



განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

**Higher Education Institution Authorisation Experts'
Final Report
David Aghmashenebeli University of Georgia**

Expert Panel Members

Chair: Dr Terence Clifford-Amos, United Kingdom, Universite Catholique de lille, France/EC Expert and Vice Chair/International Higher Education Consultant;

Co-Chair: Professor Christopher Stephens, Emeritus Professor of Medical Education, University of Southampton United Kingdom;

Members:

Lia Glonti, Coordinator, National Erasmus+ Office;

Irma Grdzeldze, Head of Quality Assurance Service, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Georgia;

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Tsotne Samadashvili, Medical Director, New Vision University Hospital;

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Authorisation Report Resume

General information on the educational institution

Ltd David Aghmashenebeli University of Georgia is private institution with 27 years of higher-education provision in Tbilisi. According to the SER, the University has developed and maintains a significant focus on its intellectual resources towards Georgia's endeavours to achieve integration and successful membership in the European Union. It was founded as the first private higher-educational institution in Georgia as the "David Aghmashenebeli Tbilisi Engineering-Economic Institute". From 1992, the Institute became the David Aghmashenebeli University of Georgia.

Since 2011, the University has achieved accredited programmes for all three-cycles of higher education. There are 5 schools: Medicine and Dentistry, Law, Economics and Business, Social Sciences and Humanitarian Sciences. 932 students are currently enrolled, studying Bachelor, Master, once-cycle and PhD programmes. These are complemented by 133 academic and 84 invited staff.

The David Aghmashenebeli University of Georgia students report that it provides a small, friendly, family-supportive environment. The Chair of the expert panel congratulated the Rector concerning the institution's sustainability over the past 27 years.

Brief overview of the evaluation process for authorisation: SER and Site visit

The process of evaluation was initiated on 30th July at the National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement, Tbilisi, following the short-notice recruitment of a Chair to lead the expert group, which comprised: co-chair, and five very experienced Georgian experts, including a student member. The Chair and Co-chair were from the UK. Following a presentation and discussion among expert panel at the Centre, including the important change in the authorisation procedure from 3 to 7 standards, the site visit was performed on 31st July 1st and 2nd August 2018 involving a total of 26 meetings.

The Rector of the David Aghmashenebeli University and his colleagues were receptive to the panel, interested in the process, respectful, very cooperative, and keen to communicate the value of the visit and its prospective outcomes in respect of the future of the University. The evaluation was a seamless procedure and concluded in a satisfactory and timely manner. In the final two sessions, the Chair of the expert panel gave a brief oral presentation of general findings to the Rector and University audience. There was excellent translation expertise provided by the Centre and the University kindly provided daily refreshments for the expert panel.

Following the evaluation, the expert panel met once again at the National Centre to discuss their findings and outcomes. Concerning judgments on the seven Standards, a voting method was employed in the decision-making process in which all panel experts, the Chair and Co-chair, were fully involved.

Concerning documents provided in advance by the University, the expert panel found the SER to be well researched, compiled and written, but extensive in length and could have adopted a more reflective style and been more consistently analytical. The SER offered a detailed perspective on the history, standing and culture of the institution, expressed across the 7 standards established by the NCEQE. The annexes, as useful complements to the SER, proved helpful to the formulation of questions by the expert panel.

Overview of the HEI's compliance with standards

What is addressed in this section takes into consideration the University Rector's emphasis on 'competition', articulated in his opening address during the on-site visit. The expert panel believes that this authorisation process is pivotal to the progressive future of the David Aghmashenebeli University in that the competitive nature of higher education in the twenty-first century demands excellence in all, or most aspects of academic life. In taking account the University's strategy for future development, the expert panel sincerely hopes that its findings will be accepted in a spirit of helpful guidance.

The mission expresses the purpose of the University and is appropriate in its core elements. The expert panel found wide dissemination of the mission in evidence, as acknowledged by several University players, internal and external. The mission, though in full compliance, could be tighter, sharper and more arresting to interested and potential audiences.

The expert panel found that strategic development plan needed to have clear timing for its projected achievement in support of the mission. There was found to be wide dissemination of the strategic plan to critically-positive audiences.

The workings of the University's organisational structure and management could be more accountable, through the performance indicators and evaluation. Cascading rather than systematic senior delegation was found to be a managerial practice. Quality assurance across the institution intends to become more embedded process in providing quality services and critical advice across range of academic support and techniques in evaluation. Ethical matters should be addressed systematically across the University so that student and staff practices are fully grounded and up-to-date in appropriate professional behaviours, including issues pertaining to research ownership.

There are methods and procedure for the planning, design, development and implementation of Educational programmes; it is vital that all curricula are kept fully up to date in terms of recent development and national recommendations. Current developments in Medical programmes in particular need updating work.

The expert panel were concerned that staff management, progressive procedures relating to new forms of contracting and securing a greater number of affiliated staff are at an early stage in their future development. Staff development does not yet have a systematic approach, though the expert panel

learned about training being given by several departments, including the Quality Assurance Department and the Career Development Centre.

The expert panel found a considerable strength in the University's support structures for students. All necessary documentation for the assignment, suspension and termination of student status and mobility is made available. A Student Self-Government body is in place as are the offices of a Career Development Centre and a Department of Sport and Youth Affairs. There is strong community for students across the University.

Internationalisation remains somewhat static for both staff and students. Although the SER expresses great intention and hopefulness, in terms of endeavour, there is little current pro-action that is delivering actual outcomes. A proposal for a new medical programme delivered in English may be one valuable international development.

Several problems concerning research became apparent during the expert panel's visit, including the issues of research ownership, current research activities, coordinated research support and the evaluation of research. International research is a priority, but it is slow in making a headway.

Concerning the components of standard 7, The University has facilities which are generally adequate for the current students and include the special feature of a simulated court room, a forensic science laboratory and a multidisciplinary centre. Generally, however, the Medical programme is in need of more modern educational spaces in support of a newer integrated curriculum. Some more work on providing for future special needs is necessary. Library facilities are supported by two librarians and is open 60 hours a week. There are basic texts for most subject, though not all copies are available in electronic format and IT. Library spaces need to be improved; however, IT resources and infrastructure, are satisfactory.

Concerning finance, income is mostly based on the tuition fees of students, but this is only sustainable with continued stable recruitment. There is some state funding for Bachelor and Master students. Greater transparency is needed in respect of how the University budget is distributed, particularly concerning schools.

The well-established dental programme in the Medical School appears to be of a good standard with an integrated dental facility near the University Campus. The Dental Centre has a phantom head skills laboratory. Students attend the clinic from year two. The clinic is well staffed with academic dentists and delivers-high quality dental care to the surrounding community. The medical programme currently in place has the traditional preclinical science teaching, followed by the clinical years. There is little early patient contact. The clinical placements members of the expert panel visited were of high quality with good patient mix, good clinical supervision and good study space for students. The current programme currently does not fully meet the current Georgian Benchmarks standards for medicine.

The new national Benchmark Standards for Medicine 2017, to be introduced in January 2019 requires there to be an integrated systems-based approach with integrated teaching and assessment, as well as early patient contact. For this to happen, a new curriculum needs to be designed with new clinical assessments such as the OSCE and Mini Cex introduced as well as an assessment strategy. A new curriculum will require a strong leadership team with innovative ideas and a major focus on change management and staff development. An understanding of modern medical education needs to be deployed in staff which will require sustained staff development.

There is currently no medical school research strategy and little basic science research. The doctoral projects are very much in the hands of clinicians exploring and researching their practice, usually being supervised by a more experienced clinical colleague.

Summary of Recommendations

It is recommended that:

The Annual Report of the University should evaluate the previous year's activities and make recommendations for future work rather than just being descriptive;

The Annual Report should include a statement of financial sustainability;

The mechanisms and frequencies for monitoring the implementation of strategic and action plans should be stated;

There should be a methodology for monitoring the action plans, which should be clear and time-framed;

Planned events should be more convincingly tied into the University's core vision and strategy;

Clear job descriptions with performance indicators aligned to the strategic plan should be developed for the all University personnel;

Systems of project management should be put in place to support the leadership team in achieving the strategic plan;

There should be performance indicators and mechanisms for evaluation in all structural units;

A QAA handbook should be developed for staff and students;

It should be outlined how each of the structural units has a measure of administrative ownership of quality assurance;

It should be outlined how continuous monitoring is evaluated;

It should be ensured that all quality reports are made available in Georgian and English;

A quality map should be produced in response to proposed expansion;

Quality assurance needs to become maturely embedded across the University and include a greater emphasis on the curriculum and aspects of staff development;

The Annual Reports need to be written in a more evaluative way so that student enrolment, progression and achievement can be tracked across programmes and schools;

Academic staff should all undergo further training in modern research ethics and plagiarism;

A University Ethics Committee should be set up to approve all research proposals;

A new educational programme in Medicine is planned and designed to meet the standards of the new Benchmark Document of 2017 which will be introduced in January 2019;

A more critical attitude and contribution should be encouraged from employers;

Alumni should be encouraged to become more involved in programme development;

The scope for Literature in English Philology should be reviewed;

A research component at Bachelor level should be incorporated;

The University designs and establishes an assessment strategy for Medicine;

In medicine clinical assessments such as the OSCE and Mini Cex are introduced;

An examination centre for the computer-based assessment of students is established and developed;

The term of the contract signed by the personnel should be longer, to maintain sustainability;

An assessment system of the personnel, academic as well as invited and administrative and support staff, should be finalised with the follow up results and an improvement strategy. A number of ongoing training sessions should be set up;

There should be policy set up to increase the number of affiliated staff, who should be eager to make significant publications under DAUG's name;

The affiliation contract should include more benefits for the affiliated staff;

Programme coordinators should have allocated number of hours to work for the programme and contribute to its development;

Academic and invited staff should have different functions that should be reflected in their contracts;

