განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

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Higher Education Institution Authorization Experts' Final Report

Caucasus International University

Expert Panel Members

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Members:

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Tbilisi

2018

Authorization Report Résumé

General information on the educational institution

Caucasus International University LLC (CIU) is based in Tbilisi. It was founded as a medical institute in 1995 and is now authorized as a private university. It has 3433 students enrolled across 11 bachelor programmes (3 offered in English), 4 single-cycle medical and dental programmes (2 offered in English) that integrate bachelor and master level study, 6 master programmes (1 offered in English), and 3 PhD programmes (one not accredited at the time of the evaluation visit, subject to appeal). There are five faculties: Medicine, Law, Business Administration, Social Sciences, and Viticulture & Winemaking. Bachelor students amount to nearly 60% of the total, and medical and dental students to nearly 30%; international students amount to nearly 20%. There are 459 staff, of whom 191 (42%) are academic staff, 148 (32%) are invited staff involved in teaching, and 118 (26%) are administrative and support staff; there are also 124 affiliated staff.

Brief overview of the evaluation process for authorization: SER and site visit

CIU provided a Self-Evaluation Report (SER) of just over 100 pages, supported by a variety of statistical annexes and a range of other documentation by way of evidence, in English and in Georgian (Kartuli). Members of the task groups that prepared the SER told the Panel that they had found the process instructive in showing how much progress CIU had made since its previous authorization review, and the self evaluation has evidently been a spur to further development. Having read the SER and other evidence in the light of the Authorization Standards for Higher Education Institutions (the Standards), the Panel formulated a list of questions to help it evaluate CIU's compliance with the Standards. CIU also provided access to further documentation on request.

After a preparatory meeting on 1 October 2018, the Panel visited CIU from 2 to 4 October. It met a wide range of academic and professional support staff at all levels, and students and other stakeholders, and it visited the facilities. Those who met the Panel appeared to be confident and well-informed. The Panel is grateful to all those it met for their open and clear input to the discussions.

In this report, information from the SER, after verification as appropriate, is quoted without further identification.

Overview of the HEI's compliance with standards

Overall, CIU addresses all the Standards. It is well run, well resourced, and well appreciated by its staff and students, as well as by external stakeholders. Where the Panel found any weaknesses, these were mainly associated with managing the growth and change arising from CIU's recent successful development and ambitious plans. Nevertheless, CIU is successfully managing the transition to a medical curriculum that meets the new 2019 benchmarks.

Summary of Recommendations
- CIU should strengthen its analysis of the data it collects by (i) not only describing but also interpreting the data and (ii) showing more clearly how it uses the interpretation to improve programmes.
- CIU should ensure that research supervisors are trained to check that student research work and publications fully meet established academic standards.
- CIU should further its internationalization agenda (i) by developing more collaboration with scientific centres and seeking more international funding, and (ii) by introducing mechanisms to enhance the international visibility of its publications.
- CIU should provide more space and equipment to ensure that the Medicine and Dentistry programmes achieve the best outcomes and fully support compliance with the 2019 MD benchmarks.
- CIU library should acquire more up-to-date literature to support the MD programme in English and more international text books.
- CIU should continue to increase the budget for research to strengthen it further.

Summary of Suggestions
- CIU could enhance the experience of foreign students by strengthening their interactions with Georgian students.
- CIU could develop an explicit research strategy for the medical school.
- CIU could enhance the international context for its research by making more foreign scientific literature and electronic databases available.

- CIU could reduce its financial dependence on tuition fees from foreign students by continuing to increase the proportion of its income from other sources.
- CIU could enhance safety by displaying key safety instructions and warnings in Georgian and English at the entrance to laboratories.

Summary of Best Practices

- CIU provides generous funding for staff development including language skills training.
- CIU's well-equipped Multi-Media Centre gives students practical experience of industry-standard work.

