



განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი  
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

**Final report on Tbilisi Teaching University  
Authorization**

**Expert Panel Members**

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## **General information on the educational institution**

Tbilisi Teaching University is a private university which was established in 1995 in the city of Tbilisi and on the website, it states that it has a *mission to create a relevant environment for receiving modern, western type education in Georgia*. Its goals are:

- *In accordance with the modern demands in the learning and scientific area, preparation of specialists having academic education and high professional competence – agricultural, engineering, business administration, law, humanitarian and social studies through cooperation with the higher education institutions, scientific-research institutions, non-governmental organizations, employers and considering the competitive environment in the labour market.*
- *To support attraction and integration of non-Georgian speaking students into the Georgian educational area. Students will be given opportunity to graduate teachers' training educational program through the bachelor programs*

It offers 17 higher education programmes including 10 Bachelors, 5 Masters, 1 Teacher Training and 1 Georgian language programme. The total student capacity is 1,300. 993 students are registered of which 590 are active and 403 suspended. The University employs 57 academic staff, of which 27 are affiliated to the University and 45 administrative and support staff.

The University website ([www.tu.edu.ge](http://www.tu.edu.ge)) states that there are 6 schools, namely Law, Business, Tourism, Humanities, Social Sciences and Agro Engineering. Programmes include Bachelors programmes in Law, Business Administration, Tourism, English Philology, and Agro Engineering. Masters programmes include Business Administration, Tourism, Finance and Law.

In 2015 the University established a Centre at Signaghi in the Kakheti Region of Eastern Georgia which currently has 159 Azerbaijan and 44 Georgian students.

## **Brief overview of the authorization site visit**

The authorization activities were organized by the National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement in Georgia who also appointed the Panel Members. The University compiled a Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and associated evidence for scrutiny by the panel in advance of the visit to the University. The authorization visit took place from 19 – 22 June 2018 which included three days in Tbilisi and a day visit to the centre at Signaghi. During the visit the panel conducted over 30 meetings with staff and students of the University plus alumni and other stakeholders. They also participated in a tour of University facilities both at the main site in Tbilisi and the Centre at Signaghi.

## **Overview of the HEI's compliance with standards**

The team judged the University against the seven authorization standards for higher education and found that it does not comply in five standards and only partially complies in the other two.

It does not comply in standard 1: Mission and the strategic development of the HEI and there are 4 recommendations in this standard including identifying a clear mission and strategic plan which is relevant, achievable, shared by all staff and supported by a suitable budget.

The University only partially complies in standard 2: Organisational Structure and Management of the HEI. There are 10 recommendations in this area including staff appointment and appraisal, student planning, benchmarking, staff resources, electronic processing, quality assurance, plagiarism and ethics.

It does not comply in standard 3: Educational Programmes. There are 17 recommendations in this area including programme development, programme catalogues, admission requirements, relevant learning outcomes, teaching, learning and assessment, student data and quality assurance.

The University does not comply in standard 4: Staff of the HEI. There are 5 recommendations in this area including the policy on human resources, job descriptions, staff evaluation, the ration of affiliated to invited staff and satisfaction and workload planning.

It only partially complies in Standard 5: Students and their support services. There are 10 recommendations in this area including student self-governance and consultation, involving students in decision making, student needs, careers services, equality across both campuses, Georgian language competence and internationalisation.

The University does not comply in standard 6: Research, development or other creative work. There are 12 recommendations and 1 suggestion in this area including strategic planning, budget allocation, internationalisation, staff support, resources, the academic journal, masters theses, external peer review, events and conferences and research output evaluation.

The University does not comply in Standard 7: Material, information and financial resources. There are 21 recommendation and 1 suggestion in this area including infrastructure and environment, health and security, facilities for people with special needs, laboratory, library, computer and other IT resources, equity across both campuses and financial planning and control.

### **Summary of Recommendations**

1. Identify a mission which is specific to the needs of the University and its community and is shared by all staff (1.1).
2. Define the role of the University both locally and internationally (1.1).
3. Review the strategic and action plans so they are SMART and related to identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (1.2).
4. Provide the necessary budget to support the strategic and action plans and ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities (1.2).
5. Review the election/appointment system of management bodies and staff (2.1).
6. Communicate job description content, in specific functions to the staff members (2.1).
7. Functions and responsibilities of structural units of the institution must be clearly defined and divided (2.1).
8. Develop a human resource appraisal system (2.1).
9. Develop and set in motion electronic document processing system (2.1).
10. Design a quality assurance system that is tailored to the needs of the University involving all relevant stakeholders (2.2).
11. Ensure that the results/reports produced by the QA processes are used by all stakeholders for continuous improvement and for making informed decisions (2.2).
12. Develop clear and consistent student body planning methodology together with the administration and program heads (2.2).
13. Develop consistent and reliable benchmarking methodology pertaining to its student body planning (2.2)
14. Make sure the university has adequate academic/teaching staff resources adequate for its student cap (2.2).
15. Develop effective policies and procedures for plagiarism prevention and detection (2.3).
16. Raise awareness in the academic community about the University policies and procedures regarding the code of ethics and plagiarism (2.3).
17. Review the policies and procedures for programme development, introduction of changes and programme closure and ensure all stakeholders are aware of them (3.1).
18. Make sure that program design, development and improvement is a participatory process that helps the University align its programs with the needs of its stakeholders (i.e. industry, students, graduates, professional associations, partners) (3.1).
19. Ensure that the regulations clearly demonstrate how internal QA process contribute to programme development, introduction of changes and closure (3.1).
20. Ensure that the programme development regulations consider student interests and needs (3.1).
21. Processes and procedures for developing individual study plans should be effectively practiced by University administrators (3.1).
22. Ensure that students are admitted to programs in compliance with relevant program admission requirements (3.2).
23. Review the structure and content of programmes and develop learning outcomes to meet the needs of students and the requirements of industry (3.2).
24. Develop an effective QA mechanism that will allow all relevant stakeholders in the development of learning outcomes (3.2).
25. Provide programme heads, academic faculty members and invited teachers with support that will help them design programme and course outcomes, design appropriate teaching, learning and assessment methods (3.2).
26. Ensure that teaching and learning develops students' knowledge and skills appropriate to the programme outcomes and appropriate resources are provided (3.2).

27. Ensure that there are effective mechanisms to determine the suitability of student workload and its distribution within and between the courses (3.2).
28. Ensure that the University collects data that accurately describe program completion rates. The University should also make sure that it designs mechanisms that make use of these data to improve their academic programs and student services (3.2).
29. Ensure that there is a systematic approach to the identification of students' need based on their academic achievement (3.2).
30. Consistent and updated program catalogues containing essential program details should be published on the University website and made accessible to stakeholders (students, industry representatives, partners and professional organizations) (3.2).
31. Develop assessment systems that are tailored according to the specific needs of each academic programme and course (3.3).
32. Provide clear assessment criteria that will directly measure learning outcomes and provide students with constructive feedback on their performance (3.3).
33. Provide programme heads, academic faculty members and invited teachers with adequate support that will help them design assessment system in line with their programme and course learning outcomes (3.3).
34. Develop a Human Resource Management policy specific to the University (including staff attraction, selection, hiring and professional development mechanisms) and ensure all staff are aware of its contents and their role in it (4.1).
35. Develop transparent job descriptions with specific detailed qualification requirements for each position (4.1).
36. Use staffs' evaluation and satisfaction survey results in the management processes (4.1).
37. Develop a detailed transparent methodology and plan for the workloads of academic and invited staff which avoids timetable clashes and enable other activities to be carried out effectively (4.2).
38. To Increase number of affiliated academic staff and make adequate ratio between academic and invited staff (4.2).
39. Develop a process to protect the rights of international students (5.1).
40. Ensure student self governance is independent though giving it right to be elected by student body (5.1).
41. Ensure international students Georgian language competence if they are enrolled on Georgian programs (5.1),
42. Ensure effective involvement of the student body in the decision making process of the institution from both campuses (5.1).
43. Deliver proper student consultations on electing compulsory and optional courses (5.2).
44. Develop a systematic approach to involving students in the decision-making processes (5.2).
45. Review Students services to include processes for the valid needs analysis of students (5.2).
46. Develop a systematic approach and mechanisms for delivering career services (5.2).
47. Develop a systematic process for internationalization of the student body (5.2).
48. Develop a process where students have equal access to Student Services across both Tbilisi and Signaghi campuses (5.2).
49. Ensure the process for the external peer review of the academic journal follows a systematic and effective process (6.1).
50. Ensure that the international board of the academic journal is permanently and not only fragmentally involved in the editorial process (6.1).
51. Revise the regulations on Masters' thesis defense and make sure it is properly enacted during the defense process (6.1)
52. Review the research budget and to allocate internal grants to support research activities (6.2).
53. Provide support to the academic personnel for applying for external donors (6.2)
54. Create facilities/laboratories for those disciplines that require such premises (namely agricultural engineering and food safety) (6.2).
55. Establish criteria for allocation of research funds (6.2).
56. Make the academic networking events and conferences more systematic and frequent (6.2).
57. Create clear strategy for internationalization of research and respective action plan (6.2).

58. Define clearer criteria for academic performance, including the requirement to publish in internationally recognized journals (6.3).
59. Consider Including research performance in the remuneration policy of the academic staff (6.3).
60. Collect and analyse the data of the scientific performance of the academic staff for future forecasting and planning (6.3).
61. Ensure that the University environment is adapted for people with special needs (7.1).
62. Fully equip the buildings with security cameras (7.1).
63. Ensure there are sufficient number of computers for the needs of the University (7.1).
64. Ensure that the University provides sanitary-hygienic conditions for all staff and students (7.1).
65. Ensure that University buildings are sufficiently ventilated (7.1).
66. Establish scientific/research laboratories appropriate for the needs of the University (7.1).
67. Provide an appropriate medical cabinet for the needs of the University (7.1).
68. Provide a library with sufficient up-to-dated library resources (books, access to electronic journals, facilities) (7.2).
69. Ensure that the Library staff are able to use information provided by the quality assurance system for future improvements (7.2).
70. Ensure that Library staff are suitably trained to use electronic resources (7.2).
71. Library staff should do statistical surveys how the resources are used to set improvements (7.2).
72. Students should have isolated working group space and free access to the facilities (7.2).
73. Library should provide supportive and informative services for students (7.2).
74. Provide a sufficient number of computers for the number of students enrolled (7.3).
75. Upgrade the IT infrastructure of Sighnaghi campus to provide comparability with the Tbilisi campus (7.3).
76. Synchronize the English website with the Georgian one and update it on regular basis (7.3).
77. Ensure that financial planning is clearly linked to the strategic and action plans and is achievable (7.4).
78. Allocate appropriate finance to the core activities of the University (7.4).
79. Ensure the budget provides sufficient finance for scientific research and library functioning and development (7.4).
80. Implement an effective system for accountability, financial management and control (7.4).

### **Summary of Suggestions**

1. Include the citation index in the assessment of research performance (6.3).
2. Display the contact information of its academic personnel on the website for facilitating the communication with students and potential collaborators (7.3).

### **Summary of the Best Practices**

None identified.