International activities, exchange programmes, international projects should be activated;

Help should be given to Career Development Centre for its future advancement;

Existing research capacities (staff, infrastructure, financial resources) should be analysed in order to specify a University strategy on research development;

The research profile of University schools should be developed based on available resources;

The capacities of Scientific Research and Lifelong Education Centre should be developed;

Implementation of a planned research strategy is ensured;

Doctoral programmes should be connected with the University's research profile;

Supporting mechanisms for doctoral programmes' implementation, such as training for supervisors should be developed;

Implementation of intra-university funding system is ensured;

Specification for funding (grant amount in the budget) for young researchers; (doctoral and master students) is given to ensure its implementation;

Additional support for the University's academic staff is provided to enhance their participation in local and international scientific programmes (training in project writing; partner search);

Recruitment of affiliated staff is ensured in order to enhance competitiveness of the University especially in the field of research;

Existing memoranda with international partners should be revised;

The internationalisation potential of research and study programmes at the University in order to define fields of collaboration should be analysed;

The search for potential international partners in selected fields should be intensified;

The availability of financial resources for sustainable international collaboration should be ensured;

A staff evaluation system should be implemented;

A project evaluation system should be implemented;

Evaluation criteria and processes should be adjusted where required;

Evaluation results should be published;

There should be internal discussion and consideration of evaluation results for future development of the University;

The Medical programme and its implementation receives more material resources, educational/scientific-research laboratories, OSCE stations and clinical skills laboratories;

The library budget should be increased to facilitate learning, teaching and researches, Increase the qualification of library staff and improve the library's environment;

The estimated increase in the budget should be explained in terms of how this will be achieved and secured;

Internal funds across different schools and programmes should be based on transparency and strategic development of the University;

An increase the financial resources should be made to ensure the scientific/research activities and internationalisation of the University;

The provision in seminal texts and variety (language and literature) should be increased for English Philology;

Summary of Suggestions

It is suggested that:

The mission statement should be further considered towards something that is more immediate and arresting in capturing the attention of multiple audiences. Consult missions more widely and comparatively, and briefly indicate the way forward for medicine;

Four areas need to be evaluated in the annual report:

- Financial and business perspective;
- Staff development and improvement perspective;
- Internal processes perspective including student progression;
- Stakeholder feedback perspective students, staff, and employers.

In addition to the SWOT in University evaluative work, also consider using SMART objectives;

A University Council or Board should be introduced with external members/ governors, where executive members can be held to account;

The Rector should be appraised by an external member;

Succession planning should be considered;

Changes should be highlighted to staff and students – “You said – We did”;

An experienced Director of Research should be appointed to take forward the international research agenda and head a research strategy group;

A clinical skills facility should be developed;

In Medicine, focus on areas of national priority such as mental health and care of the elderly;

The University's appeals'/complaints' procedure should be further developed and activated.

Summary of the Best Practices



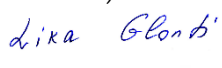
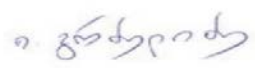



- The main features of the Strategy were known widely to academic and non-academic staff and students. The document appears to have been developed through wide consultation and then disseminated throughout the organisation;
- University television- SDASU TV;
- A specialised hall for simulated court sessions (Law).

Summary Table of Compliance of HEI with Standards and Standard Components

	Standard	Complie s wit h Re qui re me nts	Sub sta tia lly com plie s wit h req ui re me nts	Part ially Com plie s wit h Req ui re me nts	Does not Comp ly with Requi reme nts
1.	Mission and strategic development of HEI	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.1	Mission of HEI	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2	Strategic development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Organisational structure and management of HEI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.1	Organisational structure and management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2	Internal quality assurance mechanisms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3	Observing principles of ethics and integrity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Educational Programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.1	Design and development of educational programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2	Structure and content of educational programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3	Assessment of learning outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Staff of the HEI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.1	Staff management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.2	Academic/Scientific and invited Staff workload	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Students and their support services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.1	The Rule for obtaining and changing student status, the recognition of education, and student rights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2	Student support services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Research, development and/or other creative work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.1	Research activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.2	Research support and internationalisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6.3	Evaluation of research activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Material, information and financial resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.1	Material resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.2	Library resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.3	Information resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.4	Financial resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signature of expert panel members

1. Terence Clifford-Amos (Chair) 
2. Christopher Stephens (Co-chair) 
3. Lika Glonti (Member) 
4. Irma Grdzelidze (Member) 
5. Ann Gvritishvili (Student Member) 
6. Tsotne Samadashvili (Member) 
7. Maia Zarnadze (Member) 

Compliance of the Applicant HEI with the Authorisation Standard Components

1. Mission and strategic development of HEI

Mission statement of a HEI defines its role and place within higher education area and broader society. Strategic development plan of HEI corresponds with the mission of an institution, is based on the goals of the institution and describe means for achieving these goals.

1.1 Mission of HEI

Mission Statement of the HEI corresponds to Georgia's and European higher education goals, defines its role and place within higher education area and society, both locally and internationally.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The mission statement of DAUG refers to educational objectives and goals, formulated by the "Law of Georgia on Higher Education". The mission has at its core, the formation of an active member of a democratic society, who is developed to create and share knowledge. The mission states that critical, innovative and creative thinking are deemed to be decisive factors for personal success, and the success of the country as well as students being prepared to the maximum extent. The takes mission account of stakeholders, the value of being competitive in the labour market and the goal of Europeanisation.

The David Aghmashenebeli University of Georgia (DAUG) is still a relatively new institution, and to a large extent, should in its mission, respond to the future in recognition of that contemporary culture, especially in relation to recruitment and its diverse intake. This is one of the University's strengths. The University currently is small and focused on educating mainly Bachelor and Master level students. The mission statement, as outlined, is somewhat broad, but nevertheless quite strong and does correspond to Georgia's and European higher education goals.

The process for developing the mission is described, and how it links to national priorities. The majority of those interviewed: students, academic and non-academic staff, were broadly aware of the mission. The expert panel found this impressive; some interview participants held it in particular value, notably employers. The expert panel were certainly aware of the pervasiveness of the mission and how it had entered the consciousness of a variety of University players throughout the staffing provision.

However, the expert panel believes that the mission in its breadth could say a little more on terms of profiling DAUG in particular. This is a matter that the University should address in further refining its mission, along with maintaining its laudable future wishes. It is also suggested that the University mission should very briefly indicate the way forward for medicine -i.e., the opportunities to make the new curriculum exciting and innovative.

<p>Evidences/indicator</p> <p>1.1.1 Rectors order N 94 (07.06.2017);</p> <p>1.1.2 Mission of the Ltd David Aghmashenebeli University of Georgia; https://sdasu.edu.ge/ka/chven-shesakheb/misia and supplied Document 1.1.2.</p> <p>Expert panel meetings with the Rector, Academic Council, Deans other staff and students.</p>
<p>Recommendations</p> <p>Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider refining the mission statement, a little more towards something that is immediate and arresting in capturing the attention of multiple audiences. Consult missions more widely and comparatively, and briefly indicate the way forward for medicine.
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main features of the mission are known widely by academic and non-academic staff and students. The document appears to have been developed through wide consultation and then disseminated quite thoroughly through the organisation.
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements</p>
<p>1.2 Strategic Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HEI has a strategic development (7-year) and an action plans (3-year) in place. HEI contributes to the development of the society, shares with the society the knowledge gathered in the institution, and facilitates lifelong learning HEI evaluates implementation of strategic and action plans, and duly acts on evaluation results.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The process for developing the 7-year strategic development plans (2018-2024) and 3-year action plan (2018-2021) is described, as well as the actual plans available on the web. These give an extensive list of future actions but lack more detail in terms of time-bound actual achievement and cost implications. Both documents were developed in 2017. The SER, p.13 states that staff, students, graduates and employers of the university were 'passively involved in developing the strategy', showing some evidence of a participatory process, but not necessarily a full one. The strategic planning methodology is grounded in the analysis of environmental conditions, the positive and negative trends in combination with the strengths and weaknesses and capability of University activity. The Strategic Planning Methodology document illustrates that a SWOT-analysis was used to help develop the strategy, taking into account current and anticipated resources, competition and future targets. Both the SER (p.13) and the Monitoring of the Strategic Development Plan Implementation inform readers that the strategic plan and action plan are monitored, in accordance with internal regulations and procedures. In the latter document, there are very broad time frames, indicators and expected outcomes. Methodology for monitoring the process could however, be clearer. The action plans may be ambitiously set in terms of what may be achievable across the time frames of 3 and 7 years. For example, between 2018-2020, there are 55 objectives set out for completion. The expert panel meetings with the Rector, Academic Council, Deans, QA team, other staff and students indicated the wide dissemination of the plans; however, they also demonstrated that the leadership team (Deans) only knew about their own budgets, and not those of other schools. The expert panel remain unclear about the mechanisms and frequency DAUG uses to monitor the implementation of strategic and action plans.

The strategy is open and honest in terms of the University's immediate and longer-term needs. These involve: the integration of the research component in the learning process (research informed teaching), strengthening the connections between a students, professor-teachers and scientist-researchers, internationalisation at all levels, the expansion of partnerships, further modernisation of University research laboratories, more refined student services, staff knowledge of foreign languages, greater graduate employment, cooperation with foreign partners, the gaining of University grants, more researchers and the development of a more effective management system (SER, pp.12-15). As the expert panel learned and recognised, these are among the most urgent future needs of the David Aghmashenebeli University of Georgia.

Events to be implemented in 2017 relate really to academic activities such as seminars and concerts, not the project management of the plans. Equally, there is no evaluation of these activities and reference to the developing mission or any previous strategic plan. There was a strategic plan for 2011-2018 as mentioned by the Head of the Quality Assurance Service, but the expert panel were not made aware of the outcomes.

