assurance has been already projected (see Appendix 5), which defines the mechanisms and procedures for assessment of improvements and effectiveness. Their implementation is intended to assess the effectiveness of the research strategy, objectives and actions and to improve their implementation.

2. Doctoral program

The doctoral program's ambitions are in concord with the institution's research strategy, forms part of institutional planning and resource allocation, is designed to meet new challenges and needs of global labour market.

Please analyse how the doctoral program intended learning outcomes are achieved (stressing doctoral candidate progress).

SAFAA research interests are aligned with the Academy's mission and are based on the research goals and objectives defined by the institution (see Appendix 1). Goal 3 of SAFAA strategic plan 2017-2021 reflects Academy's research ambitions for the upcoming 5 years, that is; *implementation of research and interconnection with teaching*. For the effective implementation of the goal strategic objectives have been set, which will enable the institution to overcome challenges of the labour market in the future.

The objectives are as follows;
- ➢ Provide the continuous improvement of PhD program promoting research internationalization- objective 3.3.
- ➢ Ensure SAFAA role in the research of art history, fine arts, design and applied arts fields- objective 3.5.

For the implementation of strategic goals and objectives relevant activities and schedule have been defined for the upcoming 5 years (see Appendix 1).

SAFAA strategic approaches for research are reflected in the Academy's research strategy (see Appendix 2), which defines the institution's strategic goals and objectives in the field of research for 2019-2022. SAFAA research strategy goals and objectives were taken into account while developing the aims and specific objectives of the new PhD program. Thus, the goals of the new PhD program are aligned with and based on SAFAA research strategy.
According to the action plan of the strategic plan the revision of the PhD program started in 2017. Thus, taking into consideration the continuous changes in the labour market, SAFAA has launched revision of the PhD program according to the new procedure included in ''Manual for the Development and Review of the Academic Programs''. The revision processes of the academic program is intended to assure the relevance with the global market challenges and needs, as well as to promote research internationalisation. The revision process of the PhD program is coordinated by Research Center and Chair of Art History and Humnaities.

As in case of all processes carried out at the Academy, for the implementation and improvement of the PhD program human and material resources are provided. The allocation of the resources is done according to ''SAFAA Regulation on departmental Annual planning, implementation, evaluation and improvement'' (see Appendix 4).

2.1 Doctoral program is thoroughly formulated, according to the intended outcomes, is flexible, meets the needs of doctoral candidates and is in line with the institution's research strategy.

The implementation of PhD program is based on the Academy's strategy and is one of the main spheres of the intitution's activities. The description of the **current PhD program** is represented bellow.

Duration of the study by the PhD program for full-time, part- time PhD students and applicants is 3, 4 and 5 years respectively. The credits obtained are divided among the years of study.

The processes of the **current program** are as follows.

During the 3 months of the **fisrt year** a PhD student compiles and submits to the approval of SAFAA Scientific Council the research study plan discussing it with the supervisor nominated by the chair. Scientific Council discusses and approves the thesis topic, scientific supervisor and the research study plan of a PhD student. Then, a PhD student studies and obtains deep and comprehensive knowledge on the chosed research topic and interdisciplinary fields, which can be used during the research. A PhD student participates in courses provided by the curriculum obtaining relevant credits, and passes pedagocical practice, prepares and publishes scientific articles.

During the **second year** of study the research sphere launches. A PhD student should have a clear understanding of the objectives put forward and the ways for solluton. He/she gives a qualification exam of a professional subject, publishes scientific articles, makes reports in scientific conferences and collects neseccary credits.

The **third of study** a PhD student prepares thesis for defence. In case of positive conclusion of the chair the works of a PhD student is sent to the professional council of Art Institut of National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia for defence.

At the end of each year of study, a PhD student submits a report to the professional chair and Scientific Council on the works done and transferres to the next year.

It should be mentioned that the revision of the PhD program has commenced within the framework of VERITAS grant program. As bases for the revision were the feedback recieved during the meetings with internal and external stakeholders (student, lecturer, alumni, employer), study of international experience in the fields, as well as Zalzburg principles (presently SAFAA is in the process of finalisation of revision).

SAFAA research startegy 2019-2022 defines 2 separate directons for the **new academic program**. These are;

> ➢ Art History and Theory for awarding the PhD Degree in Art History and Theory
> ➢ Fine Arts (Painting, Sculpture, and Graphics) Design and Applied Arts for awarding the PhD Degree in Arts.

The second branch is a completely new phenomenon in Armenia and will present a content demand for the first time for postgraduate education that will include new requirements for admissions, thesis preparation and presentation. Accordingly, the thesis in regard with creative-performance programs present not an art research as it has been done so far, but a creative project proposal and a written research final work prepared on that project.

2.2 Doctoral program is contextually coherent with other relevant doctoral programs.

As mentioned above the PhD program has been revised within Veritas grant program. The bases for the revision were the meetings with internal and external stakeholders and study of international experience. Studies have been conducted with similar academic programs of higher education institutions in different countries, such as;
  ➢ Bath Spa University (Great Britain),
  ➢ National Higher School of Fine Arts of Lyon and Paris (France),
  ➢ Music School of Ball State University (USA).
While revising the PhD program, the working group tried to align it with Zalzburg pronciples. Besides, alignment between the learning outcomes of the academic program and the requirements of Level 8 of National Qualification Framework of RA has been done. For the alignment process the relevant tools were used, which are included in the "Guideline for Aligning Academic Programs to the National Qualification Framework" and "Handbook for the Development and Revision of Academic Programs at SAFAA" developed within ALIGN program.