## Summary Table

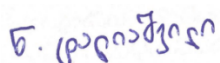
	Standard	Complies with Requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially Complies with Requirements	Does not Comply with Requirements
1.	<b>Mission and strategic development of HEI</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.1	Mission of HEI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		x
1.2	Strategic development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.	<b>Organizational structure and management of HEI</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.1	Organizational structure and management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2	Internal quality assurance mechanisms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.3	Observing principles of ethics and integrity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	<b>Educational Programmes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>		x
3.3	Assessment of learning outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	<b>Staff of the HEI</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4.1	Staff management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4.2	Academic/Scientific and invited Staff workload	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	<b>Students and their support services</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.1	The Rule for obtaining and changing student status, the recognition of education, and student rights	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		x
5.2	Student support services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	<b>Research, development and/or other creative work</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		x
6.1	Research activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.2	Research support and internationalization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		x
6.3	Evaluation of research activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	<b>Material, information and financial resources</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.1	Material resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.2	Library resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.3	Information resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.4	Financial resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## Signature of expert panel members

1. Kevin Kendall (Chair)



2. Nino Taliashvili (Member)



3. Diana Lezhava (Member)



4. Teona Zhuzhunadze (Member)

5. Maya Shishniashvili (Member)

6. Nino Zhvania (Member)

## Compliance of the Authorization Applicant HEI with the Authorization 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 Tbilisi Teaching University is published on its website and also provided in its Self-Evaluation Report (SER). It must be noted that, mission statement published in Georgian and English versions of website differ significantly and yet third version is provided in the SER. In meetings the leadership of the University explained that the mission was changed due to introduction of the authorization standards. Staff who the panel interviewed did not have a clear view of the University mission.

The newest mission statement is very broad and could describe any university, it does not define the characteristics of this University based on its type and main directions of its work. Therefore it is unable to offer a clear direction for the University.

The Mission Statement of the University does not clearly correspond to Georgia's and European higher education goals and does not define the role of the University locally or internationally.

During the interviews with management and staff, the Panel noted that mission is not shared by the community of the institution. Different members have slightly different notions of the mission.

The University leadership finds it difficult to explain long term development perspectives or describe its vision in detail. The leadership of the University acknowledges current problems but finds it difficult to give a clear vision of its future, how it sees Tbilisi Teaching University in 5-10-year perspective and what position it will have in society.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

University website ([www.tu.edu.ge](http://www.tu.edu.ge))

Self-Evaluation Report (SER)

Meetings with University staff

<p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <p>Identify a mission which is specific to the needs of the University and its community and is shared by all staff.</p> <p>Define the role of the University both locally and internationally.</p>
<p><b>Suggestions:</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p><b>Best Practices (if applicable):</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements  <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements              Partially complies with requirements  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements       </p>
<p><b>1.2 Strategic Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ HEI has a strategic development (7-year) and an action plans (3-year) in place.</li> <li>○ HEI contributes to the development of the society, shares with the society the knowledge gathered in the institution, and facilitates lifelong learning</li> <li>○ HEI evaluates implementation of strategic and action plans, and duly acts on evaluation results.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements</b></p> <p>The University has developed a 7-year strategic development plan, a 3-year action plan and also a methodology for strategic planning and an evaluation mechanism. The strategic planning methodology is a mix of strategic planning and employee motivation analysis tools. The evaluation mechanism of strategic development plan and action plan is a document, which has not been used yet in practice. The Panel did not observe any of the results of such an evaluation.</p> <p>An important part of strategic planning is an analysis of the environment, identification of opportunities and threats, and the analysis of internal factors, organization's strengths and weaknesses. Despite the fact, that Tbilisi Teaching University has included a SWOT analysis into its methodology, the tool is not used adequately, the University has not identified its weaknesses and threats well and has not addressed them adequately in the strategic plan.</p> <p>One of the main challenges faced by the University is the decline in student numbers and annual income. The leadership does not have well defined and feasible plan to overcome the problem and be financially sustainable.</p> <p>The University has assigned the strategic planning function to the financial department of the organization. During the interviews, panel observed that financial department are not in position to develop a strategy, it does not have strategic mind set, does not have a clear vision, does not see the challenges and does not have authority to plan. During the interviews they were only able to discuss the current annual budget.</p> <p>The main directions of development indicated in strategic development plan are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of efficient management system and corporate culture</li> <li>2. Growth of awareness and attraction of students</li> <li>3. Maintaining high quality, student-oriented education service</li> <li>4. Development of Kakheti campus</li> <li>5. Organizational sustainability</li> </ol> <p>The Strategic Plan does not specifically address all the aspects that are vital to the operation of the University and even if it does the staff are not aware of this or the implications for them in their role</p>



In regard to the University's contribution to the development of the society and knowledge dissemination, strategic development plan, task 3 considers sharing of intellectual resources among university staff and society.

The Strategic goals are not measurable and as a result it is impossible to understand if goals are achieved. The University has a document which shows how they may do this, but it has not yet happened and the team have not seen any evidence of evaluation. It is also not clear how to measure effectiveness of management and specific staff members.

Staff members that are responsible for execution of specific actions are not aware of their assignments and budgets. This problem was identified in Tbilisi, but it was even more evident on the Sighnaghi campus, where staff are completely isolated from strategic planning, are unaware of any challenges or planned actions. It seems that Sighnaghi staff receives directions only regarding routine work and have no participation in the implementation of the action plans.

The Panel has analyzed the strategic development plan and budget and noticed that taking into consideration challenges faced by the University, its objectives and planned actions, the budget is not adequate to accomplish the goals. For instance, one the main challenges, as described above is decline of income. The University has planned public relations activities but has assigned an annual budget of 8500 GEL, which is not sufficient for advertising placement on TV, billboards, public transport, social media, as it is indicated in action plan on page 25. The person responsible at the University was not able to provide explanation.

In summary the University has a strategic plan and associated action plans, but these are not supported by the required budget, are not understood by staff, do not address evident weaknesses and are not being monitored and evaluated.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

Self-Evaluation Report (SER)  
Strategic development (7 year) and action plan (3 year)  
University budget  
Website ([www.tu.edu.ge](http://www.tu.edu.ge))  
Meetings with staff and students at the University

#### **Recommendations:**

Review the strategic and action plans so they are SMART and related to identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.  
Provide the necessary budget to support the strategic and action plans and ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities.

#### **Suggestions:**

None.

#### **Best Practices (if applicable):**

None.

#### **Evaluation**

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

## **2. Organizational Structure and Management of HEI**

Organizational 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 Organizational Structure and Management**

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

### **Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements**

The University has an organizational structure which is published on its website and follows the normal structure for this type of organization. However, it is a family owned organization which has positive and negative aspects. The positive side is the close relations between different management bodies, flexibility and promptness in decision making. The drawback of such an organization is that the procedures for election or appointment of the management bodies of the University are not transparent and equitable. There is no fair competition for high level managerial positions, such as director, rector, deputy rector. Apart from election/appointment, it is arguable, if the human resources department are able to provide a fair assessment of the executive managers and what criteria are used in such cases.

Apart from this, it is noted that the owners, in addition to managerial positions, are teaching at both campuses, Tbilisi and Signaghi. It would seem to be difficult to allocate time to high level managerial functions, teaching, travelling on a daily basis and to be effective at the same time.

During the interviews, the Panel observed that some of the staff members are not familiar with their functions at the University and are not aware of the role in delivering the strategic and action plans.

Panel has noted that some of the units are given the functions, that could not be grouped and assigned to one position, as they require different competencies, skills, and levels of authority. Good example of such problem is the role and functions of financial department.

There is no appraisal system for administrative staff. The Head of the Human Resources department is newly appointed and has not developed a plan yet. There is no means of effectively evaluating the effectiveness of the structure

In addition, the electronic document processing system is still in the development stage and so is not fully functioning with regard to registry, monitoring and evaluation. The panel also did not see a coherent plan for business continuity.

There is no systematic, specific and clear Internationalization strategy based on the needs of this University.

### **Evidences/indicators**

The structure diagram of the University  
 The functions of the structural units of the University  
 Website ([www.tu.edu.ge](http://www.tu.edu.ge))  
 Regulations and procedures for appointment  
 Rules for processing  
 Registry  
 Memoranda with partner universities  
 Meetings with staff

**Recommendations:**

Review the election/appointment system of management bodies and staff.  
 Communicate job description content, in specific functions to the staff members.  
 Functions and responsibilities of structural units of the institution must be clearly defined and divided  
 Develop a human resource appraisal system.  
 Develop and set in motion electronic document processing system.

**Suggestions:**

None

**Best Practices (if applicable):**

None

**Evaluation**

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

**2.2 Internal Quality Assurance Mechanisms**

- ☐ 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**

Structurally, the responsibility for internal quality assurance is a functional domain of the University Quality Assurance (QA) Office. The Office staff includes the Head of the Quality Assurance Office, a Quality Assurance Deputy and a Leading QA Specialist. The regulatory framework for the University's internal QA processes is shaped by:

- The Statute of Quality Assurance Office;
- Assessment Mechanisms of Quality Assurance in Teaching;
- PDCA Principles Rules for QA Office Functions;
- Instruction for the Assessment of the Quality Assurance Mechanisms;
- Instruction for the Monitoring of Internal Quality Assurance.

As declared in the documents listed above, internal QA processes are built based on the PDCA cycle (P -plan; D -do; C -check; A -act).

According to its statute, the QA Office produces assessment reports based on the analysis of data collected from students, graduates and staff.

Analysis of the self-assessment report, as well as the submitted documents prove that the internal quality assurance processes are not tailored to the needs of the University. Specifically:

- The internal QA does not take into account the size of the University. The submitted reports reveal that predominantly quantitative data are collected where qualitative data should be generated to receive meaningful feedback from students on teaching and learning processes. These reports are also vague on assessment methods while data analysis is inadequate.
- The internal QA does not take into account that the University is a teaching university and envisions the collection of such data as the number of PhD students supervised by the faculty members. According to the regulations, assessment criteria also includes participation of faculty members in dissertation committees.
- The reports provided by the QA office are not informative (e.g. from students, graduates) as they are superficial.
- Analysis of the regulations listed above reveal that they are redundant and inconsistent (e.g. "Instruction for the Monitoring of Internal Quality Assurance" and Instruction for the Assessment of the Quality Assurance Mechanisms" are complete analogies). They fail to

provide a clear understanding of internal QA processes and procedures. Importantly, they predominately repeat similar documents from other university verbatim<sup>1</sup>

Interviews conduction during the site-visit have clearly demonstrated that:

- Not all University units are involved in the implementation of the internal quality assurance process. A large number of interviewees were not aware and quality processes in their University (e.g. faculty members regarding faculty assessment criteria and processes, program heads regarding graduate survey results, etc.)
- Reports produced by the QA office are not shared among all the relevant stakeholders. Those interviewees who mentioned the assessment reports could not state how the reports could help them identify areas for further improvement.
- Given the human capacity of the QA office (office staff), and available resources (including IT resources) the implementation of the QA processes designed in the university are not feasible;
- Reports on student academic performance are not informative to the extent of their use in program improvement processes.
- The internal QA processes lack mechanisms for systematic involvement of different of relevant stakeholders in the improvement of educational programs. During the interviews, university graduates mentioned that they did not participate in surveys. Also, the employers are mainly involved in the delivery of specific program component while lacking the comprehensive understanding of program development needs.