The planned events section, (SER, pp.21-32) does list a number of projects, but again, these largely remain untethered in terms of their connection with the University's core vision and strategy. The section is rather long and really needs mapping against the strategic plan. Planned events should be more convincingly tied into the University's core vision and strategy.

The recently-developed (2017) action plans are strategically important but on future visits there should be very clear evidence of how the plans are being achieved. In Medicine the new curriculum needs to be planned, developed and mapped against the new 2019 standards and go through internal validation.

Annual Reports going back to 2012-2017 are very brief and broad, mainly relating to educational quality. There is a lack of integration of quantitative and qualitative measures in terms of component evidences/indicators, including the relevant documents and interview results. There is a lack of self-evaluation in the reports and they do not produce aims for work over the next year. It was not clear for how long the process of annual reports had been running. The expert panel were told that the Academic Council looked at these reports. The Annual Report of the University should evaluate the previous year's activities and make recommendations for future work rather than just being descriptive so that, for example, student enrolment, progression and achievement can be tracked across programmes and schools. The annual report should also include a statement of financial sustainability.

The expert panel found evidence to agree with a wide-range of staff, that there was wide dissemination of the strategic plan and, in general, interviewed participants were able to quote from it; some did so quite impressively.

Evidences/indicators

SER

1.2.1. A seven-year plan of strategic development;

1.2.2 Action Plan and three-year Action Plan Monitoring Mechanisms;

1.2.3 Strategic planning methodology;

1.2.4 Mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the Strategic Development Plan;

This is a box check of achievements, but because there are few indicators, it is very broad;

1.2.6. Annual Reports going back to 2012-2017.

Recommendations:

- The Annual Report of the University should evaluate the previous year's activities and make recommendations for future work rather than just being descriptive;
- The Annual Report should include a statement of financial sustainability;
- The Annual Report needs to be written in a more evaluative way so that student enrolment, progression and achievement can be tracked across programmes and schools;
- The mechanisms and frequencies for monitoring the implementation of strategic and action plans should be stated;
- There should be a methodology for monitoring the action plans which should be clear and time-framed;
- Planned events should be more convincingly tied into the University's core vision and strategy.

Suggestions:

Four areas need to be evaluated in the annual report:

- Financial and business perspective;
- Staff development and improvement perspective;
- Internal processes perspective including student progression;
- Stakeholder feedback perspective students, staff, and employers.

In addition to the SWOT, for the University's evaluative work, also consider using SMART objectives.

Best Practices (if applicable):

Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions

Evaluation

Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard

- ☐ Complies with requirements
- ☒ Substantially complies with requirements
- ☐ Partially complies with requirements
- ☐ Does not comply with requirements

2. **Organisational Structure and Management of HEI**

Organisational structure and management of the HEI is based on best practices of the educational sector, meaning effective use of management and quality assurance mechanisms in the management process. This approach ensures implementation of strategic plan, integration of quality assurance function into management process, and promotes principles of integrity and ethics

2.1 Organisational Structure and Management

- o Organisational structure of HEI ensures implementation of goals and activities described in its strategic plan
- o Procedures for election/appointment of the management bodies of HEI are transparent, equitable, and in line with legislation
- o HEI's Leadership/Management body ensures effective management of the activities of the institution
- o Considering the mission and goals of HEI, leadership of the HEI supports international cooperation of the institution and the process of internationalisation.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The senior management comprises the Rector, Academic Council, the Quality Assurance Service and the Head of Administration. In support, there are fifteen structural units, the last one comprising the 5 academic schools. There is no explicit marketing department.

The Academic Council oversees the work of the University led by the Rector who is both the founder and owner. Staff and students are elected to the Council by peers. The functions of each structural unit are described in considerable detail and there is effective co-ordination between them. According to the SER (p. 33) the decisions of management bodies are made 'in a timely and effective manner' and the procedure for workflow complies with acting legislation and benefits from modern management technologies. There is a risk-mitigation plan as part of the business continuity and a registry of educational institutions is maintained by the University. During interviews, it was evident that the structural unit representatives were well informed and directed in their work, and effective coordination was readily evident. The expert panel were satisfied that the operation, decision-making powers and overall efficiency of the structural units were effective in the implementation of the University's activities. They also were satisfied with the soundness of the management structure. However, the expert panel could find little evaluation of performance indicators being engaged in each of the units.

Concerning senior appointments to management bodies, there are defined requirements and candidates are considered for appointment based on their own 'vision and 'plan' (SER, p.33). Procedures for both selection and appointment are described as being transparent and fair, securing the approval of the Academic Council and in compliance with the relevant legislation in Georgia. All appointments are made following the outcome of competition.

The Rector was appointed by the founder and owner (himself) and has been in post since the University's inception. The Rector appoints the head of administration and heads of all departments. The role of the academic board is discussed but a large responsibility seems to rest with the Rector. There is no University Council or Board with external members/ governors, where executive members can be held to account. The expert panel were not clear how the performance of the Rector is appraised or by whom. There is a need for succession planning in the leadership team. Systems of project management should be put in place to support the leadership team in achieving the strategic plans. Quite specifically this means that project management systems should be implemented, since they are important and advantageous towards achieving the aims outlined in the strategic plan. Detailed job descriptions are required for all University personnel. These should have performance indicators aligned to the strategic plan.

Some schools have experienced a very high turnover in Deans, some only in post for weeks. The practice of very senior delegation was not transparent to the expert panel, during their visit, though

a process of managerial cascading could be observed during interviews with a range of academic and non-academic staff.

There is student representation on most committees. Students and staff told the expert panel that they had contributed to the development of the strategic plan. The internationalisation process is described and there is some evaluation and plans for the future. However, it cannot be described as an international university with few staff and students experiencing HE in other countries and no international students. There are plans for a Medical programme taught in English, though how the students would manage with patients speaking Georgian was not explained.

<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <p>SER& documents 2.1.1-10;</p> <p>Meetings with the Rector, Academic Council, Deans, QA team, other staff and students.</p>
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear job descriptions with performance indicators aligned to the strategic plan should be developed for all University personnel; • Systems of project management should be put in place to support the leadership team in achieving the strategic plans; • There should be performance indicators and mechanisms for evaluation in all structural units.
<p>Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a University Council or Board with external members/ governors where executive members can be held to account; • Introduce appraisal of the Rector by an external member; • Consider succession planning.
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements </p>
<p>2. Internal Quality Assurance Mechanisms</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Institution effectively implements internal quality assurance mechanisms. Leadership of the institution constantly works to strengthen quality assurance function and promotes establishment of quality culture in the institution. ○ HEI has a mechanism for planning student body, which will give each student an opportunity to get a high quality education.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

How each of the structural units is administratively involved and their degree of ownership in quality-assurance processes, i.e., how much and what type of quality assurance they directly administer, is not made sufficiently clear. The SER, (p.44) states that they are all involved, but in the main, the focus is on the function of the Quality-Assurance Service itself as the prime mover of all evaluative work across the University. For this task, there are allocated appropriate, human, information and material resources. As part of this overarching process, all structural units are clearly involved. The Quality Assurance Mechanisms document (on-line) outlines the scope of the work of the service, in its submitting the results of anonymous surveys of students, academic and invited personnel to the Academic Council and informing programme supervisors and syllabus authors about the course evaluation results. Included in this process are administrative and support personnel, graduates (alumni) and employers. The service has a wider brief, which includes monitoring educational programmes, course units, the educational process, academic and invited staff, and the University's material-technical base.

The analysis of survey results takes place annually, though there is also continuous monitoring. How continuous monitoring is evaluated is not stated. The Quality-Assurance Service also provides advice on a range of academic matters, such as the National Qualifications Framework Learning Outcomes and programme development. Concerning the latter, recommendations are again submitted to the Academic Council for the improvement of educational courses. More generally across the University, the service elaborates on recommendations concerning any new or corrective measures to be implemented towards improvements across the University. The Quality-Assurance Service is aided in its processes by the Plan, 'Do, Check and Act' methodology. The plan is organised and compartmentalised in a way so as to ensure comprehensive delivery and oversight.

The expert panel were not able to see quality reports at a University or programme level. These reports should be available in both Georgian and English. It was evident to the expert panel that the quality-assurance team were becoming increasingly active in the University, not solely in relation to evaluative work, but in consultations with schools, departments and academic staff. Confidence in this academic support work is beginning to build, though greater capacity is still needed. DAUG currently has about 1400 students, and has expressed in its benchmarking the readiness to be increase this number up to 2400, along with a second campus in prospect. The quality-assurance mechanisms are currently developing, and numbers should not increase until the systems are more robust. Quality assurance needs to become maturely embedded across the University and include a greater emphasis on the curriculum and aspects of staff development. The expert panel has confidence in the University's future in quality assurance. However, the opinion of the expert panel is that current material resources will not be sufficient to withstand expansion while endeavouring to maintain good levels of quality provision. A quality map should be produced outlining the development quality assurance in relation to proposed expansion.

The evaluation survey seems remarkably positive. It is not clear how many staff / students responded, nor the year of the survey. There is, as yet no QA Handbook for staff and students. The Annual quality reports were found to be mainly descriptive and did not follow Plan- Do -Check- Act methodology. The Quality Assurance Service should become a model of evaluative rigor for the entire University to emulate.