Summary Table of Compliance of HEI with Standards and Standard Components

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

Signatures of expert panel members

1.   Bob Munn (Chair)

2.   Chris Stephens (Co-chair)

3.   Natia Chitashvili (Member)
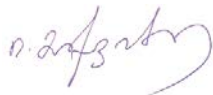
4.   Ana Gvritishvili (Member)

5.   Diana Lezhava (Member)

6.   Irma Manjavidze (Member)

7.   Tsotne Samadashvili (Member)

Compliance of the 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
o 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
CIU has a vision and mission statement created last year that builds upon the previous five-year mission and strategy. The Panel learned that the 'Caucasus' part of the University's name originally referred to Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia, but collaboration did not develop as intended because of political tensions, and so now wider international collaboration is the aim. The mission has at its core the formation of an active member of a democratic society, who is developed to create and share knowledge. The mission states that critical, innovative and creative thinking are decisive factors for personal success and the success of the country, as well as students being prepared to the maximum extent. The mission takes account of stakeholders, the value of being competitive in the labour market, and the goal of Europeanization.
CIU is still a relatively new institution, and in its mission should, to a large extent, respond to the future in recognition of the contemporary culture, especially in relation to recruitment and its diverse student intake. The mission statement corresponds to Georgia's and European higher education goals.
The SER describes the process for developing the mission, and how it links to national priorities. The majority of those who met the Panel (students, academic and non-academic staff) were broadly aware of the mission.
The Panel believes that the mission was well developed and clearly relates to CIU.
Evidences/indicators
Annexes 1.1.1-11
Interviews with Chancellor, Rector, other senior staff, Academic Council
Recommendations: None
Suggestions: None
Best Practices (if applicable): None
Evaluation
☒ Complies with requirements
☐ Substantially complies with requirements
☐ Partially complies with requirements
☐ Does not comply with requirements
1.2 Strategic Development
o HEI has a strategic development (7-year) and an action plans (3-year) in place.
o HEI contributes to the development of the society, shares with the society the knowledge gathered in the institution, and facilitates lifelong learning
o HEI evaluates implementation of strategic and action plans, and duly acts on evaluation results.
Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements
The SER describes the process for developing the 7-year strategic development plans (2018-2024) and 3-year action plan (2018-2021), and the actual plans are available on the web. These give an extensive list of future actions broken down into six major areas with more detail in terms of time-bound achievement and cost implications. The plans are clearly oriented towards the development of society, knowledge exchange and lifelong learning. Both documents were developed in the last year and build on the previous versions. The SER describes how working groups and CIU management were involved in the strategic review as well as external consultants, staff, students, graduates and employers. The strategic planning methodology is grounded in the analysis of

environmental conditions and positive and negative trends in combination with the strengths and weaknesses and capability of CIU activity. A SWOT-analysis was used to help develop the strategy, taking into account current and anticipated resources, competition and future targets. The strategic plan and action plan are monitored, in accordance with internal regulations and procedures. There are annual reports going back over several years. The Rector, Academic Council, deans, quality assurance team, other staff, and students all confirmed the wide dissemination of the plans.
Evidences/indicators
Annex 1.1.1 CIU Strategic Development Plan (2018-2024) Annex 1.1.5 Contracts and Memoranda concluded with CIU partner organizations (employers) Annex 1.1.9 CIU Budget 2018 Annex 1.1.11 CIU Web-page www.ciu.edu.ge Interviews with senior staff, Academic Council, deans, quality assurance team, other staff, students
Recommendations: None
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
o   Organizational structure of HEI ensures implementation of goals and activities described in its strategic plan o   Procedures for election/appointment of the management bodies of HEI are transparent, equitable, and in line with legislation o   HEI's Leadership/Management body ensures effective management of the activities of the institution o   Considering the mission and goals of HEI, leadership of the HEI supports international cooperation of the institution and the process of internationalization
Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements
The university organizational structure uploaded publicly on the university website is typical for private universities. CIU is governed by the Chancellor, who is appointed by its owners, also called the partners. CIU also has a Rector's apparatus, an Academic Council of all programme coordinators, and an Advisory Board composed of representatives from external organizations. It has all the major units, such as a quality assurance office, student support services, a career development centre, a research development department, and other structural units to ensure the effective management of CIU and its academic processes. Although CIU is a family business, which might conceivably hinder the fair appointment of staff to various positions, the site visit clearly showed that each staff member is competent in their directions and are perfectly aware of their obligations. The management of the university is divided between the Chancellor and the Rector, with the Chancellor being the supreme governing body. His responsibility covers the overall management of the university, especially the administrative part, including financial management under powers delegated from the owners. The Rector acts under the Chancellor's aegis and is responsible for academic affairs. The responsibilities of various departments are clearly distributed between them with certain interactions with other departments that ensure overall cohesion in the management. For instance, diploma supplements are prepared by the Academic Process Management Service, but issued by the Student Services Office. Similar structures work between other departments, and between the faculties and administrative departments. For instance, the admission of doctoral students is administered by the Scientific Research Department rather than by the faculties, but the academic aspects of the doctoral studies are overseen by the faculties. As was made clear during the

site visit, such a structure ensures that faculties focus more on academic affairs, with the paperwork controlled by the administrative unit. .

The Student Self-Governance body mediates between students and the CIU administration through advocating student projects or initiatives with the university management and discussing the funding with them. Members of Student Self-Governance are automatically members of faculty councils, but students are not represented on Academic Council. However, the members of Student Self-Governance who met the Panel said they felt no need for representation on Academic Council; membership of faculty councils is sufficient because they know that issues they raise there go on to Academic Council.

The appointment procedures of the management of the university are well-described and seem to be transparent; the Chancellor is the only person appointed solely on the judgement of the owners of CIU. The statutory document of each office displays the job descriptions and the detailed qualification requirements of the applicants. The overall statutory document of the university explains the requirements and obligations of the Rector. The staff of those departments that work under the Rector's aegis are selected by the Rector, although they are officially appointed by the Chancellor owing to negotiations on remuneration. The only positions selected and directly appointed by the Rector's decree are the staff of the Quality Assurance unit (see later).