2.3 Doctoral program is functioning in the context of a strong research environment ensuring critical mass of researchers and relevant resources promoting interdisciplinary approach.

SAFAA research strategy defines the Academy's research directions and interests taking into consideration research situation in Armenia in the fields of Art History and Theory and Armenian Art History. The same strategy defines the necessary research environment for a PhD student. Defining the effective research environment, SAFAA takes the responsibility to assure relevant research environment for the PhD students and the faculty.

SAFAA researchers carry out research in the following directions.

  ➢ General and Armenian Art History
  ➢ Architecture and Design History
  ➢ Mythology
  ➢ World Religions
  ➢ Art of Muslim World and the Far East
  ➢ Art of People of America and Africa
  ➢ Culture of Armenian Colonies and Diaspora
  ➢ History of World Views
  ➢ Historical and Cultural Heritage
  ➢ Modern Trends in Design and Allied Arts
  ➢ Art Management
  ➢ Art Sociology
  ➢ Modern Trends in World and Armenian Art

The specialists on the abovementioned directions periodically publish articles and make reports. During the reports issues on art history and theory are raised connected with

disciplines of history, archeology, aesthetics and philosophy.

PhD student- supervisor teams recently conduct researchers by the following directions.
- ➢ Manifestations of Monumental Art in the Armenian Architecture of 20th Century
- ➢ New Directions of Western Graphics and their Display in the Republic of Armenia
- ➢ Historiography of Armenian Medieval Miniature in Soviet Armenian Art
- ➢ Fashion Design in the Republic of Armenia
- ➢ Interier Design of the Armenian Museums
- ➢ Design Issues of Historical and Cultural Monuments of Ashtarak City

In addition to the research topics among different branches of art, researches between art and humanities are also encouraged.

2.4 Doctoral program provides training in core discipline areas and transferable skills and ensures an active involvement of doctoral candidates in research activities.

SAFAA current PhD program consists of the following education blocks;

- ➢ humanitarian,
- ➢ general readiness
- ➢ professional readiness
- ➢ practice
- ➢ research work
- ➢ attestations

Humanitarian and general readiness education blocks are mainly intended to the acquisition of transferable skills, while education blocks of professional readiness and practice have narrow professional nature. Education block for research work promote the creation of researching skills, and the last block, i.e. attestation, is aimed at checking the acquired knowledge, skills and abilities.

So, the new PhD program consists of the following 4 education blocks, each of them including 3 courses.
- ➢ research knowledge and skills,
- ➢ linguistic and informative knowledge and skills,
- ➢ teaching and supervision,
- ➢ professionally advanced knowledge and skills.

The first 3 education blocks are intended to the acquisition of both transferable and professional skills, while the last one, i.e. professionally advanced knowledge and skills, promotes the creation of narrow professional skills (See Appendix 6).

2.5 Doctoral program has set criteria on the assessment of the quality of research results against achieved outcomes and mechanisms for the evaluation of the research results' social impact.

For the assessment of the research results of the PhD program SAFAA plans to implement focus- group discussions with the main stakeholders, which are; graduate PhD student, alumni, and employer. The meetings should be carried out according to the procedure for the focus-group meetings developed by SAFAA Quality assurnace center (see Appendix 7). During the meetings the stakeholders will have an opportunity to give feedback on the academic program from different aspects; from courses to the learning outcomes. It should be mentioned that the procedure is fully applied for the bachelor's and master's degrees, but in case of PhD program the procedure will be tested in a new academic year.

Carrying out research activities in various fields of art, the PhD students have influence and contribution to the social development of the society.

- ✓ Within the scope of the research, PhD students publish scientific articles in review journals, including international ones. SAFAA PhD students publish articles free of charge in the Academy's "Yearbook" collection of scientific articles.

PhD students make reports and deliver speeches at the Academy, as well as during the scientific sessions of "Young Art Historians" organized by Art Institute of National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia (Art Institute of NAS of RA). The materials of the symposiums organized by Art Institute of NAS of RA are published in a separate collection of scientific articles, sent to professional universities and are distributed online hence raising public awareness.

2.6 There are set mechanisms and procedures in place to ensure development, approval, monitoring and periodic review of doctoral program with an active involvement of internal and external stakeholders.

As mentioned above the revision of the PhD program launched within the framework of VERITAS grant program. Currently SAFAA in the final stage of revision. The bases for the revision were feedback received from the internal and external stakeholders, labour market requirements, and the continuously changing field of higher professional and postgraduate education.
 SAFAA developed "Regulation on departmental annual planning, implementation, evaluation and improvement" procedure, which regulates the planning, implementation, check and improvement processes at the Academy and offers relevant mechanisms. The current revision of the PhD program has been done according to the "Handbook for the development and Revision of Academic Programs at SAFAA" developed within ALIGN program. The revision of the PhD program has been done taking into consideration views of internal and external stakeholders, such as PhD students, alumni, faculty members, employers, representatives from scientific organisations of the field, and international experience. The PhD program is also aligned with the requirements of Level 8 of National Qualification Framework of RA.