<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <p>The QAA web pages https://sdasu.edu.ge/en/quality-assurance-service</p> <p>Quality team, students' academic staff meeting</p> <p>2.2.1 Quality-assurance processes</p> <p>2.2.2 Academic staff, admin staff and student survey.</p>
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A QA handbook should be developed for staff and students; • Outline how each of the structural units has a measure of administrative ownership of quality assurance; • Outline how continuous monitoring is evaluated; • Ensure that all quality reports are made available in Georgian and English; • Produce a quality map in response to proposed expansion; • Quality assurance needs to become maturely embedded across the University and include a greater emphasis on the curriculum and aspects of staff development.
<p>Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course and programme evaluation as well as institutional should be carried out. Changes should be highlighted to staff and students – “You said – We did”.
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements </p>
<p>2.3. Observing Principles of Ethics and Integrity</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HEI has developed regulations and mechanisms that follow principles of ethics and integrity. Such regulations are publicly accessible. ○ Institution has implemented mechanisms for detecting plagiarism and its prevention. ○ HEI follows the principles of academic freedom.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The University regulatory rules and the code of ethics ensure there are policies and procedures that there is governance in an ethical way. There is a Code of Ethics which applies to all University personnel. The code is extensive and covers all matters relating to professional conduct and ethical norms. The promotion and maintenance of academic freedom sits at the heart of the code and there is a range of sanctions for both personnel and students in cases of violation of the code. The penalties for the most serious breaches include termination of contract and termination of studies for students. The procedures are clear and without compromise. It is less clear how the code is promoted and monitored in the lived world of the University. There appears to be no ethical staff-development events, or other external inputs to the University by way of training, updating and in ethical awareness.

There is a new electronic anti-plagiarism system, which is applied mandatorily to all theses at Master and PhD. The technology system is currently staffed by one person, skilled in the operation of the technology. During the on-site visit, two members of the expert panel, who spent some time reviewing the new system, were informed that to date, no serious cases of plagiarism had been found. Students mentioned their awareness of the plagiarism system and had been made aware of the process and conditions of submission. Following submission to the University Chancellery, the school Dean and Centre for Scientific Research and life-long Education conduct an examination of the work for possible plagiarism, and following technological scrutiny, provide an examination report to the author. There is a procedure in place to deal with disagreements concerning any negative findings regarding plagiarism detection. This involves the convening of a commission organised by the respective school. The final decision is taken by the school board/dissertation board based on the conclusion of the commission's expertise.

The HEI follows the principles of academic freedom outlined in the governance document and is supported by the staff survey results. The University's precepts on academic freedom for both personnel and students are governed by a person's right to think, 'critically, innovatively and creatively'. Concerning student rights, the student body, in survey (SER, p.50, undated) greatly valued the mechanism available for the protection such interests. The mechanism involves the student self-government body in which there is a member responsible for ensuring that student rights are upheld and maintained.

A concerning issue the panel found was that much of the research attributed to DAUG by academic staff who are affiliated to other universities as well and their research is attributed to other Georgian Universities. See section 6. This could be described as institutional plagiarism and indicate a lack of institutional ethical behaviour and integrity. Moreover, analysis of publications has shown (where evidence of these was provided to the expert panel) that the majority of these works have not been published in the name of DAUG. Presumably, the authors do work at DAUG too, but conduct their research and publish in the name of other institutions. On the other hand, it should be acknowledged,

that the practice might be more unwitting in the concern to build the best profile possible for the University.

Academic staff should all undergo further training in modern research ethics and plagiarism. A University Ethics Committee with outside membership should be convened to ensure research projects are planned in an ethical manner by approving the research proposals and monitoring publication.

<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <p>2.3.1. The Code of Ethics;</p> <p>2.3.2. The Provision on revealing plagiarism in a scientific work;</p> <p>2.3.3. The Internal Regulations;</p> <p>www.sdasu.edu.ge;</p> <p>SER</p>
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic staff should all undergo further training in modern research, ethics and plagiarism; • A University Ethics Committee should be set up to approve all research proposals.
<p>Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An experienced Director of Research needs to be appointed to take forward the international research agenda and head a research strategy group.
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements </p>

3. Educational Programmes

HEI has procedures for planning, designing, approving, developing and annulling educational programmes. Programme learning outcomes are clearly defined and are in line with the National Qualifications Framework. A programme ensures achievement of its objectives and intended learning outcomes

<p>3.1 Design and Development of Educational Programmes</p>
<p>HEI has a policy for planning, designing, implementing and developing educational programmes.</p>

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The University operates educational programmes for all 3 cycles. There is a methodology which has quite clearly described procedures for the planning, designing and development of educational programmes. As outlined in the SER (pp.60-61) the educational programmes of DAUG are designed by academic and invited personnel of the appropriate school. Besides such colleagues, field specialists, potential employers, students and alumni are involved in the programme design process. Viewpoints are largely obtained from surveys, though interviews may be conducted with the various participants. The methodology clearly involves a multi-actor, participatory approach. An educational programme is reviewed by the School Board and in the case of a positive evaluation, it is submitted to the Quality Assurance Department. But in the case of planning and development of the Medicine Programmes, the University has not taken into consideration the Benchmark Document of 2017, which should be the basis for curriculum construction from January 2019 in Georgia. Moreover, the medical programme currently in place is traditional with preclinical science teaching followed by the clinical years. There is also little early patient contact.

According to the above surveys, most of the stakeholders - employers and alumni - are satisfied with the University's educational programmes. During interview, employers did not express any kind of dissatisfaction with them and had no additional suggestions. This position cannot help the University to develop programmes and ensure their relevance within a constantly changing environment. The alumni membership is characterised by a certain critical attitude, but this critical position is not concerned with problems in educational programmes, but with the minimal involvement of alumni in observing an educational programme development process. Otherwise, during interview, the alumni group greatly valued the work of the University and expressed their pride in being members. Although the expert panel found that there is a multi-actor and participatory approach, this could and should be fuller in terms of critical contribution.

The University has procedures for amending, approving and annulling educational programmes. In cases of amending/annulling programmes, an institution gives due consideration to the legal interests of the students and grants students an opportunity to complete educational programmes smoothly.

Concerning other academic subjects elsewhere in the University's curriculum, for Bachelor programmes, the mission, structure of each programme, learning outcomes, methods of achievement and assessment of students' knowledge as presented, are clear and correct. In the planning, designing and development of academic programmes, the Master and Doctoral programmes display both rigor and consistency. English Philology has also been designed and planned in a way to ensure good coverage, though the library resources, as also mentioned in Standard 7, need bolstering with more seminal texts and greater variety. English literature needs more variation and greater representation.

<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <p>3.1.1. Methodology for planning, designing and development of educational programmes;</p> <p>3.1.2. Analysis of labour market and employer demands;</p> <p>3.1.3. Survey of students, graduates and employers;</p> <p>3.1.4. Alumni tracer study regarding career;</p> <p>3.1.5. Results of monitoring students' academic performance;</p> <p>3.1.6. Procedures on approving, amending and annulling of a programme, including mechanisms of further provision with education in a respective programme, in case of replacing or annulling an educational programme;</p> <p>Self-Evaluation Report;</p> <p>(Site Visit –interview with Heads of Programmes, Deans, Academic and Invited Staff).</p>
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan, design and develop a new educational programme in Medicine to meet the standards of the new Benchmark Document of 2017 which will be introduced in January 2019; • Encourage a more critical attitude and contribution from employers; • Encourage alumni to become involved in programme development; • Review the scope for Literature in English Philology.
<p>Suggestions:</p> <p>Non-binding suggestions for further development</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements </p>
<p>2. Structure and Content of Educational Programmes</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Programme learning outcomes are clearly stated and are in line with higher education level and qualification to be granted <input type="checkbox"/> With the help of individualized education programmes, HEI takes into consideration various requirements, needs and academic readiness of students, and ensures their unhindered involvement into the educational process. </p>

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

While creating a programme, the University follows current legislation and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) guidelines - not less than 240 credits for a Bachelor programme; a single-level medical/dentistry programmes- not less than 360/300 credits; a Master programme- not less than 120 credits and a PhD programme of not less than 180 credits. Learning outcomes of the programme are clearly stated and are in line with the level of higher-education, and qualification to be granted. The programme provides students with opportunities to elect for non-compulsory components of an educational programme.

The programme structure and content in most of the cases ensure the logical connection between all of its components and achievement of learning outcomes. The traditional medical programme currently in place does not demonstrate implementation of many (the individual timetable in particular) of the recommendations outlined in the current benchmark “Raising Quality of Education”, i.e., an integrated curriculum with integrated evaluation. The new national curriculum to be introduced in January 2019 requires there to be an integrated systems-based approach and early patient contact. As yet, the University has no plans for the future development of an integrated curriculum. The expert panel learned this through interview with the heads of medical programmes.

The staff also indicated that there would be a phased introduction of the 2019 curriculum standards over the next few years. Teaching staff, both basic sciences and clinical, need to develop an understanding of modern medical education which will require a sustained staff development programme. There currently appears to be little strategic planning at DAUG for the new curriculum which will require a strong leadership team with innovative ideas and a major focus on change management and staff development.

The small well-established dental programme appears to be of a good standard with an integrated dental facility. The dental students use the same facilities, laboratory and library as the medical students for teaching the basic sciences. The Dental Centre has a phantom head skills laboratory. Students attend the clinic from year two. The clinic is well staffed with academic dentists and delivers high-quality dental care to the surrounding community.

Teaching methods in the programmes delivered by the University ensure the achievement of learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are in line with the National Qualifications Framework of Georgia, which also relates to the European Qualifications Framework. In the medical programme, among the teaching methods, PBL (problem-based learning) and CBL (case-based Learning) are included, but the major method in the first three years are lecture based; during interview with the heads of programmes the expert panel found that they do not plan to use PLB, CLB in the future. There are opportunities to make the new medical curriculum exciting and innovative with perhaps introducing

project work choice and focus on areas of national priority such as mental health and care of the elderly. The University has regulations for planning, implementing and assessing scientific-research component for Master and PhD educational programmes, though there is no research component at Bachelor level.

The University has a catalogue of educational programmes, which serves the purpose of informing interested parties on educational activities of the institution. The catalogue is updated according to any changes in the programmes. It is accessible to all interested individuals and is published on the web-page of the institution. Besides the above-mentioned, interested personnel are informed through the University social network, a school-leavers' guide, text messages, printed informative and advertising materials and by the University television- SDASU TV. DAUG has individualised education programmes and methodology for their development.