Neither the submitted documents nor the interviews provided evidence that the internal QA system is used for effective management of the University. There is a lack of evidence that this system contributes to the strategic planning process.

The University has developed its "Student Body Planning Methodology". The regulation refers to a number of factors (i.e. human resources, facilities and infrastructure, student drop-out, their graduation rates, graduate students' employment rates) pertaining to student body planning processes. The University self-assessment report also contains benchmarks relevant. However, the University's approach to the student body planning processes is unclear in a number of ways. Specifically:

- the regulation establishes 1:10 student/academic staff ratio as a benchmark. Given the existing number of 57 academic staff members reported in the self-assessment report, the University does not have resources adequate for the 1,300 student cap and needs additional 73 academic staff members. This need is reflected neither in the self-assessment report or in the regulation;
- the regulation establishes 1:8 student/teaching staff ratio as a benchmark and declares that the existing ration is 1:6. These statistics are not consistent with rations submitted in the self-assessment report;
- the methodology of establishing benchmarks pertaining to student body planning submitted in the self-assessment report is not explained (both for the university and its departments). It is also not clear how these benchmarks comply with the benchmarks established in the "Student Body Planning Methodology".
- it includes student dorms. However, no calculation is provided to establish the adequacy of this facility to student numbers is provided. More importantly, university does not possess any of such facility; neither does it plan to acquire one according to its strategic plan;

During the interviews with administration and academic staff/program head, no explanation was given concerning benchmarking methodology. During the visit, the interviewees also revealed that they were not aware of the requirements established by the student body planning regulation.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

Self-evaluation report

The Statute of Quality Assurance Office

Assessment Mechanisms of Quality Assurance in Teaching;

PDCA Principles Rules for QA Office Functions;

Instruction for the Assessment of the Quality Assurance Mechanisms;

Instruction for the Monitoring of Internal Quality Assurance.

Student Body Planning Methodology;

Interviews with staff and students

Assessment/QA) reports

<p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <p>Design a quality assurance system that is tailored to the needs of the University involving all relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>Ensure that the results/reports produced by the QA processes are used by all stakeholders for continuous improvement and for making informed decisions.</p> <p>Develop clear and consistent student body planning methodology together with the administration and program heads;</p> <p>Develop consistent and reliable benchmarking methodology pertaining to its student body planning;</p> <p>Make sure the university has adequate academic/teaching staff resources adequate for its student cap.</p>
<p><b>Suggestions:</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p><b>Best Practices (if applicable):</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p><input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements</p>
<p><b>2.3. Observing Principles of Ethics and Integrity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ HEI has developed regulations and mechanisms that follow principles of ethics and integrity. Such regulations are publicly accessible.</li> <li>○ Institution has implemented mechanisms for detecting plagiarism and its prevention.</li> <li>○ HEI follows the principles of academic freedom.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements</b></p> <p>The university has adopted the Code of Ethics for its staff and students in September 2017, as well as the internal regulation document adopted in 2014 and reapproved in 2017. The code of ethics contains separate chapters for academic, invited and administrative personnel, as well as a chapter dedicated to the Students' Code of Ethics. Both documents, the Code and the Integral Regulation Document contain information on the rules of conduct, ethical standards and internal procedures, as well as the potential outcomes for violating these rules. The documents are accessible through the website. However, there is no information provided by the university concerning regular events for promoting ethical guidelines and ensuring that the code of conduct is met. The interviews conducted during the site visit showed that no information campaigns have been conducted by the university to ensure that its personnel and students are aware of the university ethical norms and the consequences following the violation of these norms. The university personnel and students possess little knowledge about the potential outcomes in case they violate the ethical standards.</p> <p>The university has developed a regulation on Plagiarism Detection, Prevention and Response Procedures and Mechanisms. The document contains information on the essence of plagiarism, information on how to avoid it, the procedures in case the plagiarism is detected, bodies to be addressed under such circumstances, respective sanctions for violating the rules and monitoring procedures. In addition, other documents also provide information on plagiarism and appropriate response, such as Charters for the Faculties for Graduate and Undergraduate Studies, Instruction for Master's Thesis Defense and Instruction for Preparing Course Work. All the above documents are freely accessible on the university website. Students are aware of the university plagiarism policy and are informed about potential consequences; however, academic personnel show less knowledge concerning the official plagiarism policy or the citation rules adopted in the university. Their knowledge about this issue is more intuitive rather than based on the official rules university promotes. The university does not have an official plagiarism detection procedure; the only mechanism named by the interviewees is the external review of papers in case of suspicion. However, such cases are mentioned to be rather rare, and have happened only on couple occasions. Despite the information being more or less accessible concerning the essence and detection of plagiarism, neither university academic personnel nor the management could provide any information on the plagiarism prevention mechanisms suggesting that the university lacks certain clear mechanisms for preventing cases of plagiarism. The university also lacks to demonstrate the</p>

organization of regular awareness raising campaigns against plagiarism and its consequences. Furthermore, there is a solid evidence that the university administration plagiarizes certain documents itself; in particular, several regulatory documents, such as "Instruction for the Assessment of the Quality Assurance Mechanisms" and HR Management Policy contains plagiarized sections which are similar or identical to the documents from other universities (see section 2.2 and section 4.1). Therefore, the abovementioned suggests that the Plagiarism Detection regulations are adopted only formally.

Academic freedom of students and personnel is ensured by the Code of Ethics and the University Charter; the latter underlines that students are free to express their ideas and refuse to accept any ideas suggested to them during the study process; they have right to establish students' bodies and promote their rights. However, it is less evident that the students actually exercise this right. The site visit demonstrated that the academic freedom of the personnel and students is ensured: it is evident that the university does not impose any restrictions over the personnel in respect to teaching or research. Personnel are free to compose their teaching materials without any limitations from the administrative body. The only case mentioned in respect to the university involvement in the professor's judgment over course composition is the direction from the management to make stronger focus on practical teaching, which is more based on the state policy about strengthening ties with the labour market and advancing students' practical skills. In other words, the university ensures the academic freedom of its personnel, however, there is little evidence that the academic community at the university is fully familiar with the academic integrity policy of the university.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

The Code of Ethics and Conduct, Integral Regulation Document  
Procedures and Mechanisms for Detection and Prevention of Plagiarism  
Charters for the Faculties for Graduate and Undergraduate Studies  
Instruction for Master's Thesis Defense and Instruction for Preparing Course Work  
Interviews with the academic personnel, students and university management.

#### **Recommendations:**

Develop effective policies and procedures for plagiarism prevention and detection.  
Raise awareness in the academic community about the University policies and procedures regarding the code of ethics and plagiarism.

#### **Suggestions:**

None

#### **Best Practices (if applicable):**

None

#### **Evaluation**

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

### **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

#### **3.1 Design and Development of Educational Programmes**

HEI has a policy for planning, designing, implementing and developing educational programmes.

**Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements**

The University has developed rules and procedures that regulate planning, design and development of educational programs. These are mainly described in:

- Rules for the Development, Partial Alteration, Initiation, Review, Approval/Cancellation of Educational Program.
- Rules Regulating Teaching Processes in Educational Programs;
- Methodology of the Educational Program Development;

In these documents the processes of programme development, introduction of changes/improvements and cancellation are designed to involve different stakeholders – academic faculty members, invited professions/teachers, administration, industry, students and graduates. However, the documents are not consistent and fail to outline clear processes. Specifically, processes of programme development and introduction of changes/improvements are often overlapping and not clearly differentiated. The functions of a programme development committee and programme heads are not clear and well-shaped. Cooperation between the field committees, programme heads, development committees, the QA Office and the Faculty/Department is not clearly stated, oftentimes it is overlapping.

The documents are also vague on the contribution of the internal QA processes in the process of program development, introduction of changes/improvements and closures. There is a lack of evidence in the documents that these processes of programme development, introduction of changes/improvements and cancellation make effective use of QA mechanisms and reports. As stated, these processes are mainly guided by paper-based regulations and guidelines (e.g. National Qualification Framework, different forms and guidelines developed by the QA Office).

The University creates opportunity for employers and graduates to be involved in the processes contributing to the development of new programmes, development of the ones being currently delivered by the university. The university also produces reports of student academic performance. However, these opportunities fail to produce meaningful feedback for decision making. Reports from graduate students identify the rates of their employment and is silent on the assessment of academic programmes or the skills that graduates find essential for their employability and competitiveness. The Job Market research conducted by the University does not provide a clear analysis of knowledge and skills sought after by the employers in different fields. The methodology of the research raises the questions of the validity of its results. The reports on student academic performance do not demonstrate a clear link to program learning outcomes. Also, there is no mechanism that makes sure that these reports are used to make decisions concerning program development, improvement or its cancellation. There is also a lack of evidence that the University seeks feedback from professional associations, local and international partners that will help them develop and improve their academic programs.

The analysis of the documents as well as the interviews revealed that there is a lack of effective and consistent mechanisms that will make sure that programs are updated based on the changing demands of stakeholders (i.e. industry, students and graduates). There is no evidence that the stakeholders are systematically involved in the program improvement processes. Their needs remain mostly unidentified.

The documents also regulate the administrative aspects of teaching and learning processes. Namely, "The Rules for the Development, Partial Alteration, Initiation, Review, Approval/Cancellation of Educational Program" states requirements for academic calendar to include autumn and spring terms and give relevant details including the distribution of relevant weeks. However, the regulation is deficient as it also mentions the possibility for a summer term but remains silent of how it required to be delivered.

The interviews conducted during the site visit with different stakeholders (i.e. Deans, Program Heads, academic faculty members, invited teachers, students, graduates, industry representatives) reveal the lack of their participation in the processes contributing to the development of new programmes and the improvement of the existing ones. Importantly Programme Heads are not aware of the QA processes that ensure the assessment of their programmes. The majority are not aware of the results produced by these assessments.

The University has outlined rules and procedures in case changes are introduced to existing programmes or of programmes being cancelled. According to these regulations, if programmes are changed, students are transferred to new programmes in a similar subject area. In case programmes are phased out students are transferred to other programmes either within the same university or another university. However, these procedures do not consider a possibility for students to have individual study plans that will allow them either to complete their current programmes within a reasonable timeline or adjust to the requirements of new programme. This deficiency is further aggravated by the lack of awareness among the university administrators of the guiding principles for the development of individual study plans demonstrated during the interviews.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

Self-Evaluation Report.

Rules for the Development, Partial Alteration, Initiation, Review, Approval/Cancellation of Educational Programmes.

Rules Regulating Teaching Processes in Educational Programs.

Methodology of the Educational Program Development.

Methodology for the Development of an Individual Study Plan.

Job Market Research.

Graduate Reports.

Interviews with staff, students, alumni and employers.

#### **Recommendations:**

Review the policies and procedures for programme development, introduction of changes and programme cancellation and ensure all stakeholders are aware of them.