3. Admission Policy

HEI's admission policy on doctoral program is transparent, is in line with doctoral program's ambitions.

Please analyse whether the selection mechanisms of doctoral candidates are aligned with the doctoral program's ambitions.

At least 6 months before the start of each academic year, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia distributes postgraduate admission places for a full- time and part-time learning, based on applications submitted by the HEIs. The number of applications is substantiated by the necessity of the specialist in the specific field. Information on the provided places, admission deadlines, requirements and etc., are posted in SAFAA official website and disseminated through media.

The admission for the PhD program is organised according to "SAFAA Procedure for postgraduate admission" (see Appendix 8), which focuses on the admission requirements, process of competition and etc. The Procedure can be found on SAFAA official website and is available to all stakeholders.

Professional examination committee is created by SAFAA Rector's order for the professional examination passed during the admission. The committee consists of 3-5 specialists having scientific degree of the specific professional field.

Admission examination questionnaire is compiled by the Chair of the Examination Committee and posted on the Academy's official website. The admission committee gives permission to the applicant to participate in the professional examination.

Based on the results of the competition the applicant is appointed by the Rector's order signing a relevant contract. Those who are admitted to the postgraduate full-time study are given state scholarship.

Taking into consideration all the content improvements of the PhD program, the new academic program offers new requirements for the admission targeting peculiarities of art history and fine arts, design, and applied arts (see Appendix 6).

According to the new PhD program the selection and admission of the applicants will be done by a committee (3-4 persons) specially convened for that purpose, which will include Chair of Research Center, head of the relevant chair, SAFAA leading specialist, and an invited lecturer.

3.1 HEI has set mechanisms for promoting equitable recruitment, selection and admission procedures.

At the Academy the admission for the PhD program is organised according to "SAFAA Procedure for Postgraduate Admission" (see Appendix 8).

For the admission process of the PhD program a committee is created for carrying out the professional examination, which consists of internal and external stakeholders. Involvement of

external stakeholders promotes the transparency and impartiality of the process. After the competition is completed, the committee announces applicants' grades. The applicants have an opportunity to appeal. In that case, the committee presents justification for the assessment.

Each year the questionnaire for the professional examination of postgraduate admission is revised and posted on SAFAA official website.

3.2 Selection criteria of doctoral candidates are transparent, publicly available and are in line with the explicit outcomes of doctoral program.

According to "SAFAA Procedure for Postgraduate Admission" the applicants who received high grades from the professional examination participates in a competition, which overcome those, who received higher grades. If the grades are equal, the committee is guided by other principles, for example, takes into account the grades/points received from foreign language and/or computer science examinations. Detailed description can be found in "SAFAA Procedure for Postgraduate Admission" Point 4 (see Appendix 8).

During the revision of PhD program the selection criteria of the applicants are also planned to be revised targeting the peculiarities of 2 directions (1. art history and theory, 2. fine arts, design, and applied arts).

3.3 HEI periodically analyses the effectiveness of applicants' assessment system.

For evaluating the effectiveness of the applicants' assessment system each academic year SAFAA QA Center plans to carry out focus- group meetings with the 1st year PhD students. A PhD student should assess admission process; the scope of the material required for the professional examination, the approach of the commission during the examination and etc. The meeting will be held among applicants for each academic year. The results of the meetings will be analysed at SAFAA QA Center. After, the analysis should be presented to the Vice-Rector for Education and Science and the relevant chair for getting acquainted with the results.

4. Supervisor

HEI provides highly qualified supervisors/well-structured supervisory team to achieve doctoral program's ambitions.

Please analyse how the HEI assures sufficient supervision motivated for the implementation of doctoral program's ambition.

The requirements to the Scientific supervisor is defined by Supreme certifying committee, according to which the supervision of scientific works is conducted at Academy so far /see http://bok.am/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/git ast kanonakarg.pdf/. The selection of research topics is carried out in an atmosphere of research-supervisor close cooperation. The latter assures the topic relevance of a PhD student with the supervisor's current research interests, which contributes to the effective research conduction. When carrying out his/her activities, the supervisor is guided by certain norms, which are set out in the contract and other legal acts.

As a result of revision of PhD program a trilateral contract has been developed between supervisor, PhD student and university, which defines the rights and responsibilities of the three parties /see Appendix 9/.

New PhD program, apart from the scientific supervisor, also provides a co-supervisor, who should have a scientific degree or title and publications during last 3 years. The latter will be responsible for:

- ➢ practical and performance progress of work
- ➢ any consultancy relating to the preparation of the thesis
- ➢ support in administrative or organizational issues
- ➢ support in any problem arisen during research

This approach will promote young professionals of relevant field to get experience as a future supervisor as well as will promote development of teamwork competency.

4.1 Supervisors/supervisory team responsibilities, qualifications, workload, recognition criteria are comprehensively stated and described and are in line with doctoral program's ambitions.