If a student wishes an individual plan, he or she approaches the Dean of the school. An individual plan is designed by a programme supervisor on the basis of consultations with the student, personnel involved in the programme, and representatives of the respective services of the University.

<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <p>3:2:4 https://sdasu.edu.ge/ka/chven-shesakheb/saganmanathleblo-programebis-katalogi;</p> <p>Mechanisms of informing: by the social network, a school-leavers' guide, text messages, printed informative and advertising materials (brochures, flyers, etc.);</p> <p>3.2.6. Methodology of designing an individual education plan;</p> <p>3.2.7. Alumni tracer study regarding career (including employment rate with obtained qualification) and academic development;</p> <p>Results of monitoring students' academic performance;</p> <p>3:2:9 A rule of regulating the learning process;</p> <p>3:3:0 Procedures for approval, modification and annulling of the programmes;</p> <p>Self-Evaluation Report;</p> <p>Site Visit (interview with the Head of Programmes, with the Deans, Academic and Invited Staff).</p>
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a new educational programme in Medicine that meets the standards of the new Benchmark Document of 2017 which will be introduced in January 2019; • Incorporate a research component at Bachelor level.
<p>Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Medicine, focus on areas of national priority such as mental health and care of the elderly.
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements </p>
<p>3.3 Assessment of Learning Outcomes</p>
<p>HEI has law-compliant, transparent and fair system of learning outcomes assessment, which promotes the improvement of students' academic performance.</p>

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

DAUG Learning outcomes and the assessment system takes into consideration the specifics of the field, and include adequate assessment formats (exception MD programme – see below), components and methods, which enable various audiences to identify whether students have achieved learning outcomes attributed to the specific educational programme.

Different assessment methods are used for the evaluation of the students from the different programmes - a test, an essay, a demonstration, a presentation, a discussion, presenting audio-visual work, performing practical/theoretical assignment, teamwork, participating in a discussion, solving cases and participating in an imitative process. In the Medical programme, however, new clinical assessments such as the OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical Examination) and Mini Cex (Mini clinical evaluation exercise) need to be introduced as well as an overall assessment strategy. Currently there is no systematic mapping of the assessment of the programme's learning outcomes, and teaching and assessment are not integrated. The OSCE has been widely used for the last twenty years to evaluate the clinical competences of students and residents in many higher-education medical schools around the world. During the OSCE examination, students demonstrate clinical skills with the use of simulators or patient performers (WFME – World Federation Medical Education, WHO – World Health Organisation. The new Benchmark Document of 2017 will be introduced in January 2019 for Georgia). Currently, there is not a clinical skills' facility.

The University has no examination centre for the computer-based assessment of students. This innovation would mean one more step towards a more transparent examination system. During the site visit, students mentioned that they are informed about the goals achieved, gaps in learning and ways towards improvements.

The University has an effective assessment appeal system in place and students are informed about this procedure. After the examinations are over, a student must be notified about the results of the examinations in not more than 3 days, which is entered in an electronic base with a relevant examination register, confidentially accessible by all students.

A student is entitled to make an appeal against the examination results by a set deadline, not later than the second working day of publishing the examination results. He/she can apply to the Dean's office and request re-consideration of the examination results. The appeal is reviewed and the decision is made by an appeal panel, invited and assembled by the Dean.

<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <p>3.3.1.Educational process regulating rule;</p> <p>3.3.2. Students' surveys;</p> <p>university web-site http://ersu.edu.ge/;</p> <p>Self-Evaluation Report;</p> <p>Site Visit – interviews with the deans, with the head of the programmes, students, academic and invited staff, IT department.</p>
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and establish and assessment strategy for Medicine; • In medicine, introduce clinical assessments such as the OSCE and Mini Cex; • Establish and develop an examination centre for the computer-based assessment of students.
<p>Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a clinical skills' facility.
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements </p>

4. Staff of the HEI

HEI ensures that the staff employed in the institution (academic, scientific, invited, administrative, support) are highly qualified, so that they are able to effectively manage educational, scientific and administrative processes and achieve the goals defined by the strategic plan of the institution. On its hand, the institution constantly provides its staff with professional development opportunities and improved work conditions.

<p>4.1. Staff Management</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o HEI has staff management policy and procedures that ensure the implementation of educational process and other activities defined in its strategic plan. o HEI ensures the employment of qualified academic/scientific/invited/administrative/ support staff.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

Over the last few months, intensive work has been done on elaboration of Personnel Management Policy which consists of general principles and rules and is reflected in procedures such as recruitment, evaluation and development. However, all these procedures, as yet, are embryonic as not much outcome is seen in most of the cases.

These rules apply to the procedures related to academic, invited, administrative and support personnel. During the visit it was revealed that some of the key administrative and support personnel (the head of the Scientific Centre, the lawyer, the head of Career Development Centre) have been recently employed, and permanent changes of the staff concerning administrative positions has been observed. The newly-employed staff are indeed qualified; however, they are working with short-term contracts like many other University staff. The logic supporting the diverse duration of these contracts caused the expert panel some doubt about the sustainability of the processes. According to the SER, the retainment rate of University personnel is 96.4%, of the invited personnel, 98% and of the administrative and support personnel, 63%; however when checking contracts after interviews, the authenticity of these indicators did not seem so positive. While checking the contracts, the expert panel found that the administrative staff was changing fast during a short period of time.

In following up the procedures, the expert panel found the agreements between the institution and the staff had been changed. During the visit, it has been revealed that in recent months, contracts signed by the heads of structural units and Deans are much better than they were before. Old contracts did not have a systematised approach: appointment orders and the contracts did not comply in time; administrative and support staff were appointed with very diverse periods, and as mentioned above, the logic of contracting was not very clear. In seeking clarity, the expert panel requested a range of contracts for analysis and checking. In some cases, only Orders of Appointment were presented without copies of the full contracts.

The University establishes affiliation on several indicators: according to the budget, number of contact hours for the programmes, number of students and the salary. HEI has already begun a new process of affiliation. Currently, the number of the affiliated staff comprises less than 30%. DAUG's administration believes that affiliation is still in the initial stage, but is confident it will gradually be able to raise the number of affiliated staff. This was also confirmed by the head of the HR department. Although during the interviews, Deans did not show complete awareness of the methodology for defining the number of affiliated academic staff, they articulated that they would be really pleased if they had more affiliated staff. Also, during the interviews, surprisingly, some staff did not show much awareness of the concept of the affiliation process itself.

The academic staff are actively involved in the teaching process, though their research productivity is very low. It is true, however, that there are instances where staff have published in different journals on behalf of the University, though the number of such cases is modest. According to information from the interviews and the SER, research in the University remains a significant area

for improvement, and it is DAUG's future strategy to develop a policy which will make personnel interested in producing quality publications under the name of DAUG. This is a laudable and much-needed objective.

Academic personnel are involved in decision-making processes: they are members of faculty boards and Academic Council of the University. The University has several ways of assessing personnel administrative and support staff which are being introduced. Samples of completed assessment forms were presented during the interviews. The head of the department assesses the subordinates. However, follow-up activities of the assessment results are not yet visible.

Staff personnel are evaluated by the students' surveys. The number of conducted hours is calculated and analysis of students' academic performance is carried out. During the interviews, it was confirmed that the DAUG has peer-observation practice, and that the head of the department assesses, or observes the staff.

Staff development does not have a systematic approach. However, there are cases where staff were sent for training with the British Council, which illustrates the University's intention to support the development of its staff personnel. Also, the Quality Assurance Office, which in cooperation with the Scientific-Research and Continuing Education Centre, plans to activate the process of staff development. In the process of preparation for authorisation, the Quality-Assurance Office conducted several training programmes for the staff. The training was concerned with issues such as programme design and programme development in general; certainly, as with academic staff more universally, personnel definitely would benefit from training on the teaching methodology, assessment systems, supervising and other academic supportive measures. In order to implement a new medical programme, staff, in both basic sciences and clinical, need to develop an understanding of modern medical education which will require a sustained staff-development programme.

<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel Management Policy; • Interviews; • Contracts; • Survey results; • Rules of affiliation.
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The term of the contract signed by the personnel should be longer, to maintain sustainability; • An assessment system of the personnel, academic as well as invited and administrative and support staff, should be finalised with the follow up results and improvement strategy. For the development of the personnel, a number of ongoing training sessions should be set up; • There should be policy set up to increase the number of affiliated staff, who should be eager to make significant publications under DAUG's name.
<p>Suggestions:</p> <p>Non-binding suggestions for further development</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements </p>
<p>4.2. Academic/Scientific and Invited Staff Workload</p>
<p>Number and workload of academic/scientific and invited staff is adequate to HEI's educational programmes and scientific-research activities, and also other functions assigned to them</p>

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The staff workload for academic or invited staff is quite diverse. It is updated every semester. During the interviews, it was revealed, that personnel can be invited to conduct lectures from 2 to 16 hours a week. Contracts for academic and invited personnel are very similar. Academic and invited personnel are involved in the implementation of programmes and they conduct relevant hours in providing consultations for students. This was illustrated by students during interviews. But they are less involved in research and publishing on behalf of the University.

Programme sustainability is evident and there is now a significant number of academic as well as invited personnel to support the provision. However, the duration of contracts varies and the staff sign the contracts sometimes for one year, and sometimes only for one semester. During the interviews it was revealed that some of the staff were newly appointed, and others had been working for this institution for a number of years.

For the last six months, significant changes have been seen in the documentation and some of the contracts have been updated. Although the appointments made in recent months have both the Rector's order and signed contract, beforehand, either the Rector's order or signed contract was presented.