Make sure that program design, development and improvement is a participatory process that helps the University align its programs with the needs of its stakeholders (i.e. industry, students, graduates, professional associations, partners).

Ensure that the regulations clearly demonstrate how internal QA process contribute to programme development, introduction of changes and closure.

Ensure that the programme development regulations consider student interests and needs.

Processes and procedures for developing individual study plans should be effectively practiced by University administrators.

#### **Suggestions:**

None.

#### **Best Practices (if applicable):**

None.

#### **Evaluation**

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

#### **3.2 Structure and Content of Educational Programmes**

- Programme learning outcomes are clearly stated and are in line with higher education level and qualification to be granted
- 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.

#### **Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements**

Educational Programs developed by the University are developed based on the ECTS guidelines. For each programme, curriculum documents include the purpose of the programme, its learning outcomes, structure (including elective courses), teaching and learning strategies, student assessment methods/rules and resources. The University submitted its catalogues where the basic programme details are provided.



However, programme documents reveal deficiency in a number of ways:

- Programme learning outcomes are often very broad and unclear. They are presented in a too general way as they are outlined in the NQF (e.g. Master Program "Food Safety"). Because of their generic character, there is a lack of evidence that these learning outcomes are fit for the competitiveness and employability of students.
- Programme learning outcomes and programme course learning outcomes are not clearly differentiated (e.g. Bachelor Program in Food Technology and its practical course/internship outcomes).
- Programmes demonstrate overlap of content regardless of the level of education (e.g. Food Microbiology in Food Safety (MA) and Food Technology (BA)).
- There is a lack of evidence that ECTS guidelines are observed in the process of programme and course design. Specifically, the distribution of contact hours follows predominantly the same pattern. There is a lack of evidence that this distribution is based on the estimation of a student workload.
- Often the number of learning outcomes listed in the course is likely to exceed the number of allocated ECTS. Given that there is not effective mechanism to monitor student workload, these courses run a high risk of providing ineffective instruction and failing to achieve learning outcomes.
- In a number of cases the distribution of ECTS creates a risk for students not to be able to accumulate adequate number of credits for their field of specialization (e.g. Bachelor Programme Food Technology offers student to accumulate 115 ECTS in their major specialization and a choice between a minor or field-specific module. In case students select a minor, they will not be able to add more credits from their major thus failing to meet the requirement for 120 ECTS for a major).
- There is a lack of evidence that programme learning outcomes are adequately covered by a course included in the programme structure. This is specifically the case in programmes where laboratory work is an essential component. The submitted syllabi provide little evidence of how the laboratory work is delivered and assessed though contact hours for practical work are allocated in the document. This is a particular concern as the University does not have in-house laboratories and infrastructure to provide adequate resources to support the delivery of such courses.
- Teaching and learning methods are not selected based on the specifics of an academic programme and its learning outcomes. Curriculum documents include mostly identical lists of these methods.
- Educational programmes offer very few number of elective courses. Educational Programmes predominantly include the required course. Elective courses in the field of specialization are very scarce (e.g. Bachelor Program in Food Technology).

The data submitted with the self-assessment reports has revealed that the university collects data pertaining to program completion and dropout rates. However, the data are not informative and fail to describe accurately how students complete their programs. The methodology should be more refined and allow the University administration, program heads and other stakeholders calculate student completion rates within a standard time span. There is also a lack of evidence that these data are used for the improvement of academic programs and student services.

During the interviews with the academic faculty members, programme heads and invited teachers, it became obvious that there is no clear understanding of how programme learning outcomes are developed and used. Often the interviewees mixed programme and course learning outcomes. They demonstrated no clear understanding of how programme outcomes are aligned with programme structure and how they are measured.

During their interviews, students reflected on their academic programmes and stated that their programmes offer a very limited choice of elective courses. In case their desired elective course is full (the regulation limits the number of students for each course up to 15) they are registered to other available course by the administration automatically. The latter procedure is stated in "Rules for the Development, Partial Alteration, Initiation, Review, Approval/Cancellation of Educational Program".

Academic programmes as well as the University regulations (e.g. "Rules for the Development, Partial Alteration, Initiation, Review, Approval/Cancellation of Educational Program") set clear requirements for student admission. Specifically, on the Master level all students are expected to demonstrate a

B2 language skills in English. However, during the interview with local as well as international students it became clear that this regulation is not properly observed in the admission process.

The university has also admitted international students to their academic programmes delivered in Georgia. During the interviews these students demonstrated no or very basic skills in Georgian. When asked how they managed to study, the students stated that they were assigned an interpreter (an interpreter was present in one of the interviews with students). The practice of assigning an interpreter to international students was stated on a number of occasion by the University administration as well. Some students and teaching staff reported, that in case there were no interpreters, local students helped international students with translation during classes and while working on their assignments. The panel did not receive clear answers to questions as how local students managed their own studies while assisting international students.

During their interviews programme heads, faculty members and invited teachers described their efforts to improve the performance of students with low academic performance. However, the university largely lacks a system-wide approach to the identification of such at-risk students. "The Methodology for the Development of Individual Study Plans" also fails to accommodate instructional needs of students based on their academic achievement. The deficiency in the regulation and practice is further aggravated by the lack of awareness among the University administrators of the guiding principles for the development of individual study plans demonstrated during the interview.

The University submitted its program catalogues with its self-assessment report. However, the information on the University website concerning the programs is fragmented, sometimes essential program details (e.g. program learning outcomes, qualification/degree, etc) are missed.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

"The Methodology for the Development of Individual Study Plans".

"Rules for the Development, Partial Alteration, Initiation, Review, Approval/Cancellation of Educational Program"

Student data (program completion, dropout rates submitted with the self-assessment report);

Academic Program Packages.

Interviews with staff and students.

#### **Recommendations:**

Ensure that students are admitted to programs in compliance with relevant program admission requirements.

Review the structure and content of programmes and develop learning outcomes to meet the needs of students and the requirements of industry.

Develop an effective QA mechanism that will allow all relevant stakeholders in the development of learning outcomes.

Provide programme heads, academic faculty members and invited teachers with support that will help them design programme and course outcomes, design appropriate teaching, learning and assessment methods.

Ensure that teaching and learning develops students' knowledge and skills appropriate to the programme outcomes and appropriate resources are provided.

Ensure that there are effective mechanisms to determine the suitability of student workload and its distribution within and between the courses.

Ensure that the University collects data that accurately describe program completion rates. The University should also make sure that it designs mechanisms that makes use of these data to improve their academic programs and student services.

Ensure that there is a systematic approach to the identification of students' need based on their academic achievement.

Consistent and updated program catalogues containing essential program details should be published on the University website and made accessible to stakeholders (students, industry representatives, partners and professional organizations).

#### **Suggestions:**

None.

<b>Best Practices (if applicable):</b> None.
<b>Evaluation</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements
<b>3.3 Assessment of Learning Outcomes</b>
<b>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements</b> Based on the programme documents submitted by the University, it is clear that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student assessment methods are not selected based on the specifics of an academic programme. Neither are they aligned with course outcomes. They largely follow the universal assessment rules outlined in the Rules for the Development, Partial Alteration, Initiation, Review, Approval/Cancellation of Educational Program (e.g. the breakdown of 70 – 30 points between the midterm and final assessments, tests as the dominating instrument, predetermined criteria for each assessment component).</li> <li>• The University has developed the "Assessment System of Learning Outcomes". However, this mainly restates the regulations outlined in the Ministers' Degree #3 on ECTS and student assessment. It does not provide guidelines for programme heads, academic and invited staff to design their assessment based on the programme and course learning outcomes;</li> <li>• The analysis of course syllabi made it clear that there is a lack of assessment criteria which directly measures course learning outcomes. This deficiency prevents the assessment system to become fair and transparent and provide students with constructive feedback.</li> </ul> <p>During the interviews, academic faculty members and invited teachers were not clear how learning outcomes were associated with assessment methods. This lack of understanding is reflected in the programme documents in which there is nearly no consistency between learning outcomes and student assessment. Often the assessment of learning outcomes within individual courses is not feasible given the number of allocated credits and the duration of the course.</p> <p>During the interviews students, program heads, academic and invited teachers referred to the practice of appeals by students. Based on the evidence provided by the interviewees, student appeals are processed and addressed in a timely and appropriate manner. There was no evidence that the procedure is not clearly followed. It should be noted here that course syllabi that are available to students include assessment methods and criteria.</p>
<b>Evidences/indicators</b> The Rules for the Development, Partial Alteration, Initiation, Review, Approval/Cancellation of Educational Program. Assessment System of Learning Outcomes. Program packages. Interviews with staff and students.
<b>Recommendations</b> Develop assessment systems that are tailored according to the specific needs of each academic programme and course. Provide clear assessment criteria that will directly measure learning outcomes and provide students with constructive feedback on their performance. Provide programme heads, academic faculty members and invited teachers with adequate support that will help them design assessment system in line with their programme and course learning outcomes.
<b>Suggestions:</b> None.

**Best Practices (if applicable):**

None.

**Evaluation**

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

**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.

**4.1. Staff Management**

- ☐ HEI has **staff management policy** and procedures that ensure the implementation of **educational process** and other activities defined in its **strategic plan**.
- ☐ HEI ensures the employment of **qualified academic/scientific/invited/administrative/ support staff**.

**Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements**

The University is obliged to have staff management policy and procedures that ensure the implementation of educational process and other activities defined in its strategic plan. Staff management policy should include staff attraction, selection, hiring and professional development mechanisms, also principles of remuneration and encouragement, which takes into consideration employees performance evaluation results. The University should use staff evaluation and satisfaction survey results in the process of staff management. Staff must be involved in decision - making processes. HEI has academic council which is the governing body, some of academic staff is elected in academic council and therefore they are involved in decision making process. According to this procedure academic staff is partially involved in decision-making process.

According to the SER HEI totally has 22 affiliated academic personnel, 107 invited lecturer who are involved in teaching process and 590 active students. High number of affiliated academic staff ensures sustainability of programs, according to the above mentioned ratios it could be difficult to reach the aim. 590 students are served by 45 administrative and support personnel, it must be mentioned that HEI has two faculties and each of them has one manager who deals with students issues, also there is only one person who is responsible for learning processes, in addition in Signaghi there are two people who are also responsible for learning issues (deputy dean/specialist for the department of learning processes). This number of staff is not sufficient to provide effective service for students.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report the University has developed a document that includes management methodology and strategy, general principles and rules of personnel management oriented on personnel development. This document was presented only during the site visit. Besides this document some other documents were also provided which deal with the same issues. These are: Charter of HR department, System of evaluation of the scientific performance of staff, the rule of choice of academic personnel, the rule on selecting employees and defining their qualification requirements.

