

FOCUS-GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONNAIRE

OPENING SPEECH

Dear student,

Yerevan State University is implementing a sociological research aimed at developing the quality of university education. Opinions formed during the discussion will be used in a generalized manner. Your opinion on YSU's learning processes is essential for directing improvements in education quality.

We appreciate your time and willingness to contribute to the improvement of YSU's education quality.

PART 1

INITIAL IDEAS ABOUT STUDY PROGRAMME

What factors have influenced the choice of profession, higher education institution, and study programme?

- *Discuss the possible influence of factors, such as opinions of family members, kinship/friendly relations in the field of profession/given higher education institution, modern/profitable/useful-to-society essence of the profession, reputation of the higher education institution, tuition amount, etc.*
- *Where and how have they obtained information about their chosen study programme? Discuss the process of obtaining information, including where it was gathered from, how long before admission, and from which sources. Identify the sources and extent to which they have been informed about the study programme's goals, content, learning outcomes, future career opportunities, and their acquaintance with the relevant faculty, managing, and teaching staff, etc.*
- *Discuss the extent to which initial ideas and expectations about the chosen profession and study programme have been met during the study process. If they have not, then how and why?*

PART 2

STUDENT'S SATISFACTION WITH STUDY PROGRAMME

CONTENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME

Discuss the key strengths and weaknesses of the study programme.

- *Discuss the knowledge and competences gained within the study programme, which students consider essential for efficient professional activity and professional development.*
- *Are there any knowledge, skills, or courses, which would be essential for professional activity and career, but have not been included in the study programme?*
- *Discuss the courses that participants of focus-group discussion believe do not contribute to the realization of professional activity in any way. Which courses do they prefer to take instead of them?*

Provide focus group participants with cards containing their study programme's learning outcomes (in an open and well-structured form). Request that they note the degree to which each learning outcome is obtained and its importance in terms of professional activity, for example:

Study Programme's Learning Outcomes	The necessity of knowledge and competences gained during studies for future professional activities			The degree of mastery of knowledge and competences gained during studies		
	Necessary	Partially necessary	Not necessary	Full	Partial	Don't master

INDIVIDUAL WORK

The effectiveness of assigned individual work (research, homework, essays, etc.) in evaluating knowledge and competencies.

- *Discuss the effectiveness of different individual works in terms of obtaining, demonstrating, and evaluating knowledge. Request that the participants suggest possible alternatives that can be more effective from the point of view of demonstrating knowledge, and particularly, passing current exams.*

Discussion on the effectiveness of completing graduation paper in the study programme.

- *Discuss the extent to which the choice, completion (including theoretical and practical aspects), and defence processes of the graduation paper relate to acquiring, developing, testing, and applying professional knowledge and competences.*
- *Discuss with the participants what has particularly contributed to or interfered with the effectiveness of completion (including literature accessibility and topicality, collaboration with the academic supervisor, time management, etc.) and defence of the graduation paper, as well as the conduct of research.*
- *Discuss with the participants the phenomenon of plagiarism during the process of knowledge acquiring and testing, its prevalence and possible ways to overcome it.*

PROFESSIONAL WORK-PLACEMENT

Discuss with the participants the types of professional work-placements they have undertaken, the content and their participation in them, obtained knowledge and competences, and overall the effectiveness of work-placements in terms of acquiring professional knowledge and competences.

- *Discuss what professional or generic experience and skills they have gained during work-placements, which were established by the study programme's learning outcomes and students' expectations, based on their ideas. What expected professional knowledge and competences have been acquired during work-placements, and to what extent? Mention the strengths and weaknesses, outcomes and omissions of the work-placements organization and implementation.*
- *What organization did they undertake their work-placements with, and how effective were they? To what extent have the places of work-placement been accessible, relevant, and effective for acquiring, testing and developing professional knowledge and competences?*
- *Suggestions on making work-placements more effective in the faculty.*

TEACHING STAFF, TEACHING METHODS, AND ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

Evaluate the teaching methods and academic environment

- *Discuss the applied methods of teaching and learning, effectiveness of teaching, opportunities for individual connection and consultation with lecturers, availability and topicality of teaching aids materials, sufficiency of classrooms including conveniences, and technical capacity.*

- *Discuss to what extent the lecturers included in the programme are prepared to deliver courses and other study modules skilfully and with contemporary methods/approaches, as well as to what extent they have contributed to the acquisition, perception, testing, and demonstration of the knowledge, and competencies envisaged by the profession (study programme).*
- *Request that they mention three lecturers with the most effective and three lecturers with the most ineffective teaching approaches. To ensure ease, request that participants mark those names on pieces of paper separately and submit them to you.*
- *What hardships have they faced during their learning process?*
- *Request their recommendations for improving and developing the study programme. For example, identify courses or study modules considered ineffective and suggest potential replacements, along with recommendations for teaching, learning, and assessment methods.*

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!