As previously mentioned, there are not many articles published on behalf of DAUG within the affiliation. Welcomingly, a new affiliation process has begun and the University administration hopes that it see the first new cohort of affiliated personnel. Soon they will have a policy that will bring more affiliated personnel in the future. However, as the agreement does not necessarily imply any special benefits from which the prospective colleague will benefit from affiliation with this institution, some worries exist regarding an increase in the number of affiliated staff.

Evidences/indicators

- Personnel Management Policy;
- Interviews;
- Contracts;
- Survey results;
- Rules of affiliation.

Recommendations:

- The affiliation contract should include more benefits for the affiliated staff;
- Programme coordinators should have allocated number of hours to work for the programme and contribute to its development;
- Academic and invited staff should have different functions that should be reflected in their contracts.

<p>Suggestions:</p> <p>Non-binding suggestions for further development.</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions.</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements </p>

5. Students and Their Support Services

HEI ensures the development of student-centred environment, offers appropriate services, including career support mechanisms; it also ensures maximum awareness of students, implements diverse activities and promotes student involvement in these activities. HEI utilizes student survey results to improve student support services

<p>5.1. The Rule for Obtaining and Changing Student Status, the Recognition of Education, and Student Rights</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For each of the educational levels, HEI has developed regulations for assignment, suspension and termination of student status, mobility, qualification granting, issuing educational documents as well as recognition of education received during the learning period. ○ HEI ensures the protection of student rights and lawful interests.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The University has provided all necessary documentation for the assignment, suspension and termination of student status and mobility. During the on-site interviews, it was also mentioned that HEI provides some individual timetables for the mobility of students. The HEI has an ethical code. During the interviews, students mentioned that they knew about ethical code and that it was accessible for them via the web-page. Students were also aware that the University now possesses mechanisms for the detection of plagiarism; this system was demonstrated to the expert panel. The SER mentioned that information is provided for all that is required for studentship.

At the beginning of the academic year, the Rector of the University and representatives of administration hold information meetings with students. The expert panel were informed that the environment is very user friendly for the student body and any student issues are resolved speedily. This was confirmed by a variety of interviewees, including security and support staff. The University has an official appeals' procedure, which also includes complaints; however, this needs to be developed further and activated, since to date, DAUG informed the expert panel, that other than examination appeals, no official complaints had been received. This quite perfect situation is unusual in higher-education institutions.

In respect of the protection of students' rights, the University benefits from a student self-government body. Although quite newly established, this unit has already conducted activities, including training in first aid and an improved infrastructure for students. Such responsibilities and activities are shared in this department and cover all the necessary issues and interests for students. Departmental representatives spoke with commitment and enthusiasm during on-site interviews.

Contracts between HEI and students, for the protection of students' rights are in place for all academic cycles and students are informed about their obligations and rights.

Evidences/indicators

- SER;
- Methodology of Individual study plan;
- Code of Ethics;
- Document of internal regulation;
- Rule of regulation of study process;
- Contracts between the HEI and students;
- Interview with students;
- Interview with academic and administrative staff.

Recommendations:

<p>Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop and activate the University's appeals'/complaints' procedure.
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements </p>
<p>5.2 Student Support Services</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HEI has student consulting services in order to plan educational process and improve academic performance ○ HEI has career support service, which provides students with appropriate counselling and support regarding employment and career development ○ HEI ensures students awareness and involvement in various university-level, local and international projects and events, and supports student initiatives ○ HEI has mechanisms, including financial mechanisms to support low SES students

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

All Students receive appropriate and proper consultation and support throughout the process of education. The HEI has a learning-process management system where students are able to receive notifications about different activities. They can also discuss with lecturers and are encouraged to monitor their own academic performance. The University has a new Career Development Centre, established during the last three months. The centre has already participated in two job fairs, made contact with employers and alumni; but an increase in its activation is required. Currently, this centre has only one employee and no secretary. Information about employers (partners) is accessible on the web-page.

The Head of Quality informed the expert panel that they conducted one large survey for the authorisation preparation and its purpose. Employers stated their involvement in some processes, but some of them wished to have a stronger relationship with the University.

A major area of improvement for students at the University is internationalisation. The University provided the expert panel with some information regarding students' participation in international conferences, but most of these are held by other universities. The University needs to activate exchange programmes for students and engage in other international activities. There is an office for international relations, but it needs to be greatly activated.

The University also has a Department of Sport and Youth Affairs for which students are grateful that they are given the opportunity to be involved in extra-curricular activities and a variety of University events. Concerning financial support for students, this information is made available to them, but further development of the University policy in terms of the support mechanisms for socially-vulnerable students remains an area for improvement.

Holistically, there is strong support for students, positive relationships and an excellent community spirit which is nurtured by a small university atmosphere.

Evidences/indicators

- SER;
- Alumni and student survey;
- Documents about projects and activities in the university;
- Order #497 about financial support for social vulnerable students;
- Statute of career development and employment Centre;
- Interview with students.

Recommendations:

- Activate international activities, exchange programmes, international projects;
- Help the Career Development Centre to advance.

<p>Suggestions:</p> <p>Non-binding suggestions for further development.</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements

6. Research, development and/or other creative work

Higher Education Institution, considering its type and specifics of field(s), works on the strengthening of its research function, ensures proper conditions to support research activities and improve the quality of research activities

<p>6.1 Research Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o HEI, based on its type and specifics of its fields, carries out research/creative activities. o Ensuring the effectiveness of doctoral research supervision o HEI has public, transparent and fair procedures for the assessment and defense of dissertations which are relevant to the specifics of the field
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Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

Research is mentioned in the University's mission, vision, goals, values and principles as an important part of DAUG activities, but the SER lacks specific information on research projects conducted thus far and emphasises focus on future plans. Moreover, when asked why research was neglected throughout 27 years of the institution's history, the answer provided by the Scientific Research and Lifelong Education Centre was, that besides the complicated financial situation in Georgia - not allowing funding of these activities - research was not explicitly required by previous authorisation standards. University staff (deans, heads of programmes) had problems in understanding the notion of, and answering questions on research profile. The Dean of School of Humanities mentioned student conferences. When asked about research priorities, the Dean of the School of Business and Social Sciences mentioned the development of critical thinking skills and integration of research into the teaching process. At the same time, while defining priority areas of research are stated to be strategic goals of the University, it is not clear how this process will be conducted.

The University did provide a list of research activities conducted in 2012-2017, which features among others: developed textbooks, conference abstracts, participation in doctoral councils and also publications. But random analysis of these publications (where working links of papers were provided) has shown that very few of these works have been published in the name of DAUG. There is obviously no concept of ownership of scientific research outcomes at the University, which was also demonstrated during interviews. Apparently, authors do have contracts with DAUG, but they conduct their research and publish in the name of other institutions, which actually provide financial and other resources for this purpose: I.Bergvala, S. Sengstakea, N. Brankovab, V. Levterovab, E. Abadiac,d, N. Tadumadze,N. Bablishvili et al. PLoSOne, August, V7, Iss.8, 43240, 1-16, 2012. Combined species identification, genotyping, and drug-resistance detection of Mycobacterium tuberculosis cultures by MLPA on a bead-based array (National Centre for Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases, 2012) <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0043240>; Ivanishvili R., Taboridze I. THE EFFECT OF THE DIRECT COMPOSITE VENEERS RESTORATIONS ON THE MICROBIAL STATUS OF ORAL CAVITY European Scientific Journal July 2013 /SPECIAL/ edition <http://eujournal.org/index.php/esj/article/view/1617/1620> (Grigol Robakidze University, Tbilisi, 2013).

All internal documents, regulating research activities, were adopted in December 2017 but it is not clear, how these activities have been regulated prior to this, and what has been changed currently. All research-related activities of the University have either just commenced (such as the call for internal funding of research projects), or are planned for the future (such as collaboration with economic agents, internationalisation and the establishment of research units). The expert panel was unable to evaluate any outcomes of these activities. Generally, part of the SER dedicated to research, is written in terms of future activities.

A specific structural unit – Scientific Research and Lifelong Education Centre – has been established at the University since April 2018; currently, this centre employs only one person and it is not clear how this one staff member will be able to fulfil all the functions listed for this unit, in the main these being: elaboration of a plan for scientific research activities, organisation of research activities, reviewing research work, analysing reports and grant administration. The establishment of an independent research unit (institute, department, centre.) is also planned according to the SER, but it is not clear in which field. The SER mentions a collegial unit, a Scientific Research Development Council, which will be in charge of selecting research projects for funding. This is chaired by the Rector, but no council meetings have been conducted thus far, the first meeting being scheduled by the end of the internal grant competition in August 2018; therefore no documents (decisions, protocols) are available yet for analysis.

At the same time, the University has two currently accredited doctoral programmes (in Medicine and Economics) and 25 doctoral students. 8 doctoral theses have been accomplished between 2011-2018. The admission regulations for the doctoral programme, requirements for the doctoral thesis, functions and responsibilities of doctoral supervisors, prerequisites for dissertation defence and other aspects of doctoral studies are regulated by separate “Charters of graduate studies and the dissertation council” adopted for the School of Medicine and Dentistry and School of Economics and Business in December 2017.

Results of Students’ Survey on Efficiency of Supervision of Doctoral Theses were very positive. Doctoral students are satisfied with existing conditions as confirmed during interviews. The University provides doctoral students with adequate legal framework for obtaining a doctoral degree and ensures provision of the teaching component – students mentioned teaching practice and courses in teaching methods as important for their future careers. Doctoral students have almost daily contact with their supervisors, since – especially at the medical school – they do research at clinics together with their supervisors. Students have no facilities at the University, such as a desk or computer. Research is undertaken outside the University at premises of affiliated clinics and other institutions and they visit the University only for teaching classes; however, doctoral students have full access to the University library, including electronic resources.