After analyzing above mentioned documents several issues were discovered. The rule of choice of academic staff and the HR management policy are not in compliance with each other. According to the rule (article 2.2.) the Academic Board defines the number of members of the Competition Commission (no less than 5 persons) which is approved by the Rector. According to the same rule (article 4.2.) the chair of commission is elected from the members of the commission. These issues are regulated in a different way by the HR management policy, article 5.3. says: the number of members of the competition commission is defined and approved by the rector. Commission consists of 6 members, Chair of Commission is appointed by the rector. On the 8, 10 and 34 pages of the HR management policy is given the abbreviation "GTUNI". This is the shorten name of Guram Tavartkiladze Teaching University. This website was checked and its' HR management Strategy <http://gttu.edu.ge/ge/about-us/legal-directory/regulationsinstructions>. These two documents were compared, and it was found out that Tbilisi Teaching University has plagiarized HR management policy. Evaluation system of the performance of staff, even questionnaires are the same, procedures of defining competition commission

for election of academic staff are the same and copying of these regulations caused difference between the HR management policy and rule of choice of academic personnel. Motivation system of staff is same. The strategic plan of Tbilisi teaching university is not in line with the plagiarized HR management policy. It is mentioned in the policy that the University should periodically overview the remuneration system. This issue is not covered by the strategic plan of Tbilisi teaching university, nor by the budget of the University.

According to the plagiarized HR management policy (article 2, pg. 9) administrative staff are appointed by the rector, but according to the internal regulation of the HEI (The rule on selecting employees and defining their qualification requirements – article 1) The candidate shall be elected on the relevant position as a result of the competition and the publication of the vacancy. These two regulations are not in compliance.

According to the Charter of the University (article 7.7.) The Director appoints the Rector. During interviews with the Human Resources office about appointing/electing procedures of the staff. They responded that the University does not have a regulation about appointing the Rector. They also were asked about the mechanisms of the integration of new employees into the work environment and their efficient involvement into the working process, also about the implementation process of staff evaluation and satisfaction survey results in the process of staff management. According to the interviews and documents the University does not have such mechanisms. The University has only presented surveys of staff (2016-2017, 2017-2018) about the quality of educational service, it was not sufficient to identify how these results are used in the development and management of staff. The panel interviewed the Deans' office at Signaghi building and the Deputy dean and manager were asked about the human resource management policy (attraction, evaluation, encouragement), unfortunately they were not familiar to this document. Staff management policy and regulations are not accessible and interested parties are not informed on these policy and regulations.

Academic and Invited staff (Signaghi) were interviewed about the assessment system of staffs' scientific efficiency. They were not familiar with this system. According to the Statute of the University (article 14) department of Public and International relations is responsible for the evaluation of the scientific efficiency of staff. The Vice rector for international relations was interviewed about this issue and said that academic staff are assessed according to the questionnaires but was not able to provide information about further implementation of these results. The assessment of staffs' scientific efficiency defines requirements for academic staff, it is mentioned that this requirement can be used for administrative staff, but according to specific conditions it is impossible to evaluate administrative staff.

The University has not developed a fair and transparent system for encouragement which must be based on the staffs' performance evaluation results. The University has not defined transparent and objective procedures for hiring (electing/appointing) administrative, and support staff, which ensures attracting and hiring qualified employees. The panel interviewed the self-evaluation team and they were asked about attraction procedures of academic staff. According to the interviews the main reasons which attract academic staff are: remuneration, academic freedom, financing of research projects. The University also finances non-affiliated staff. According to the budget only 7000 Georgian Lari is intended for research activities which does not seem adequate.

The University has developed Affiliation terms and conditions. The panel interviewed the human resource office and Vice Rector about benchmarks for affiliated staff. They responded that existing number (22) was sufficient and the University does not have benchmarks.

According to the Self-evaluation Report the University focuses special attention on the development of human resources and facilitates its personnel in professional development - qualification raising and retraining. It should be noted that the Training and Certificate Programs Center provides organizing of training / courses / seminars to raise relevant qualifications. The Human Resources office and Vice-Rector for Public and International relations were interviewed about abovementioned Centre. The centre received this function 5 months ago and during this period several lecturers were trained in project management. The University does not have strategy for the professional development of its staff. According to the budget only 2500 Georgian Lari is intended for training/retraining.

According to the Authorization standards for HEI it is mandatory to have the qualification requirements of academic/scientific/invited/administrative/support staff, considering their job descriptions and functions. Staffs' qualifications must be in line with the University qualification requirements.

The University has developed job descriptions for administrative/support staff and qualification requirements for academic staff and they presented the rule on selecting employees and defining their qualification requirements. According to this rule only general qualification requirements are defined, for example according to the article 1.3. qualification requirements are: Higher education, working

experience no less than 2 years, knowledge of office programs. It is impossible to identify how the University selects relevant candidates for vacancies according to these general requirements. The panel interviewed the Human Resources office about qualification requirements. They responded that the University had not defined specific requirements for each position.

Presented job descriptions are not transparent and in many cases functions are duplicated, which leads to ineffective management. For example: According to the job description of Vice-Rector for academic affairs he/she is responsible for Preparation of draft orders for inviting lecturers. At the same time the head of Staff management department is also responsible for preparing draft orders on the issues of human resources (appointment, punishment). According to the job description of the manager of the department of Students' Registry and Communications with Graduates he/she makes statistics of graduates who are employed. The manager was interviewed by the panel about above mentioned duty, it appeared that he/she was not familiar to this function. According to the job description of Vice-Rector for international relations he/she is responsible for the evaluation of staffs' migration. She was interviewed by experts' panel about the implementation of this function. It appeared that she was not familiar with this responsibility.

Because of the absence of qualification requirements, it was impossible to check the compliance of Staffs' qualifications with the University qualification requirements.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

HR management policy  
System of evaluation of the scientific performance of staff  
The rule of choice of academic personnel  
The rule on selecting employees and defining their qualification requirements  
Job descriptions  
Interviews with staff  
Statute of HEI  
Rule on Affiliation  
Self-Evaluation Report

#### **Recommendations:**

Develop a Human Resource Management policy specific to the University (including staff attraction, selection, hiring and professional development mechanisms) and ensure all staff aware of its contents and their role in it.  
Develop transparent job descriptions with specific detailed qualification requirements for each position.  
Use staffs' evaluation and satisfaction survey results in the management processes.

#### **Suggestions:**

None

#### **Best Practices (if applicable):**

None

#### **Evaluation**

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

#### **4.2. Academic/Scientific and Invited Staff Workload**

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

#### **Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements**

The workload of academic/scientific and invited staff should be adequate for the University's educational programmes and scientific-research activities, and also other functions assigned to them. The University should have a workload scheme for academic and invited staff and methodology of determining the number of academic, scientific, and invited staff in relation with academic programs.

According to the SER and contracts of academic staff the workload of academic personnel of the University is mandatory to include: teaching activities, research activities, consultations, work on grants and participation in university activities. According to the contracts and interviews with Human Resources office academic staff get a salary only for teaching activities, not monthly but hourly for each delivered lecture. Only affiliated staff get a monthly salary. It must be mentioned that academic and invited staff have the same system of remuneration and academic staff do not get a salary for scientific performance. IN fact the University has "invited" academic staff who are responsible only for delivering lectures. According to this remuneration system fulfilment of research activities may be questioned.

The University has provided a workload scheme which includes the teaching workload and it does not include scientific/research/creative/performing and other activities.

According to this scheme several issues appeared:

1. Affiliated professor of English philology at the same time occupies an administrative position. According to the job description, working hours are from 10:00 to 19:00 h. (Monday-Friday). The weekly workload is 24 hours. At the same time this person is the head of program and as the professor involved in research/scientific performance.
2. Weekly workload of associate professor of the law program is 34 hours, also has an obligation to be involved in research activities and take part in universities' activities.
3. Invited lecturer of law program has 40-hour workload.
4. Associate professor of the law program occupies 2 administrative positions. According to the job description, working hours are from 10:00 to 19:00 h. (Monday-Friday). This person is also the head of program with a weekly workload of 26 hours. There is also an obligation to be involved in research activities and other university activities.
5. Associate professor of business administration program has 31-hour workload. There is also an obligation to be involved in research activities and other university activities. This huge workload will not afford this person to fulfill their obligations.
6. Affiliated professor of business administration occupies rectors/director's positions, at the same time the weekly workload is 8 hour and as the professor is involved in research/scientific performance.
7. Affiliated assistant professor at the same time occupies administrative position. According to the job description working hours are from 10:00 to 19:00 h. (Monday-Friday). The weekly workload is 12 hour and has an obligation to be involved in research activities and take part in universities activities. Also this person is the head of the department of learning process and is the only person who is responsible for these duties.
8. Affiliated associate professor at the same time occupies an administrative position. According to the job description working hours are from 10:00 to 19:00 every day. At the same time the weekly workload is 18 hour and as the professor is also involved in research activities.

The panel interviewed the Human Resources and Law offices and asked if the University had some restrictions for academic staff which at the same time are occupying administrative positions. It appeared that the University has not developed this, but Human Resources office explained that restrictions should be defined.

Staff workload must be adequate and must be in line with current legislation requirements. Currently staffs' workload at the University is not adequate and it may lead to crucial issues and finally cause non-fulfilment of responsibilities.

The University has developed a methodology for planning the number of academic/invited personal. This document is very general, and it is impossible to identify the reasons which cause the belonging of a professor or associate professor to each program. To ensure programme sustainability, while planning the number of academic, scientific and invited staff, the institution must consider the number of existing and future students on each programme, the specifics of the programme, and best international practices. HEI does not have such regulations.

During the site visit for checking learning processes the panel asked the University to present timetables for the next semester both for Tbilisi and Signaghi buildings. According to these timetables crucial issues appeared. Lectures in Signaghi and Tbilisi are planned to be delivered by the same staff at the same time. For example:

1. on Tuesday a member of staff delivers lectures in Signaghi from 12:00 to 14:50. At the same day as delivering lectures in Tbilisi from 13:00 to 16:50.
2. on Monday a member of staff delivers lectures in Signaghi from 10:00 to 12:50. At the same day delivering lectures in Tbilisi from 11:00 to 13:50.

<p>3. on Monday a member of staff delivers lectures in Signaghi from 10:00 to 12:50.at the same day delivering lectures in Tbilisi from 13:00 to 15:50.</p> <p>4. on Friday a member of staff delivers lectures in Signaghi from 13:00 to 14:50. At the same day delivering lectures in Tbilisi from 10:00 to 12:50.</p> <p>The panel interviewed the deans' office at Signaghi and asked about operation of learning processes, especially the panel were interested in the system of delivering lectures by the staff which are travelling from Tbilisi. The Deans' office responded that staff did not miss lectures and lectures were delivered face to face without using an e-learning program. According to these timetables and interviews the learning process cannot be effectively delivered during this semester.</p> <p>According to the above-mentioned documents number and workload of academic and invited staff is not adequate for the University's educational programmes and other functions assigned to them and the implementation of educational programs is not ensured.</p>
<p><b>Evidences/indicators</b></p> <p>Contracts</p> <p>Timetables</p> <p>Interviews with staff</p> <p>Individual workload Scheme of staff</p> <p>Job descriptions</p> <p>Self-Evaluation Report</p> <p>Methodology for planning number of academic/invited personal</p>
<p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <p>Develop a detailed transparent methodology and plan for the workloads of academic and invited staff which avoids timetable clashes and enable other activities to be carried out effectively.</p> <p>To Increase number of affiliated academic staff and make adequate ratio between academic and invited staff.</p>
<p><b>Suggestions:</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p><b>Best Practices (if applicable):</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p><input 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 checked="" 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

### 5.1. The Rule for Obtaining and Changing Student Status, the Recognition of Education, and Student Rights

- 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 follows common learning process regulatory procedures which define the assignment, suspension and termination of students' status, mobility, granting qualification, issuing educational documents as well as recognition of education received during the learning period. The University has the regulations for students' status assignment, suspension and termination, also for mobility, granting qualification, issuing educational documents, recognition of education. As stated in the Self-Evaluation Document, and as it was examined through the web-site all the information about learning process regulation is public and available for students. Nevertheless, while visiting Signaghi campus the official documents of recognition of Azerbaijan students has been requested and the provided ones were not signed by university or a student itself. University delivered only one document and at the end of the working day which raises suspicious whether it was signed that day.