Qualifications are defined by Supreme certifying committee /see http://bok.am/?page_id=164&fbclid=IwAR29xkYY8cREUwLu-X-nUQeQ4fiZCaEF9HR_CtdJidbO0uX-a295vPIJKo/:

Supervisor's responsibilities, functions and rights are described in details in the contract with him/her.

A scientific supervisor performs the following functions:

- ➢ To be responsible for the modernity of a research topic and for the defence of a PhD

student on time

- ➢ To help PhD student to develop individual working plan, manages and provides the implementation of working plan through regular meetings, gives instructions on the list of necessary literature
- ➢ To be responsible for presenting a report on the PhD student's scientific and scientific-pedagogical work done to the professional chair.
- ➢ To direct a PhD student in the appropriate forms of dissemination of research results, including their publication
- ➢ To be present at the sessions of the professional chair and Scientific council, where the PhD student is attested
- ➢ To be responsible for acquiring and further developing supervision skills in a number of areas including international publications and conferences
- ➢ To help PhD student in the preparation of pre-defence and defence /helps in writing a speech, collecting necessary documents to be submitted and in other issues/
- ➢ To provide the maintenance of ethical norms by a PhD student

Scientific supervisor should.

- ➢ Present a report on the works done with a PhD student
- ➢ Upgrade his/her qualifications, implement experience exchange with his/her colleagues at the Academy or with the employees of other scientific institutions

The evaluation on the work done by a supervisor with a PhD student is given after 1 year. In case of a negative evaluation, the head of the professional chair presents a solicitation to the Scientific council for changing the scientific supervisor.

The scientific supervisors, who have achieved considerable results in the preparation of professionals with scientific-pedagogical high qualifications, by the order of Academy's rector may be encouraged with material or other resources or other forms of promotion.

The calculation of a supervisor's salary is conducted according to the regulation of Supreme certifying committee. At least 50 hours for 1 PhD student and 30 hours for PhD applicant (հայցորդ). In order to reduce the workload of a supervisor, **the new PhD** program provides a co-supervisor, who will be responsible for technical issues and will support PhD student during research conduction.

4.2 HEI has supervisor/ supervisory team appointment procedures.

The Academy is guided by the procedure defined by RA Supreme certifying committee, while appointing a scientific supervisor. Accordingly, the candidacy of a scientific supervisor is discussed in the professional chair and then submitted to the Scientific Council for approval /see http://bok.am/wpcontent/uploads/2019/03/git_ast_kanonakarg.pdf/.

4.3 HEI has motivation mechanisms for supervisors to be involved in active researching and be part of relevant scientific network.

The Academy has not developed mechanisms yet, which will promote the supervisors' active involvement in relevant scientific networks.

4.4 There is well-established system for periodic evaluation of supervision that foster to review existing policies and procedures for supervision and to reveal the professional needs of supervisors.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the supervision process, Quality assurance center has developed a questionnaire for PhD students. They evaluate the supervision process as well as their supervisor /see Appendix 10/.

By the Quality Assurance Handbook for 3rd cycle, it is planned to reveal working needs of supervisors. Quality assurance center will organize focus-group discussions with supervisors.

4.5 HEI fosters the development and professional progress of supervisors.
To promote professional development of supervisors and teaching staff, the Academy implements a number of activities, in particular:
- ✓ organizes trainings for the professional development of the teaching staff
- ✓ Academy is a member of a number of grant projects within the framework of which teaching and support staff members are trained. The trainings are directed to the development and revision of the academic programs at Academy, to the development of research activities and to internationalization. Representatives of Academy who are trained abroad share their experience during the in-house trainings within the university.
- ✓ Academy always fosters professional development of its staff giving an opportunity to the lecturers to exhibit their works in the gallery/exhibition hall of Academy free of charge and the researchers are given the opportunity of publishing articles in "Taregirq" collection of scientific articles free of charge. These activities promote career development.
- ✓ Academy creates working opportunities for young lecturers which gives an opportunity of ensuring fluent and balanced generation change of the teaching staff. The experienced lecturers guide young lecturers who are making their first steps in the sphere of teaching.
- ✓ **By the new PhD program** is defined not only a supervisor but also a co-supervisor for the fluent and balanced generation change, who will support PhD student. The latter gives an opportunity to a beginner-researcher to get experience for supervision. Moreover, modern approaches to teaching and learning imply the use of modern technologies and gadgets. Thus it is a serious challenge to recruit young human resources with necessary skills and promote their cooperation with experienced staff members. Such an approach gives an opportunity to ensure the interconnection of new methods and best traditional approaches. To make the activities towards ensuring

professional growth of the teaching staff more coordinated Academy plans to develop policy and clear time-schedule of trainings for professional development of the teaching staff.

5. Research Environment

HEI promotes the quality research provisions by creating an environment conducive to research.

Please analyse how the HEI ensures the proper implementation of the doctoral program.

By Academy's research strategy 2019-2022, the development of research field is defined as one of the priorities for the university. Therefore, The Academy implements relevant activities to provide appropriate research environment and resources. Relevant chair and Research center are the units, which always cooperate with a PhD student during study. The Academy, according to its contractual obligations, provides a PhD student with working area and tools, gives an access to university library and other working facilities, also to various electronic resources. The university provides PhD students with relevant information on different events organized at the Academy, as well as in Armenia and on international platforms. Moreover, in collaboration with various scientific institutions, Academy's PhD students are permitted to access scientific, creative, museum and library services of those institutions.