Doctoral research is mostly funded from students’ tuition fees; additional costs, for example travel costs for sampling outside Tbilisi, are also covered by the doctoral students. In some cases DAUG is funding participation in local/international conferences and publication of papers. Surprisingly, doctoral supervisors mentioned that they cannot afford expensive international publications – obviously there is no clear system of financial provision for publications. Funds are provided according to individual cases. Doctoral supervisors have not been trained for their positions and in fact deny the necessity of such training. Supervision of doctoral students may be provided by DAUG professors, or invited academic staff.

Currently, DAUG has no research scientific staff and no postdoctoral students. Contracts of academic staff (including affiliated staff) do not specify research obligations and workload.

<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SER; • 6.1.1. Regulation for Assessing and Defending PhD Theses; • 6.1.2. Charters of graduate studies and dissertation councils of Schools; • 6.1.3. Report on scientific activities of academic personnel and scholars; • 6.1.4. The strategy for development of DAUG as an institution of applied research; • 6.1.7. A list of PhD theses defended during the last 5 years; • 6.1.8. Annotations of PhD theses defended during the last 2 years; • The Conception of Scientific-Research Centre of DAUG https://sdasu.edu.ge/en/research/project; • DAUG academic staff contract examples; • The Student Survey results on the effectiveness of supervision during PhD researches and the report on utilization of the results; • Interviews with DAUG staff and doctoral students.
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse existing research capacities (staff, infrastructure, financial resources) in order to specify University strategy on research development; • Develop the research profile of University schools based on available resources; • Develop capacities of Scientific Research and Lifelong Education Centre; • Ensure implementation of planned research strategy; • Connect doctoral programmes with the University's research profile; • Develop supporting mechanisms for doctoral programmes implementation, such as training for supervisors.
<p>Suggestions:</p> <p>Non-binding suggestions for further development</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements </p>
<p>6.2. Research Support and Internationalisation</p>
<p> <input type="checkbox"/> HEI has an effective system in place for supporting research, development and creative activities <input type="checkbox"/> Attracting new staff and their involvement in research/arts-creative activities. <input type="checkbox"/> University works on internationalisation of research, development and creative activities. </p>

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The SER states that “Implementation of research projects demands much better financial support on the part of the University which is reflected in its budget for 2018” (p.103). DAUG has developed a system of intra-university funding. The rules of project funding have been adopted in December 2017. The call for proposals opened in May 2017 with the deadline on 10.08.2018 and projects will be selected by 15th of November; so at the moment of this authorisation visit, it was not clear how many projects would be financially supported by this new system.

According to the University budget for 2018, 75 000 GEL have been allocated for intra-university research grants, whereas the total research funding makes 120 000 GEL. The duration of projects submitted for intra-university grants may vary between 12 and 24 months, and the annual budget is between 10 000 and 12 000 GEL according to the discipline. The budget for research projects has been calculated based on data and prognosis provided by the schools (Deans) and could be adjusted in the future.

Except for the funding possibilities through the internal grant system, the University is not offering any other supporting services to its staff: training in project writing will be provided by the Scientific Research and Lifelong Education Centre in the future, as was stated during on-site interviews.

Nothing specifically is mentioned in SER on the University strategy to attract and involve new staff in research activities, although there is a specific “Strategy for Attracting and Involvement of Young Staff in Research Activities” – adopted in December 2017 along with all other regulatory documents (provided during interviews). The system of internal grants is considered to be a main tool to support the integration of young persons in research activities and focuses on doctoral and master students. Four types of projects are supposed to be funded by DAUG, although the University budget doesn’t reflect this intention:

- 1) Support to young scientists (doctoral students and postdocs) by funding innovative individual research projects with duration up to 6 months (2019-2023);
- 2) Support to doctoral students by funding innovative research projects with duration of 1 or 2 semesters and focusing on collaboration with international partners (2018-2023);
- 3) International mobility of young staff for 2-4 months (2018-2023);
- 4) Support of research at Master Level (2019-2023).

There has been no call for the above-mentioned projects as yet, and as already mentioned, financial resources supporting these grant projects are not clearly indicated in the University’s budget. It is also not clear, how doctoral students will find international collaborators for joint innovative research projects.

All these planned activities provide supporting mechanisms for research of doctoral and master students, although it is not clear, if DAUG considers these students as its “own resource” and has any other mechanisms to encourage their further affiliation with the University. At the same time, the

provided staff numbers could be perceived as alarming: from 217 persons involved in academic activities (133 academic and 84 invited personnel) only 37 are affiliated with DAUG (the number of affiliated staff has been increased by 2, following submission of the SER). This means that the University can claim ownership of the research activities of only these 37 colleagues. The age profile of affiliated staff is not provided separately, but generally only 16% of academic staff are under 40 years old, whereas 40% are older than 60. Thus, the University urgently needs to develop a strategy of staff recruitment in order to ensure sufficient human resources for research activities, and in the longer-term perspective, to ensure the competitiveness of the University at national level at least. Information on the internationalisation of research activities in SER limits itself to the list of international partner institutions (8 organizations from 5 European countries) with whom the University has memoranda, but specifics of projects (topics, duration and level of involvement,) are not clear. The University lacks a clear strategy on the internationalisation of research. The International Relations Department could not provide any specific information as to the existing situation and future plans. The Scientific Research and Lifelong Education Centre could not present information on existing memoranda. These seem to be formal without any tangible results in the field of research collaboration.

It is not clear how future international partners will be selected and what will be topics of international projects. The potential for internationalisation of research and study programmes has not yet been explored; and since some Deans understand internationalisation as increasing teaching hours for foreign languages, this matter might be difficult to define.

<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Evaluation Report; • 6.2.2. The University budget; • 6.2.3 Regulation on funding of scientific research through internal grants; • Strategy for Attracting and Involvement of Young Staff in Research Activities; • https://sdasu.edu.ge/ka/siakhleebi/article/51813-konkursi-samecniero-kvlevebis-shida-grantith-dafinansebisthvis; • Interviews with DAUG staff.
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure implementation of intra-university funding system; • Specify supporting funding (grant amount in the budget) for young researchers; (doctoral and master students) and ensure its implementation; • Provide additional support for the University's academic staff to enhance their participation in local and international scientific programmes (training in project writing; partner search); • Ensure recruitment of affiliated staff in order to enhance competitiveness of the University especially in the field of research; • Revise existing memoranda with international partners; • Analyse the internationalisation potential of research and study programmes at the University in order to define fields of collaboration; • Intensify the search for potential international partners in selected fields; • Ensure availability of financial resources for sustainable international collaboration.
<p>Suggestions:</p> <p>Non-binding suggestions for further development</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements </p>
<p>6.3. Evaluation of Research Activities</p>
<p>HEI has a system for evaluating and analysing the quality of research/creative-arts activities, and the productivity of scientific-research units and academic/scientific staff.</p>

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

Two, mostly overlapping, documents are the defining criteria and procedures for evaluation of University staff: “The rule of assessment of academic, scientific and invited staff” and “Minimal standard and assessment rule for scientific-research activities of scientific personnel of DAUG”. The assessment of research projects is determined by the “Regulation on funding of scientific research through internal grants”, and in case of doctoral research, by the respective “Regulations for Assessing and Defending PhD Theses”.

All these documents were developed and approved in December 2017 and so far, they have been used for the evaluation of neither staff nor research projects (except doctoral projects). Results of previous staff and project evaluations are not available. (University research projects themselves are unavailable as yet.) Therefore, it is not clear if anything has been considered for the planning and development of research activities. It is also not clear, how the University would use analysis of these activities (when available).

The SER is not providing any further information on evaluation of research activities, other than copying from the above mentioned documents.

Evidences/indicators

- Self-Evaluation Report;
- 6.1.5. Minimal standard and assessment rule for scientific-research activities of scientific personnel of DAUG;
- The Student Survey results on the effectiveness of supervision during PhD researches and the report on utilization of the results;
- 6.3.1. The rule of assessment of scientific-research activities of scientific personnel;
- 6.3.2. Students’ survey results on their involvement in research activities and on supporting respective initiatives;
- Interviews with DAUG staff and doctoral students.

Recommendations:

- Start implementing a staff evaluation system;
- Start implementing a project evaluation system;
- Change/adjust evaluation criteria and processes where required;
- Publish evaluation results;
- Discuss internally and consider evaluation results for future development of the University.

Suggestions:

Non-binding suggestions for further development

Best Practices (if applicable):

Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions

Evaluation

Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard

- ☐ Complies with requirements
- ☐ Substantially complies with requirements
- ☐ Partially complies with requirements
- ☒ Does not comply with requirements

7. Material, Information and Financial Resources

Material, information and financial resources of HEI ensure sustainable, stable, effective and efficient functioning of the institution, and the achievement of goals defined through strategic development plan.

7.1 Material Resources

- ☐ The institution possesses or owns material resources (fixed and current assets) that are used for achieving goals stated in the mission statement, adequately responds to the requirements of educational programmes and research activities, and corresponds to the existing number of students and planned enrolment.
- ☐ HEI offers environment necessary for implementing educational activities: sanitary units, natural light possibilities, and central heating system.
- ☐ Health and safety of students and staff is protected within the institution.
- ☐ HEI has adapted environment for people with special needs

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The University's material resources, both fixed and liquid, which follow the documentation from the Public Registry, are possessions of DAUG HEI. The total area of institution is 6630 sq. meters and educational space is 6245 sq. meters.

The University possesses the following assemblies: foyer, recreation spaces, classrooms, administrative offices, spaces for group work, sanitary and hygienic units, library, specific laboratories, a room for clinical anatomy, linguaphone, a hall for simulated court sessions, a forensic science laboratory, a multidisciplinary centre for virtual laboratories, SDASU TV (which is equipped with modern equipment and corresponds of needs for educational process), a press club and field-specific teaching/research laboratories and a fast-food facility. The sport hall is equipped with an exercise machine, a mini football net, a basketball set, volleyballs nets and balls, a rope, a tennis table, basketball hoops and balls, soccer balls and tennis sets.