Students' rights are defined in a student's contract. The website provides the information about any regulatory procedures, also payment of fees and conditions. The students have an opportunity to view the information about any issue related to their learning process management. Although rights are defined by documents and papers were on place during the visit, the interviews with students, especially with international students (from Azerbaijan) revealed that they do not know their rights and the university does not protect them completely as it should.

According to the SER students' rights and legitimate interests are protected by the provisions of the University, the contents of internal legal acts and the structural units implementing student's services. In addition, each student is entitled to apply to the University with a complaint and request to react to their opinions. Different structural units such as Self-Government, SEIS Service (Student Employment and Initiative Service) work with students in order to meet their interests.

During the interviews with the students at Tbilisi Campus of the University it revealed that the students know their rights and know where and how to appeal in case they have complaints. Some of the students brought the examples when they had some needs (e.g. there was a need for more computers and books in the library) and the University satisfied their requests.

The University has 218 foreign students (from Azerbaijan, Nigeria, Iran, Turkey, Syria in both campuses – Tbilisi and Signaghi). During the interviews with the students it revealed that they can only say a few words in Georgian or English although they study on Georgian and English educational programmes at the University. Both foreign students and administrative staff admitted that they have passed exams of the current semester and payed fee for the semester. However, they have not obtained appropriate ECTS yet. According to the case with Georgian language competence and knowledge of study process we can judge that foreign students' interests and rights are not appropriately protected at the university.

The situation in Signaghi Campus is different in terms of Georgian students' conditions. During interviews it revealed that they do not know how they get credits and how they have to register on courses.

According to SER Students Self-Government are elected by an open ballot, on the basis of universal, equal direct elections. However, interviews revealed that current Self-Government was assigned by the Rector himself. On the other hand, students' voice seems to be heard in the university due to the fact that student body has a representative in academic council.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

Self-evaluation report of Tbilisi Teaching University

Student's contract

University regulations

A rule of regulation the learning process

Rule of recognition ECTS

Web-page (<http://tu.edu.ge/>) 6

Interviews in Tbilisi and Signaghi campuses

#### **Recommendations:**

Develop a process to protect the rights of international students.

<p>Ensure student self governance is independent though giving it right to be elected by student body</p> <p>Ensure international students Georgian language competence if they are enrolled on Georgian programs</p> <p>Ensure effective involvement of students body in the decision making process of the institution from both campuses</p>
<p><b>Suggestions:</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p><b>Best Practices (if applicable):</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements</p> <p>Partially complies with requirements</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements</p>
<p><b>5.2 Student Support Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ HEI has student consulting services in order to plan educational process and improve academic performance</li> <li>○ HEI has career support service, which provides students with appropriate counselling and support regarding employment and career development</li> <li>○ HEI ensures students awareness and involvement in various university-level, local and international projects and events, and supports student initiatives</li> <li>○ HEI has mechanisms, including financial mechanisms to support low SES students</li> </ul>
<p><b>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements</b></p> <p>According to SER, Students support activities are presented in the Legal Acts of the Teaching University with the declared procedures and principles. The University provides students with consultation and support for improving the learning process and academic achievements. Consultation days and hours are provided in each syllabus and is posted on the information boards. The information has been confirmed during the interviews with the University representatives and with students partially. It should be underlined that not all the students seemed to know how they could register on courses at the beginning of the semester. According to some of them faculty helps them to select courses in each semester although the university has electronic portal which seems to enable university to launch such options for students as selecting and registering on courses.</p> <p>When it comes to foreign students (218 in total) it should again be noted that they have considerable difficulties in their study process. Representatives of administration explained that foreign students have translators who help them understand courses. However, it was not clear how they could manage to do individual work and even communicate with their Georgian peers. Additionally, Signaghi Campus site-visit results should be considered – there are 159 foreign students (from Azerbaijan). In terms of language understanding they have considerable difficulties. During the interviews with academic staff one of the lecturers (lecturer of business administration) admitted that within the same course where he teaches Georgian and Azerbaijani students, Georgian students have to do individual work while Azerbaijani students do not have individual work at all. Azerbaijani students have translator who helps them during classes.</p> <p>Otherwise, students are aware of where to get help when they have questions. They have close contact with administration and can get any kind of information they need.</p> <p>The University has career support service, a structural unit – SEIS (Students Employment and Initiative Centre) which provide students with such career services as CV and motivation letter writing trainings, meeting with different external guest and so on. However, the centre is mostly used by the external providers and in such cases, trainings are not free but for students the University administration makes</p>

some discounts. Everything was confirmed by the administration and students. The only thing is that centre seems to be new and it is slightly difficult to see the action plan or development mechanism which will ensure proper career counselling for students. Needs analysis are done based on informal meeting and discussions with students. Moreover, according to the standards career centre should have counselling services which could not be examine during the visit.

It should be noted that university has agreement with AIESEC which is one of the biggest volunteering service networks in the world. The organization has its room at the University and according to the interviews actively cooperates with the administration and students.

Many courses at the University integrates component of practice with teaching and based on memorandums students have a chance to go for practice to different employers.

The University organizes different activities for students such as conferences, cultural and sports events. Self-government organizes informational meetings with students to find out their interests and to play a role of moderator between them and university administration. So far they have organized several cultural and sports events. At the moment Self-government works with other universities Self-government on the project which elaborates on environmental protection. However, during interviews with students and with President of Self-government their participation in decision-making process was not confirmed. The only case in this regard is students' representative in Academic Council.

Unfortunately, site-visit in Signaghi campus revealed that students are isolated from what is done or what is going on in Tbilisi Campus. Students seemed that they even did not know about career service centre which exists at the University. There is separate students Self-government at Signaghi campus which has only one representative however it was not revealed that she has connections with Tbilisi Campus Self-government.

According to SER and interviews with the administration revealed that the University strives to internationalization of student body. But site-visit and interviews with students revealed that there are only few cases when students had a chance to go abroad. Also, not very systematic approach for general internationalization of student body was stated.

According to SER the University has support system for low SES students, including financial benefit mechanisms, which are expressed as a one-time assistance and 10%-20% reduction in the tuition fees. The system of gradual redistribution of tuition fees is effective at the university. During the interviews students admitted that tuition fee is one of the main reasons of the enrolment at this university.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

Self-evaluation report of Tbilisi Teaching University

Memorandums with employers

List of implemented and planned activities

Regulation of students' self-government

Regulation of structural units conducting students' services

Rule of regulating the learning process

Web-page (<http://tu.edu.ge/>)

Interviews in Tbilisi and Signaghi campuses

#### **Recommendations:**

Deliver proper student consultations on electing compulsory and optional courses

Develop a systematic approach to involving students in the decision-making processes

Review Students services to include processes for the valid needs analysis of students

Develop a systematic approach and mechanisms for delivering career services

Develop a systematic process for internationalization of the student body

Develop a process where students have equal access to Student Services across both Tbilisi and Signaghi campuses.

<b>Suggestions:</b> None
<b>Best Practices (if applicable):</b> None
<b>Evaluation</b>  <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

<b>6.1 Research Activities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ HEI, based on its type and specifics of its fields, carries out research/creative activities.</li> <li>○ Ensuring the effectiveness of doctoral research supervision</li> <li>○ HEI has public, transparent and fair procedures for the assessment and defense of dissertations which are relevant to the specifics of the field</li> </ul>
<b>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements</b>  <p>The mission of the university does not mention the research activities at all, suggesting that research is not a priority of the university. In addition, according to its Charter and specifics, the university does not have doctoral level, and integration of teaching and research only happens on the Master's level. Nevertheless, the university regulatory documents, as well as its strategy and action plan underline that the university enhances the development of research and supports its academic personnel in conducting research. Research performance is even mentioned to be one of the criteria for evaluating the performance of the university personnel. Nevertheless, these documents do not point out any research direction/priorities the university promotes, or how the research activities will be supported, either financially or technically. The strategic document only mentions the memoranda signed with various partners for conducting joint research, however, the memoranda provided to the panel are mainly about staff/student exchange or internship opportunities. In other words, the university does not have a strategy for promoting research.</p> <p>Despite such a focus on research, the university activities in this respect are rather scarce. One of the major activities the university conducts for supporting research is publishing of the Georgian language academic journal entitled "Science and Life." The editorial board of the journal consists of Georgian and foreign scholars. However, the involvement of the international members of the board is limited: the articles are mostly published in Georgian with English and Russian abstracts. On some occasions, the papers are published in Russian and in very limited numbers – in English. According to the journal coordinator, the papers are translated into English only in case any of the foreign board members are interested to review the paper and ask for translations. In most cases, the review of the papers is done locally by the editorial board; no blind review processes were identified which would guarantee the objective assessment of the quality of papers. In addition, the members of the editorial board contribute to the journal as authors on regular basis that further diminishes the possibility of objective review.</p> <p>The university provides information on the Master's theses defended at its premise underlining that Master's students supervision is one of the obligations of the university. For this purpose, relevant procedures and documents are submitted. The university does have a regulatory document on how the Master's thesis should be visually and substantially formed, however, the Master's dissertations that were monitored during the site visit demonstrate that these regulations remain only on paper, as the papers clearly lacked to meet the requirements, greatly vary from one another visually and in terms of academic writing rules. For instance, the despite the fact that the university has adopted its own citation method, various forms of citation were used in the dissertations; in most cases, the structure of the theses did not coincide with the university rules.</p>

<p><b>Evidences/indicators</b></p> <p>Self-Evaluation Document  Strategy and action plan  Regulatory document on Evaluation System of Personnel Scientific Productivity  Academic journal  Master's thesis preparation and evaluation criteria and procedures  Interviews with staff and students  Master's theses</p>
<p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <p>Ensure the process for the external peer review of the academic journal follows a systematic and effective process.  Ensure that the international board of the academic journal is permanently and not only fragmentally involved in the editorial process  Revise the regulations on Masters' thesis defense and make sure it is properly enacted during the defense process</p> <p>–</p>
<p><b>Suggestions:</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p><b>Best Practices (if applicable):</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></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><b>6.2. Research Support and Internationalization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ HEI has an effective system in place for supporting research, development and creative activities</li> <li>○ Attracting new staff and their involvement in research/arts-creative activities.</li> <li>○ University works on internationalization of research, development and creative activities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements</b></p> <p>The university, its strategic and action plans and self-assessment form declare that the university supports the research activities of its staff. This is mostly accomplished through publishing academic journal mentioned above. In addition, it is mentioned that academic research is supported through providing funding based on transparent and fair procedures. However, exact procedures for funding research is not explained. Also, there is little evidence that the university provides resources (either material or in terms of laboratories, etc.) to the personnel to conduct research and integrate their research outcomes into teaching. The budget for research is very scarce and consists of 7000 GEL for 2018, though in previous years it was much lower (1000-1500 GEL for 2016; 3000-5400 GEL for 2017). Despite the fact that the university conducts academic programs in agricultural engineering and food technology, there are no laboratories or facilities for such specific programs on the university premises and the only option to get access to laboratories is the memoranda of partnership with other organizations. However, even in case personnel and students are provided occasional access to these laboratories, the absence of the facilities on the university premises may hinder the consistent and permanent research activities. In addition, there is no evidence that the university provide internal research grants to its personnel: the only material support provided is the funds for preparing textbooks, and no comprehensive finances are allocated for funding fieldwork required for multiple disciplines the university has. In addition, the scheme for allocating the research funds is not clear and it is hard to</p>

determine on what basis the funds are distributed. Furthermore, there is no evidence that the university provides assistance or encourages its staff in acquiring research grants outside the university (through external donors). The projects that the university applies for are merely for exchange or training purposes and not for research.