Academy revised its PhD program by redefining and clarifying the institutional support mechanisms for more effective research conduction.

5.1 There are necessary resources for the implementation of doctoral program in accordance with its content, which effectively support the implementation of program's ambitions and create an environment conducive to research.

Academy provides relevant human and material resources for the effective implementation of PhD program. Following units coordinate research activates at Academy:

➢ Research center
➢ Relevant chair
➢ Scientific secretary

Academy within its responsibilities provide a PhD student with

➢ Sufficient research environment,

➢ Working areas and tools, laboratries

➢ Acces to library and other archives

➢ Obtains permission through inter-institutional communication from other institutions, if a PhD student needs to have an access to scientific, creative, museum and library

resources of those institutions

- ➢ recommendation letters,

- ➢ the opportunity and support to publish his/her works in local and international reviewed scientific journals

- ➢ support in participating in local and international workshops and conferences

5.2 HEI monitors the scientific progress of the individual doctoral candidates by achieved scientific results and provides career development opportunities. Supervisors have primary responsibility in doctoral candidate's scientific progress.

Academy implements annual and ongoing monitorings on the scientific progress of a PhD student. In the 1st year, a PhD student with his/her supervisor develops an individual research plan according to which the learning is carried out. At the end of each year supervisor and PhD student submit a report, which is initially discussed in the professional chair and then submitted to Scientific council of Academy. The latter evaluates a PhD student's work done and gives consultancy if needed. Ongoing monitorings on the scientific progress of a PhD student is implemented by the head of relevant chair through periodically meetings with supervisor and PhD student. PhD students of Academy teach at university, which promote their career development by getting teaching experience.

Supervisors have a primary responsibility for scientific progress of PhD students as they are responsible for the effective implementation of individual research plan.

Thus, for research conduction, the supervisor helps PHD student to publish scientific articles in reviewed journals as well as supports PhD student to present reports in local and international scientific conferences.

5.3 HEI ensures that all doctoral candidates receive useful and regular information and advice to promote research and to have opportunity to work in research teams and different research environments.

In order to contribute research, the Academy provides PhD students with information on existing scientific events in the field. If necessary, the Academy guarantees the participation of a PhD student in the event.

Academy's supervisor are the leading researchers of the field, they work and are involved in other institutions also. Due to the close collaboration between supervisor and PhD student, a PhD student has the opportunity to get acquainted with research works in other scientific institutions and in case of matching research interests, also joins research group.

5.4 HEI has sound financial distribution policy and capacity to sustain and ensure the integrity and continuity of doctoral programs at the institution.

The allocation of financial resources at Academy is conducted according to "Regulation on

departmental annual planning, implementation, evaluation and improvement at SAFAA". Academy's budget defines the financial resources, which ensure the continuity and completeness of PhD program. Depending on the functions, faculty, scientific secretary and supervisor involved in the PhD program are paid.

Appropriate financial resources for the acquisition of the material resources necessary for the effective implementation of PhD program are provided, too.

5.5 HEI has mechanisms in place for the evaluation of the effectiveness, applicability and availability of resources.

The evaluation on the resources and services provided by university will be carried out at 2 levels (academic program and course) and in different formats. For evaluating the effectiveness of the course, PhD students will evaluate not only the course but also provided resources. In this case, PhD students will be given questionnaires /see Appendix 11/.

After finishing PhD program, students will evaluate the whole academic program including courses, teaching methods, provided resources etc. In this case, a focus-group discussion will be carried out /see Appendix 7/

The evaluation on the effectiveness of provided resources will be carried out not only by PhD students but also alumni and faculty. The evaluation on the effectiveness of resources with them will be carried out through focus-group discussion, where they will have the opportunity to evaluate resources provided by the university also.

6. Doctoral Candidates
Doctoral candidates are recognized as professionals with commensurate rights.

Please analyse whether the doctoral candidates are part of implementation of the HEI's ambitions in research.

SAFAA charter defines basic rights of its all students. Besides, the university recognizes PhD students as professionals with commensurate rights through signing a contract with each of them. The rights and responsibilities of university and a PhD student are separated in the contract. Existing bilateral contact not only regulates relationship between the parties but also gives them rights.

The university has already developed a tripartite contact within Tempus Veritas grant project, which aims to clarify, regulate and put on legal grounds not only the relationship between university and a PhD student but also the relationship between university, PhD student and supervisor /see Appendix 9/:

6.1 HEI has formal mechanisms to regulate relations between candidate, supervisors and institution where the rights and responsibilities of doctoral candidates are clearly formulated.

A number of SAFAA fundamental documents define the rights and responsibilities of the

various groups of the university's internal stakeholders:

- ✓ SAFAA charter- defines the basic rights of a student

- ✓ SAFAA Code of ethics –defines the necessary behavioural manifestations at Academy /see Appendix 3/

- ✓ Student contract-When student enter PhD programs, the PhD student signs a contract with university, where the right and responsibilities of a PhD student are set. Within revision processes of PhD program, Academy has already developed a tripartite contact, which includes all parties (university, PhD student, and supervisor) and regulates their relationships.