For dentistry and medical programmes, the University has two contracts for renting educational spaces for students. Contracts were agreed and are valid until 2025. During the site visit, the expert panel visited both educational bases, the affiliated hospital (Vivomedical) which is a modern hospital, with sufficient spaces for students hospital activities, and DAUG 's Georgian-English Dentistry Clinic, which is equipped with the relevant equipment: dental chairs, dental roentgenograph, digital X-ray unit, autoclave, oral camera, ultrasound machines, Glasperlen sterilizer, laser machine, airflow system, dosimeter, dental tooth dryer, dental visiograph, water heater, endomotor with apex locator, vector without a scaler, and scalers.

The University's material resources are relevant for educational programmes and for their implementation, an exception is the MD programme, which is in need more modern educational spaces, to include: a skills centre, OSC E stations and research laboratories. The University has uninterruptible power supply and also water supply. Classrooms have natural and artificial light and the building has a heating system. There are a fire prevention, safety systems, security guards and video-surveillance systems. A doctor's room with first aid equipment is in place.

The University has to improve its facilities for persons with special needs, such as more ramps and an elevator. During the on-site interviews, it was made known that DAUG has entered into agreement for the installation of an elevator and the design for this project is ongoing. Currently, the University has only one student with special needs and all spaces for education are currently accessible. The University building has an adjacent yard and a parking lot with a specific section for persons with special needs.

The clinical placement in Internal Medicine and Oncology the expert panel visited was of high quality with a good patient mix, good clinical supervision and good study space for students. The

small well-established dental programme appears to be of a good standard with an integrated dental facility near the University Campus. The dental students use the same facilities, laboratories and library for teaching the basic sciences as the medical students. The Dental Centre has a phantom-head skills laboratory.

<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <p>1.2.1. A seven-year plan of strategic development;</p> <p>7.1.1. documentation certifying the possession of immovable property, excerpts from Public Registry;</p> <p>7.1.2. Documentation certifying the possession of movable property (including the documents certifying the possession of fire fighting and medical inventory, safety cameras);</p> <p>7.1.3. Agreements signed with scientific-research institutions and facilities offering onsite practice.</p> <p>7.1.4. Student and Personnel Survey Results in terms of Material Resources;</p> <p>7.1.5. Document certifying orderly operation of heating and ventilation systems, and functioning time-frames;</p> <p>7.1.6. Documentation certifying the compliance with the sanitary norms;</p> <p>7.1.7. Fire prevention and safety, First Aid, and Order mechanisms;</p> <p>7.1.8. Conclusion on safety of facilities issued by LEPL Levan Samkharauli National Forensics Bureau;</p> <p>7.1.9. Conclusion on fire safety issued by the Fire Protection Division of the Emergency Management Service under the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia;</p> <p>7.1.10. The Statute of Security Service Department at DAUG;</p> <p>7.1.11. Agreement on object protection;</p> <p>SER;</p> <p>Interview Results;</p> <p>Requested documents: The lease Agreements (2);</p> <p>Survey Results.</p>
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Medical programme and its implementation needs more material resources, educational/scientific-research laboratories, OSCE stations and clinical skills laboratories.
<p>Suggestions:</p> <p>Non-binding suggestions for further development</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements </p>
<p>7.2. Library Resources</p>
<p>Library environment, resources and service support effective implementation of educational and research activities, and HEI constantly works for its improvement.</p>

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The library has the responsibility to provide the necessary material resources and information for study and research for students, academic staff and residents.

During the site visit the expert panel visited the University campus library (but not the affiliated hospitals, dentistry clinic's libraries). The University campus library has several spaces: archives, reading hall, meeting and group workplace. The computer room is equipped with 9 computers, connected to the internet, a printer, scanner and copy machine, readily available. The library is equipped with wifi which ensures free internet connection operative via different devices. The library is open to visitors 6 days per week (60 hours per week).

The complete campus library contains more than 22000 units of books. Signed books in syllabi mostly are available in library reserve. Not all copies of books are available in electronic format and IT, though the Library staff are working to improve the digitalisation process of present library materials. Students and staff have access to international library databases which are listed in the SER. There is an electronic catalogue. The University also works towards improvement and renewal of the library and its resources, which is defined in the SER strategic development plan. Distance access to the main library data for students and academic staff is also available.

During the site visit of the library, it was not clearly explained and also seen, precisely how the spaces are distributed, the sufficiency of reading places in the hall and computer areas for the actual numbers of staff and students across all three cycles. The library has two employees, who, in the evidenced judgment of the expert panel, are in need of more training for their responsibilities.

Evidences/indicators

1.2.1. A seven-year plan of strategic development;

1.2.2. Action Plan and three year Action Plan Monitoring Mechanisms;

7.1.1. Documentation verifying the ownership of book collections;

7.2.2 Mechanisms for the development and renewal of library resources and services;

7.2.3. Regulation for the use of the library;

7.2.4. Library Charter;

7.2.5. Documents certifying involvement in international electronic library network;

7.2.6. Results of students' surveys on environment, resources and service in the library;

7.2.7. Dynamics of funding allocated for provision and development of library resources during the last 5 years;

SER of DAUG;

Interview results;

Survey Result;

Requested document “Prognostic indicators of Budget for 2018-2020 years”.

Recommendations:

- Increase the library budget to facilitate learning, teaching and researches. Increase the qualification of library staff. Improve the library’s environment;
- Increase the provision in seminal texts and variety (language and literature) for English Philology.

Suggestions:

Non-binding suggestions for further development

Best Practices (if applicable):

Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions

Evaluation

Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI’s compliance with this specific component of the standard

- ☐ Complies with requirements
- ☒ Substantially complies with requirements
- ☐ Partially complies with requirements
- ☐ Does not comply with requirements

7.3 Information Resources

- ☐ HEI has created infrastructure for information technologies and its administration and accessibility are ensured
- ☐ Electronic services and electronic management systems are implemented and mechanisms for their constant improvement are in place
- ☐ HEI ensures business continuity
- ☐ HEI has a functional web-page in Georgian and English languages.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

IT resources and infrastructure, and its administration and accessibility, are in compliance with the needs of the University.

From the SER of the University, and during interview, the expert panel found that DAUG is the owner of the SDASU TV, which it broadcasts in the territory of Georgia and which is also available through internet resources. DAUG also has the SDASU RADIO. Specific equipment includes 132 computers, 6 laptops, 23 projectors, 28 printers, 2 copiers, 2 scanners, 7 professional cameras, and audio video systems for SDASU TV. The University has 2 microtic routers, which ensures the uninterruptible, continuous operation systems of the HEI. There is a safety system, such as automatic uploading of the files on the Google drive to ensure they are neither damaged nor lost. Two servers cover each other for the safety of files, which is approved in large organisations and universities. The University is equipped with wireless internet (Unifi) receivers which provide for steady operation and continuity across the wireless network.

The University has a new anti-plagiarism software mechanism, and has introduced an electronic services and electronic management system, The web page of the University is bilingual, Georgian and English, and information is regularly updated.

Evidences/indicators

7.3.1. IT management Policy;

7.3.2. Contract with Internet Provider;

7.3.3. Document certifying the domain and hosting possession;

7.3.4. Business continuity;

SER;

Interview Results;

Site visits.

Evaluation

Please mark the checkbox which mostly describes your position related to the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard

- ☒ Fully complies with requirements
- ☐ Substantially complies with requirements
- ☐ Partially complies with requirements
- ☐ Does not comply with requirements

Recommendations:

Recommendation/or proposal, which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standards

Suggestions:

Non-binding suggestions for further development

Best Practices (if applicable):

Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions

7.4 Financial Resources

- ☐ Allocation of financial resources described in the budget of HEI is economically achievable
- ☐ Financial standing of HEI ensures performance of activities described in strategic and mid-term action plans
- ☐ HEI financial resources are focused on effective implementation of core activities of the institution
- ☐ HEI budget provides funding for scientific research and library functioning and development
- ☐ HEI has an effective system of accountability, financial management and control

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The main points which are described in the strategic development and action plans of the University are achievable by the allocation of finances as shown in the budget and for 2018-2020, the prognostic indicators. The increased budget of the University was understood both by the analysis of budget and through interview results. Income is mostly based on the tuition fees of students, which may be assessed as a guarantee of sustainability of the financial resources of the University, taking into account the fact that some surplus has been built up over its 27-year history, so the expert panel were informed during on-site interviews. Strong student recruitment provides the main source of finance. For the future, the University plans to start an English language programme in medicine, which will need more funding for staff selection and hiring, equipment and re-modelling of educational aspects of the School of Medicine.

Concerning internal processes, the separation of the University's budget between schools and programmes, both in terms of decision-making and strategy could be much more transparent. The University's system of accountability is adequate. DAUG has conducted a financial audit, a summary of which is included in the annexes.

<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <p>1.2.1. A seven-year plan of strategic development;</p> <p>1.2.2 Action Plan and three year Action Plan Monitoring Mechanisms;</p> <p>7.4.1. Information about financing sources;</p> <p>7.4.2. DAUG budget;</p> <p>7.4.3. Dynamics of the last 5 years of financing;</p> <p>7.4.4. Financial reports of pre-reporting period (2016-2017);</p> <p>7.4.5. Regulation and format for the distribution of responsibilities, delegation, and accountability;</p> <p>7.4.6. Document implementing financial management and control system;</p> <p>SER;</p> <p>Interview results;</p> <p>Requested documents: Prognostic indicators for 2018-2020 y. of DAUG, 2018-2020 y. prognostic indicators of budget of DAUG</p> <p>Site visits.</p>
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe more clearly where the estimated increase in the budget will come from and how this will be achieved and secured; • Allocate and separate internal funds with different programmes, based on transparency and strategic development of the University; • Increase the financial resources which will ensure the scientific/research activities and internationalisation of the University.
<p>Suggestions:</p> <p>Non-binding suggestions for further development</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements </p>