The university lacks strategy and certain measures for attracting emerging and junior scholars. However, considering the specifics of the university (absence of doctoral level), this aspect cannot be evaluated. Nevertheless, it also lacks clarity on how Master's students are engaged in research apart from working on their theses that is part of the academic program. The self-assessment form underlines that annually the university organizes students' conferences. The university website does contain some information on the upcoming students' conference, though no exact information on thematic, regularity or any other details on already conducted conferences is provided.

The university does not have a strategy for internationalization of research. The only activity done in this respect is conducting annual international conferences, however, the submitted documents and the self-assessment form only mention one international conference that was conducted in 2017. No information on other conferences was provided either in the self-assessment documents or during the site visit. There is no evident that the university conducts any joint research projects with international partners. Again, the only activity involving international partners is the mobility projects the university implements. The university provided memoranda of understanding with various organizations, including foreign organizations, such as AIESEC and Mevlana Exchange Programme promoting student and staff exchange. The university participates in Erasmus+ several projects and thus, supports the involvement of the university in international networks. The list of partnership agreements and memoranda of understanding with various local and international universities, such as University of Oradea, Romanian Academy – Branch of Timisoara, University of Finance and Management in Warsaw, etc. are also provided; majority of them support the exchange of scholarly thought, conducting joint research projects, organizing joint forums and conferences, as well as staff and student exchange. Despite the number of memoranda supporting the joint academic research and internationalization of research, there is little evident that these activities are implemented in practice. The university does not provide any information about ongoing or planned research activities with the international partners. In addition, the majority of these agreements are signed within past 1 year, therefore, their practical implications and usage is less evident.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

University website ([www.tu.edu.ge](http://www.tu.edu.ge))  
 Budget 2016, 2017, 2018  
 Strategic development and action plans  
 Visual inspection of the facilities during the site visit  
 Interviews with staff and students  
 Memoranda of understanding with various partners

#### **Recommendations:**

Review the research budget and to allocate internal grants to support research activities  
 Provide support to the academic personnel for applying for external donors  
 Create facilities/laboratories for those disciplines that require such premises (namely agricultural engineering and food safety)  
 Establish criteria for allocation of research funds;  
 Make the academic networking events and conferences more systematic and frequent  
 Create clear strategy for internationalization of research and respective action plan.

#### **Suggestions:**

None

#### **Best Practices (if applicable):**

None
<b>Evaluation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partially complies with requirements</li> </ul> </li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements</li> </ul>
<b>6.3. Evaluation of Research Activities</b>
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.
<b>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements</b> <p>The university provides rules and regulations on the procedures and criteria for evaluation of research activities and academic productivity of the academic staff. Research is regarded as one of the main obligations of the academic personnel, that should occupy certain amount of their workload. Consequently, the university regulations do have assessment criteria for this performance, among them the number of ongoing research projects, grant projects, academic publications, etc. However, this assessment system does not include any specific details on what can be regarded as academic productivity: no information about the number of publications in international/local peer reviewed or impact factor journals, citation index or any relevant assessment criteria. Some information on the requirements is provided in the document on the procedures on selecting academic personnel, though not for those who already occupy academic positions.</p> <p>In addition to lack of clear criteria, the university does not provide any evidence for academic performance and monitoring of the university personnel, such as list of joint or individual research projects or awarded grants. The only evidence provided in this respect is the list of publications of the academic personnel; though almost absolute majority of these lists contain the publication in Georgian language in local editions, particularly in the university-managed academic journal. No citation index is provided for the personnel. No analysis of the scientific performance of the university is done or published, thus, the university management is not able to define the strong or weak points of its scientific activity, forecast the priority areas or plan future endeavors in respect to research performance.</p> <p>Despite the above-mentioned fact that according to the regulation, the academic performance of the personnel should also include their research performance, the site visits made it obvious that this provision does not work in practice. The academic personnel are aware that they are also required to conduct research, however, their remuneration only depends on the number of hours they teach. Therefore, the formal regulations are not enacted.</p>
<b>Evidences/indicators</b> <p>Regulatory document entitled "System for Evaluation of Personnel Academic Productivity Interviews with staff and students</p>
<b>Recommendations:</b> <p>Define clearer criteria for academic performance, including the requirement to publish in internationally recognized journals; Consider Including research performance in the remuneration policy of the academic staff; Collect and analyse the data of the scientific performance of the academic staff for future forecasting and planning.</p>
<b>Suggestions:</b> <p>Include the citation index in the assessment of research performance</p>



**Best Practices (if applicable):**

None

**Evaluation**

- ☐ 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 Self-Evaluation Report states that the total area of the Teaching University based on the addresses and the main features of the infrastructure are:

The main buildings of the Teaching University, N1 and N2, are located in Tbilisi, Egnate Ninoshvili str., N 55. Cadastre code of land (real estate) 01.16.01.014.017. Building N1-1204.18 sq.m; Building N2 is under construction and is 133.35 sq.m and will be completed soon. The Teaching University from 2016-2017 academic year for training purposes uses Signaghi Training building at the address: Signaghi District, Sakobo, University Str. N32; Cadastral code of land (real estate) 56.03.57.046; The existing applicable area is 2136 sq.m. The building is located in the three-story building, Educational process is running on the second and third floors.

The possession of building N1 (Ninoshvili street N55) is certified with the extract from public registry (possession length 10 years, till 2028, lean lease contract). According to the extract from public registry Davit Jangulashvili owns Building N2, which is still under construction. The Head of quality assurance office explained that Davit Jangulashvili gave the right to Tbilisi teaching university to manage real estate (building N2) and this is certified by the contract. The Contract is not registered in public registry and the possession of real estate is not certified with the extract from public registry.

The University presented a contract which expires on 14 December 2018, and according to this contract the University possesses a building located in Signaghi. This contract is not in line with current authorization standards, because agreements for possession of fixed assets should be made for at least a period of authorization to be granted. The Director of the University presented a Contract signed on 25 April 2018 and according to this contract real estate located in Signaghi is in the possession of University for 10 years period. This contract is not registered in the public registry, so the director was not able to provide the extract from public registry, he explained that the public registry has rejected registration of the contract until the current contract expires

The Self-Evaluation Report states that Auditoriums located in the main teaching area of the Teaching University, at 55 Egnate Ninoshvili str., in Tbilisi are equipped with the necessary desks for training purposes (59 three-place, 468 units double, 15 units four-place), chairs (1470), boards- 23 units; In the main building of the Teaching University there are 3 computer classes equipped with relevant software and computers Classrooms in both buildings have natural as well as artificial light possibilities,

In total university owns 102 computers. Out of these 74 computers are with powerful parameters.



Documents presented by the University do not certify possession of above mentioned chairs, computers and desks. According to the documentation the University owns: 13 computers, 650 chairs and 65 desks.

Educational space is not equipped with necessary facilities for educational programme, The University does not have sufficient teaching/scientific-research laboratories. Many classrooms both in Tbilisi and Signaghi are equipped only with blackboards. The Tbilisi building has: a moot court and news rooms, which are very basic. During the site visit it appeared that computer classes are equipped with 36 computers, in Signaghi there are only 10 computers and 203 students are involved in learning processes. The University has 590 active students. The SER states that the maximum student capacity is 1300. According to the provided documents and information the University does not have adequate material resources to ensure 1300 students with educational process.

The University has provided 10 agreements concluded with practice objects, one of these agreements has expired (ltd – radio imedi). Some agreements for practice objects were not presented, for example for the law and public administration programmes.

During the site visit it was found out, that sanitary units, were not cleaned and organized as appropriate, especially in Signaghi. Sanitary units do not observe sanitary-hygienic conditions. The Sanitary unit in Signaghi does not have windows and ventilation system, it was impossible to close the entrance door. There is a heating system in both buildings, but there is not ventilation system. In Signaghi it was very hot, in such circumstances it is impossible to learn effectively. Evidence about upgrading the existing system of ventilation and timeframe for its operation was not provided. During the site visit the University presented a document certifying compliance with sanitary norms. The contract was signed on 20 June 2018. The University also provided another contract (1.01.2018) which certifies the compliance of sanitary norms, but only in Tbilisi.

Approved Evacuation plan, documents related to uninterruptible power supply system, electricity, water and natural gas utilities were presented. Conclusion on fire safety was presented only for the building located in Tbilisi.

Health and safety of students and staff is not protected within the institution. The University presented conclusions on safety which were prepared on 20 June 2018. The University does not have a security video recording and storing outside of the buildings, inside the buildings there are not sufficient cameras, on the 5th floor (Tbilisi) and on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor (Signaghi) does not have cameras. Medical cabinet in Signaghi is located in a classroom which is not equipped with ventilation, and a constant supply of cold and hot water. Medical cabinet in Tbilisi was not properly equipped, hot water was not available, room was located on the ground floor which caused smell and dampness. Buildings do not have additional emergency exits (where doors open inside out and cannot be made of iron).

The SER states that the University has developed fire prevention and safety, first aid, and order mechanisms and documents were presented certifying the possession of fire prevention and medical inventory. The University has contracts with staff responsible for security and provision of medical assistance.

The SER states that the space for study purposes in both buildings of the University is partially adapted to students with special educational needs, namely, educational spaces equipped with ramps that allow students with special needs to move independently. Improvement of infrastructure in this direction is underway. During the site visit it was found out that the University in Signaghi does not have adapted environment for people with special needs, In Tbilisi university has a special equipment on the stairs but it was useless and it was impossible to use it independently.

Students with special educational needs do not have access to the library and adapted sanitary unit. It is impossible to use the ramps independently. The Rector of University said that he was going to buy an elevator, but money is not provided in the budget.