6.2 Doctoral candidates are engaged in governance at the university and participate in decision-making.

SAFAA charter defines the participation of its internal and external stakeholders in different management circles: Board of trustees, Scientific council, Council of department.

PhD students are involved in the Scientific council and participate in decision-making process. Besides, according to "Regulation on departmental annual planning, monitoring, evaluation and improvement at SAFAA", Academy has a commission, which evaluates the activities of the university. A PhD student is also involved in this commission.

6.3 HEI has set mechanisms that ensure quality of the student services and doctoral candidates are involved in the quality assurance practices.

Quality assurance mechanism at 3rd cycle are spread also on the existing resources and services provided by the university. It is planned to conduct focus-group discussions with graduate students and alumni, during discussions the quality of student services provided also will be touched upon. Further, it is planned to develop separate tools-questionnaires, through which PhD students and faculty will evaluate the effectiveness of existing resources and services.

PhD students' participation in the quality assurance process has been on the weak basis as there were not developed quality assurance mechanisms. Now, university drafted Quality assurance handbook for 3rd cycle, which will regulate not only participation of PhD students but also quality assurance processes at 3rd cycle.

7. Internationalization

Internationalization is coherent with institution's research strategy and the individual needs of the doctoral candidates.

Please analyse how the HEI strives to be a part of local and international research networks by the implementation of the doctoral program.

SAFAA highlighting the internationalization of all its activities, pays special attention to the internationalization of the research area and especially PhD program, which is reflected in the 3.3 objective of its strategic plan 2017-2021 an in the activity plan of its Research strategy.

University's participation in two grant projects (Veritas, C3QA) greatly contributed to the launch of internationalization of the research field. Within the projects new cooperations with local and international higher education institutions and quality assurance centers have been formed. Such opportunities allow to develop PhD program according to Salzburg principles and localization of European experience as well as to establish internal quality assurance system in the research field and to operate appropriate mechanisms and tools.

Thus, implementation of a number of activities by the institution aimed at raising the level of research development and internationalization at SAFAA:

- ➢ The importance of research activities in the selection of faculty members
- ➢ Coordination of faculty's research work and support their research activities
- ➢ Development of research strategy by defining research priorities
- ➢ Revision of PhD program in line with modern demands
- ➢ Development of research component in academic programs, promoting students' involvement in research
- ➢ Development of clear mechanisms for research and teaching interconnection
- ➢ Development of cooperation with external partners
- ➢ Dissemination of research results carried out
- ➢

The above mentioned approaches will contribute to the development of research carried out at SAFAA and internalization and will establish solid grounds for the international dissemination and recognition of national thought and art.

7.1 HEI promotes fruitful and effective collaboration with local and international counterparts aiming to create critical mass and networking as well as to implement joint research and doctoral programs.

SAFAA attaches importance to cooperation with local and international institutions that promote experience exchange and development of research field. The cooperation is active especially with local institutions (Matenadaran, Art Institute of RA National academy of Science National gallery, History museum, Institute of archaeology and ethnography etc.). During research, PhD students have the opportunity to conduct studies and joint-research, to

access information databases, participate in conferences, seminars introducing presentations, the results of their research done.

The scope of cooperation with international institutions and organizations has been expanded as a result of participating in grant projects, whose further development activities may provide grounds for the implementation of joint research and academic programs.

7.2 The mobility of doctoral candidates is driven by the candidates' research projects. Academy has not carried out mobility of PhD students yet. Taking into account that now the basis for internalization are being created, the university after approval of **new PhD program** plans to develop mobility participating in Erasmus+**.**

7.3 HEI allocates sufficient financial resources for internationalization.
In order to promote internationalization, the problem of sufficient financial resources can be solved at SAFAA through finding grants and additional financial resources, which will start in parallel with the launch of **new PhD program**.

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8. PhD awarding
HEI has clear mechanisms for monitoring and assessment of the research results (applicable to the institutions having Specialized Councils).
Please analyse how the Specialized Councils acknowledge the formation of an autonomous researcher.

Academy does not have a Specialized council yet, but **new PhD program** plans to formulate a Specialized Council, whereas for each dissertation defence it is desirable to select and formulate a concrete commission, <u>at least three</u>, and <u>with maximum of seven</u> members, who are closer to the topic and the field of research. In this case the defence may be organized at Academy. At least one member of the commission should be invited from other local or international scientific institutions. **After the approval of new PhD program** relevant recommendation will be sent to RA Supreme certifying committee.

9. Internal quality assurance

HEI has an internal quality assurance system, which promotes continual improvement of all the processes of doctoral education.

Please analyse how the HEI promotes the formation of quality assurance culture for doctoral education.