As stated in the SER, according to the strategy and the relevant action plan the adaptation of the buildings is defined; the mentioned process is foreseen in two stages:

Projecting stage: The designers were invited by the University to study constructive characteristics of the building and to present the relevant conclusion and project for admission to the University before the 1 of April 2018. 2nd stage of adaptation: In accordance with the submitted adaptation project, the University provides the perfect adaptation of the two buildings in accordance with the terms set out in the project. According to the action plan the University should have adapted environment for the people with special needs at the end of 2018, however money is not provided in the budget for these activities.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

Documents certifying the possession of real estate, contracts, extract from the Public Registry.

Documents confirming the acquisition of inventory.

<p>Agreements concluded with practice objects.</p> <p>Receipts certifying payment of electricity, water and natural gas utilities.</p> <p>Document certifying compliance with sanitary norms.</p> <p>Fire prevention and safety, First Aid, and Order mechanisms/documentation.</p> <p>Documents certifying the approval of evacuation plans.</p> <p>Documents certifying the possession of fire prevention and medical inventory.</p> <p>Action plan.</p> <p>Budget.</p> <p>Self-Evaluation Report.</p> <p>Interviews with staff and students.</p> <p>Tour of the facilities.</p> <p>Conclusion on Fire safety.</p> <p>Employment agreements made with staff responsible for security and provision of medical assistance.</p>
<p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <p>Ensure that the University environment is adapted for people with special needs.</p> <p>Fully Equip the buildings with security cameras.</p> <p>Ensure there are sufficient number of computers for the needs of the University.</p> <p>Ensure that the University provides sanitary-hygienic conditions for all staff and students.</p> <p>Ensure that University buildings are sufficiently ventilated.</p> <p>Establish scientific/research laboratories appropriate for the needs of the University.</p> <p>Provide an appropriate medical cabinet for the needs of the University.</p>
<p><b>Suggestions:</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p><b>Best Practices (if applicable):</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p><input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements</p>
<p><b>7.2. Library Resources</b></p> <p>Library environment, resources and service support effective implementation of educational and research activities, and HEI constantly works for its improvement.</p> <p><b>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements</b></p> <p>The SER states that there is a library on both campuses of the University, in Tbilisi and in Signaghi. The library provides students, professors and administrative personnel with books, magazines, periodical publications, electronic resources and databases. Currently the book fund of the library in total consists of 12,980 books, out of which 123 books have been purchased in 2016-2017. Among them the library on Signaghi campus has 700 printed and 450 electronic books. The library has access to the network "Open Biblio". The library staff are equipped with the appropriate skills and knowledge. It is available for students and staff no less than 6 days a week, 60 hours as defined in the instructions of the library and in contracts of librarians. In both campuses library has a printer, copy machine and scanner – one in each. However, at Signaghi campus these facilities are available in the space belonging to staff. Students should ask library staff for using them.</p> <p>Library regulations on how to use it is on place and is published on the web-site but the interviews showed no evidence on how students equally get informative support from library usage either in Tbilisi or Signaghi campuses.</p>

The site visit and careful examination of library resources revealed that the library resources are limited and there are only 7 PCs. The room is also not large and there is no isolated or independent group workspace. The library staff stated that the library is open 54 hours per week, rather than 60 hours. According to the representatives of the library they have access to electronic resources which are provided by the National Scientific Library of Georgia but the access to the journals are limited i.e. there are some journals with access but mostly abstracts are available and not full texts. Library staff stated that they can request statistical data on the usage however they have not done it yet. The books are mostly in Georgian and there are only a small number of books in English. At the Signaghi campus the book resources are very limited. Moreover, facilities in terms of workspace and computers were worse in Signaghi campus.

During the visit to the library of the Signaghi campus it was revealed that library staff are not aware how to use resources, specifically how to access electronic journals.

According to the library staff they purchase books based on the requirements of students and academic staff. They have mentioned that they provide informative meetings with students on how to use materials.

In general the University Quality Assurance office evaluates the quality of library resources, staff and students' satisfaction but the library staff did not seem to be aware how to use this information or other statistical data for setting improvements.

During the interviews with students they stated that library resources is one of the areas which should be improved at the university. One of the areas of improvement is book fund. Students also admitted that the book fund should be enlarged.

#### **Evidences/indicator**

Self-Evaluation Report.

Interviews with staff and students at Tbilisi and Signaghi campuses.

Electronic catalogue.

Contract regarding OpenBiblio.

Electronic databases.

Other library resources.

#### **Recommendations:**

Provide a library with sufficient up-to-dated library resources (books, access to electronic journals, facilities).

Ensure that the Library staff are able to use information provided by the quality assurance system for future improvements.

Ensure that Library staff are suitably trained to use electronic resources

Library staff should do statistical surveys how the resources are used to set improvements.

Students should have isolated working group space and free access to the facilities.

Library should provide supportive and informative services for students.

#### **Suggestions:**

None

#### **Best Practices (if applicable):**

None

#### **Evaluation**

- ☐ 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**

The University has IT management policy and procedures, which is a 2-page document, providing general information about functions of IT service. Policy and procedures should be written more thoroughly, indicating purpose, strategy, detailed procedures, stakeholders, etc. Policies define how IT Service will approach security, how employees (staff/faculty) and students are to approach security, and how certain situations will be handled.

IT risks have not been evaluated by independent consultants.

The University is planning to introduce electronic services and electronic management systems, which will ensure effectiveness, efficiency and accessibility of management of services and processes. IT department already has negotiations with service provider.

Panel has noticed that not all rooms and all the time are provided with Internet access.

English version of official web page is not fully updated, in some cases, translations differ from Georgian version, for instance mission statement.

The university provided the documentation for the IT management, such as the statutory documents for the IT department, functions and IT management policy. The documents contain information on the security and safety measures for the IT infrastructure, protection of the equipment, back-up services, infrastructural upgrade.

The university, especially Tbilisi campus is equipped with the electronic equipment, namely, the meeting rooms, conference halls, library, administrative offices are equipped with the computers, projectors and other materials, though the majority of classrooms are equipped only with whiteboards that hinders the possibility for the lecturers to use multimedia or other modern online teaching facilities. There are computer classes for students, however, the number of computers is not proportionate to the number of overall student contingent. The computers are relatively new, though with very basic (non-licensed) software, such as MS Office and Adobe Photoshop.

In case of Signaghi campus, there are more problems in respect to IT infrastructure. There are no computers in the library, computer class contains very small number of computers. The majority of the classrooms are equipped with the blackboards only and no equipment.

The university has an agreement with one of the local IT service providers (ini.ge) that has already created students' records management system, though due to its ineffectiveness the system is practically not used either by students or professors, the system is being modified by the service provider. The new system will combine not only students' records but will transfer the entire university management system into online version. The process is not yet finalized; therefore, it is not possible to assess its effectiveness. According to the plan, the students and personnel private data will be stored on cloud servers for ensuring the data protection. The internal IT office of the university is mostly responsible on providing basic assistance to the personnel and students in respect to the system usage.

The university has a bilingual website, which is user-friendly and easy to orientate. The Georgian version contains all the relevant information, including the mission, strategy and the development plan of the university, list and descriptions of the academic programs (both Bachelor's and Master's), admission requirements, code of conduct for professions and students, information on plagiarism, evaluation criteria and procedures, rules of thesis defense, list of professors according to the faculties (though the contact details of the personnel is missing), information on library resources and other facilities, timetables, information on the exchange programs and related materials. The website does provide list of the academic personnel, though no contact details are displayed.

Different from the Georgian website, the English version is less informative, though the university has more than 150 foreign students. It contains very basic information on the admission requirements and procedures, visa procedures, infrastructure and dormitory (which is not functioning yet). The English website lacks rest of the information, such as code of conduct, provisions of various departments, information on plagiarism, etc.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

University website ([www.tu.edu.ge](http://www.tu.edu.ge))  
 Self-Evaluation Report  
 Tour of Tbilisi and Signaghi campuses  
 Agreement with ini.ge  
 Interviews with staff and students at Tbilisi and Signaghi.

#### **Evaluation**

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

#### **Recommendations:**

Provide a sufficient number of computers for the number of students enrolled.  
 Upgrade the IT infrastructure of Signaghi campus to provide comparability with the Tbilisi campus.  
 Synchronize the English website with the Georgian one and update it on regular basis

#### **Suggestions:**

Display the contact information of its academic personnel on the website for facilitating the communication with students and potential collaborators.

#### **Best Practices (if applicable):**

None

#### **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 SER states that the budget is set according to the priorities of the University and after consultation with the structural units. It goes on to say that the budget is then monitored and reported on in a transparent manner. The process is managed by the Strategic Planning, Finance and Material Resources Service. The SER also states that the University has sufficient funds to carry out the learning processes, solve all the problems that could threaten this as well as fulfill their short and long term strategic plans. The SER goes on to say that there is management accountability for finances and that the accounts are audited by an Audit Company.

The Strategic Plan states that the main goal of the University is to have quality, affordable academic programmes with effective management and increased student numbers and also to develop the Kakheti campus. However it is not clear to the team how they plan to do this.

The budgets provided for 2016 and 2017 are very brief but show a declining income, 2018 forecasts a slight rise in income but it is unknown if this is likely to be achieved. Student numbers are declining as there are only approximately 700 students against a capacity stated as 1300. Also there is a low retention rate on programmes, for example the Masters programmes have only 17% completion.

Budgets are set annually but it was evident from meeting with staff concerned that they were not linking this to the strategic plan and there was not a long-term strategy to ensure that budgets supported the actions in the strategic plan. The amounts of money allocated to, for example, research 7,000 GEL, conferences, 2,500 GEL, library resources 9,000 GEL, computers 9,000 GEL and marketing 8,500 GEL are completely unrealistic to achieve the strategic plan. It seems also that staff have unrealistic expectations of what is achievable with the finances available. The staff comments were often: 'we've managed so far' or 'we hope to manage in the future'. An example is the plans to increase recruitment on the Bachelor Agro Engineering programme. Staff said that they hope to recruit 30 students in September, but they had no information on what actions the University was taking to achieve this. Likewise the University hopes to attract foreign students but have no realistic strategy or supporting finance to make this happen. There also appears to be limited financial transparency as many staff could not give reliable information on budgets available and often stated that they had to ask the Rector if they needed any finance. The team did not see any evidence of an effective system for financial accountability, management and control other than directly through the Rector. The team examined a document called 'Document of Financial Management and Control System' but did not see any evidence of the contents of it happening in practice.

In summary, student numbers and income are low and likely to decline further, there are no realistic plans to increase income and the budget does not support the strategic and action plans. There seems to be poor financial management and planning and it does not, for most staff, play a part in decision making and there is a lack of financial transparency with most financial decisions being taken by the owner/director. There seems to be a lack of awareness of the risk if the plans are not achieved and no plan for business continuity.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

Self-Evaluation Report.  
Budgets (2016/17/18).  
Strategic Development and Action Plans.  
Interviews with staff.

#### **Recommendations:**

Ensure that financial planning is clearly linked to the strategic and action plans and is achievable.  
Allocate appropriate finance to the core activities of the University.  
Ensure the budget provides sufficient finance for scientific research and library functioning and development.  
Implement an effective system for accountability, financial management and control

#### **Suggestions:**

None

#### **Best Practices (if applicable):**

None

#### **Evaluation**

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