The Academy has always emphasized the quality assurance processes in the offered bachelor's, master's and research degrees, so SAFAA defined the quality assurance in its strategic plan 2017-2021 as one of the strategic goals with the view to create basis for the development of quality assurance processes as well as for further quality culture formation (SAFAA strategic plan 2012-2016, Goal 2, Clarification of learning quality assurance process and development of implementation mechanisms). For the effective implementation of strategic goals clear activities have been defined, which for many years, have contributed to the clarification and development of quality assurance processes at the university, as well as creating appropriate basis for the formation of quality culture. If in the previous strategic period (2012-2016) the university was highlighting the quality assurance processes and the development of mechanisms for implementation, then in the new strategic period (2017-2021) emphasizes the dissemination of quality culture and improvement of the quality assurance system as so solid basis were created in the previous years.

Within the frames of C3QA grant project, the university drafted a Quality assurance handbook for 3rd cycle. Previously, the university did not have quality assurance processes for 3rd cycle, which would contribute to the continuous improvement of it. Quality assurance processes that will contribute to the continuous improvement of PhD program are separated in the Handbook.

Thus, the university giving strategic prioritization to quality assurance processes as well as elaborating a separate policy for PhD program contributes greatly to the continuous development and improvement of the processes at this level as well as to the formation and dissemination of quality culture not only at the bachelor's and master's degrees but also at 3rd cycle.

9.1 There are well-established and publicly available policies and procedures for internal quality assurance of doctoral education.

Adopting the definition of quality as correspondence with goals SAFAA's quality assurance policy is aimed at the fulfilment of SAFAA mission and goals defined in the strategic plan. This assumes definition of objectives for quality assurance, effective implementation of the activities of the university, implementation of improvements based on the feedback from internal and external stakeholders.

At the institutional level quality assurance policy is reflected in a number of documents that successfully regulate the current procedures for instance: Regulation on annual planning,

monitoring, evaluation and improvement of the activities of SAFAA structural units, Quality assurance Handbook, Handbook on the development and revision of academic programs etc.

SAFAA Quality assurance policy defines the framework of processes for quality, continuous improvement, documents regulating the processes of the university giving much importance to PDCA cycle within the framework of all its activities. The latter partly reflected on 3rd cycle, as there were no quality assurance mechanisms but newly drafted Handbook includes such tools, which will regulate this part of the operation as well.

9.2 The internal and external stakeholders of doctoral education are involved in the quality assurance processes.

Giving a great importance to the involvement of internal and external stakeholders in quality assurance process SAFAA Quality assurance center has always used such mechanisms of quality assurance at bachelor's and master's degrees, which have ensured the involvement of key stakeholders in different processes of the university.

Taking into consideration the gap that quality assurance mechanisms have not been developed for 3rd cycle, which would contribute to the involvement of stakeholders in different processes and improvement of a number of processes at this level, Quality assurance center developed tools to fill this gap in 2019. The developed tools have not been applied yet. The developed quality assurance tools apply to the following processes of 3rd cycle: admission, academic programs and courses, research conduction and supervision, material resources and provided services.

Thus, the developed quality assurance tools will be applied starting from the new academic year aiming to identify the needs and demands of the key stakeholders of 3rd cycle and to promote the effective implementation of objectives and processes of the 3rd cycle.

9.3 HEI collects reliable information on the implemented processes through feedback mechanisms, which is evaluated for the improvement of the goals and processes of doctoral education.

SAFAA has always attached importance to the working and educational needs of its stakeholders during its activities. This process has been put on more coordinated basis after the establishment of the Quality assurance center, which has been able to identify the needs and demand of key stakeholders as much as possible in recent years, contributing to the continuous improvement of university's a number of activities.

The launch of quality assurance processes at 3rd cycle has been provided in the frame of Veritas grant project, through the self-assessment program of PhD program, SWOT analysis, meetings with key stakeholders etc. With the completion of the project, quality assurance processes have been put on more serious basis within the framework of the C3QA grant project, as it has become possible to get acquainted with the institutional approaches of research quality assurance at local and international levels.

For the continuous improvement of 3rd cycle, Quality assurance center has developed feedback mechanisms that provide appropriate information about this or that process.

Quality assurance tools for 3rd cycle are covered in the following areas: admission, academic programs and courses, research conduction and supervision, material resources and provided services. Below is the description of each process in details.

Admission

Quality Assurance Center has developed a focus-group discussion procedure to collect and reveal the needs and demands of internal and external stakeholders more effective, as well as to collect reliable information on key processes /see Appendix 7/. Based on this procedure, a meeting should be conducted with a first-year PhD student to evaluate the admission process: the amount of material required for the professional examination, the approach of the commission during the examination etc. The meeting will be held among first-year PhD students of each academic year. The results of the meeting will be analyzed by Quality assurance center, after which it will be presented to the Research Center and relevant chair to get acquainted with the results.

Academic program and courses

For the effective implementation of academic programs it is important to organize properly their development and revision processes. Therefore, quality assurance tools will be embedded by the university that will enable to gather quantitative and qualitative data on the academic programs. Below are the tools that will be applied at the level of academic programs.

➢ *Evaluation on the course*

For the evaluation on the existing courses a questionnaire has been developed, which has two parts. The question are has also a tool description, where the target group, the number of participants, etc., are described in details /see Appendix 11/. The first part of the questionnaire includes questions on the course workload, tasks given, assessment methods, provided resources etc. In the second part, students evaluate the effectiveness of the lecturer's classroom performance: consultancy given, working approach to students, teaching methods, etc.

After completing the survey, Quality assurance center will analyse the data gathered and submit to the relevant chair, after which a meeting will be held to discuss the results of the survey between the head of the chair and lecturer.

➢ *Evaluation on the academic program*

To evaluate PhD program, Quality assurance center will carry out a focus-group discussion with graduating students according to the "Procedure for the focus-group meetings at SAFAA" /see Appendix 7/.
The discussion will focus on the academic program, its human and material resources, services

provided to PhD students by university etc. To evaluate the effectiveness of the meeting, participants will be given an evaluation sheet. The results of focus-group meetings will be analyzed at Quality assurance center and will be submitted to the Research Center and relevant chair.

For the continuous improvement and revision of the academic program, meetings with all stakeholders are important, so it is planned to conduct meetings with alumni and faculty in accordance with the above-mentioned procedure.

Research conduction and supervision

To evaluate the effectiveness of the supervision process 2 separate questionnaires for supervisors and PhD students have been developed with their tool descriptions respectively /see appendix 10, 12/. The supervisor and PhD student will evaluate each other from the point of view of fulfilling the responsibilities, meetings during research conduction, tasks and guidance given by supervisor, student self-study, etc. The survey will be conducted separately so that the participants to be free to express their thoughts. The results of the survey will be analysed at Quality assurance center and submitted to the Research center and the relevant chair to discuss the results. After the discussion, if there are any omissions from the perspective of the student and/or supervisors responsibilities a discussion will be held with the participation of all responsible parties.

Evaluation on the existing resources and provided services

At 3rd level, quality assurance tools are also used to evaluate the resources and services provided at university. At the moment, only focus-group discussions with graduating PhD students and alumni (Evaluation on the academic program) address the quality of the services provided but it is planned to develop separate questionnaires, through which it will be possible to evaluate the effectiveness of existing resources and services provided by PhD students and by teaching staff.

Thus, SAFAA has developed such mechanisms of feedback for the implementation of 3rd cycle goals and objectives, which will enable to gather quantitative and qualitative data for the continuous improvement of 3rd cycle.

9.4 The internal quality assurance system of doctoral education is periodically reviewed.

Internal quality assurance system of the university is aimed at the effectiveness of SAFAA activities, it is regularly reviewed according to the strategic plan, the needs and requirements of internal and external stakeholders, requirements and tendencies defined on national and international levels.

Goals and objectives for quality assurance of the university are redefined after the completion of strategic plan taking into account the level of implementation of objectives defined in the previous strategic plan as well as the change of internal and external environment during that period and the modern trends.

Quality control system /see Appendix 13/ of the university is the basis for not only at bachelor's and master's degree but also at 3rd cycle quality assurance processes, where quality assurance and management of different processes, their interrelatedness, evaluation, responsible units, involved internal stakeholders, etc., are clearly noticeable.

SWOT analysis of the doctoral program

	External Opportunities (O)	**External Threats** (T)
	1. Opportunity to form an internal professional commission.	1. Rejection of new program.
	2. Approval of the new program by RA Supreme certifying committee.	2. Changes in the legislative field.
	3. Implementation of joint-researches and awarding joint-degrees.	3. Lack of human resources in the external professional commission for practical and performance based professions such as Design, Decorative applied arts, Fashion design etc.
	4. Opportunities to find external financial resources.	
	5. External assessment on the program quality and receiving recommendations for continuous improvements.	

Internal Strengths (S)	S-O "Max-Max" Strategy	S-T "Max-Min" Strategy
1. The research is included in the Academy's strategic plan 2017-2021 and is considered as one of the strategic priorities of the university. 2. Academy has a separate unit "Research center" for the coordination of research area. 3. Development of a new PhD program with learning outcomes based on the current one. 4. Appropriate research environment for conducting research. 5. Human resources with necessary quantity and quality. 6. Quality management system/structure, which also includes research.	1. Development and implementation of Research strategy. 2. Implementation of a new PhD program. 3. Expansion of cooperations with higher education and other scientific institutions. 4. Improvement of research environment (new resources including human and material). 5. Development and implementation of quality assurance policy for 3rd cycle.	1. Justification for the approval of revised PhD program. 2. Justifications and revisions in the new program depending on the changes in the legislative field.

Internal Weaknesses	W-O	W-T
(W)	"Min-Max" Strategy	"Min-Min" Strategy
1. Current academic program does not have learning outcomes and reflects the characteristics of Art history and theory and Design, Decorative Applied arts.	1. Full-fledged implementation of new program.	1. Full-fledged implementation of new research strategy according to its activity plan.
2. Research priorities are not reflected in the existing documents.	2. Optimal allocation of financial resources.	2. Effective application of quality assurance tools and providing recommendations for improvements.
3. The interconnection between teaching and research is weak.	3. Trilateral contract between the Academy-Supervisor and a PhD Student	3. Development and application of promotion mechanisms for internal research.
4. Promotion mechanisms for PhD students and supervisors are not sufficient.		4. Development and effective application of mechanisms for strengthening the interconnection between teaching and research.
5. Lack of internal researches.		
6. Insufficient financial means are provided for research development.		