The structure of the university ensures effective coordination and management of CIU. It employs an appraisal system for its staff. CIU is also keen to employ its own graduates, encouraging students to work as interns in administrative or academic positions where they may be employed after they graduate, provided they meet the normal criteria for the position.

CIU has a Business Continuity Plan that lists a wide range of risks related to external threats and its plans to mitigate them. Risks related to a decreasing number of students are not addressed by the plan, even though student fees make up almost half of the overall budget. However, the site visit made it clear that the diversified income of the university and the financial arrangements and commitments made by the owners will help the university in case of financial crisis.

Given its mission as an international university, CIU has developed an internationalization strategic plan and action plan. The university has signed memoranda with nearly 50 foreign institutions, though not all of them are enacted. Nevertheless, it was clear during the site visit that CIU has very strong links with a number of universities in countries such as Spain, Poland, and elsewhere in Eastern Europe. CIU uses these partnerships to facilitate student and staff mobility (both inbound and outbound), joint research, the introduction of joint academic programmes, etc. CIU also employs recruitment companies to help attract foreign students from specific target countries, having found this more cost-effective than its own efforts.

Evidences/indicators

University structure diagram
University Statute
University Strategic Development Plan
Statutory documents of each administrative unit
Statutory documents of each faculty
Business Continuity Plan
University Internationalization Policy and Action Plan
Memoranda of Partnership with universities and other bodies

Interviews with senior staff, Advisory Board, Academic Council, Student Self-Governance, Scientific Research Department, Student Services Office, International Relations Department

Recommendations: None

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

o   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.
o   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

The university has a Quality Assurance (QA) office under the Rector's aegis. Its head and personnel are appointed by the Rector, different from other offices. The rationale behind this distinctive structure was verified during the site visit: usually, only staff remuneration is negotiated with the Chancellor, but given the importance of the QA office for the management of the university, the Rector is given absolute freedom to negotiate even the remuneration of potential appointees without consulting the Chancellor first.

The QA office statutory document gives clear obligations and functions of the office and its staff. The office is responsible for institutional authorization and programme accreditation procedures and for quality control of the academic programmes, including conducting surveys of students, academic and administrative personnel and alumni and analysing the results. Internal quality assurance is based on the PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Act) approach, and the respective steps are described in the programme development plan. CIU regulates academic programme development with step by step instructions, starting from the programme initiation, discussion, development, approval and monitoring of performance, with the process guided by the QA office. The decision to develop a programme is based on labour market research, as confirmed by the site visit, when the Panel saw labour market research reports.

The Panel confirmed that the QA office performs regular student and staff satisfaction surveys and uses them to develop academic programmes and services. However, the survey reports seen by the Panel contained mainly statistical data, which were mostly described rather than interpreted. Similarly, the document 'Procedure of Application of Quality Evaluation Results and Report on Application of Results' describes the procedure, the changes made during the year, and the strengths of the various academic programmes and the university infrastructure. It makes no explicit link to the inputs to the procedure such as the results from surveys (although staff who met the Panel did give some specific examples) or evaluation by independent experts. Representatives of the QA office observe lectures, but the feedback seen by the Panel appeared largely formulaic. As described below under 3.3, CIU also analyses mark distributions to help lecturers enhance the achievement of learning outcomes. The final 'Act' component of the PDCA cycle should be strengthened so that the methods of analysis and the conclusions are explicit.

The university has a document that sets out the student body planning procedure. For this purpose a special formula is used that considers the number of students and the number of full, associate and assistant professors. The formula also takes into account the overall final benchmark of the university in respect to maximum quantity of student body.

Evidences/indicators

Statutory document for Quality Assurance department
Student satisfaction surveys
2.12.1 The analysis of survey results and relevant reports
Alumni survey
Staff surveys
Labour market research reports for various academic disciplines
2.11.1 Quality Assurance Mechanisms and Evaluation of their Efficiency
2.13 Procedure of Application of Quality Evaluation Results and Report on Application of Results
2.2.8 Rule for Student Contingent Planning and Enrolment

Interviews with Academic Process Management Service, Quality Assurance Office, programme coordinators, teaching staff

Recommendation: CIU should strengthen its analysis of the data it collects by (i) not only describing but also interpreting the data and (ii) showing more clearly how it uses the interpretation to improve programmes.

Suggestions: None

Best Practices (if applicable): None

Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☒ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

2.3. Observing Principles of Ethics and Integrity

o HEI has developed regulations and mechanisms that follow principles of ethics and integrity. Such regulations are publicly accessible.
o Institution has implemented mechanisms for detecting plagiarism and its prevention.

o   HEI follows the principles of academic freedom.
Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements
CIU has a code of ethics for students, which appropriately explains the rules students should follow on the campus; it also promotes a non-discriminatory policy towards various groups, and stresses that such behaviour will not be tolerated even outside the campus territory. The Code of Ethics is displayed on the university website in Georgian and English in a visible place in the student section. Students are well aware of their responsibilities towards their university; they know about the consequences for violating these rules, as well as the procedures on how to appeal in order to defend their rights. There is no separate document concerning ethical behaviour for academic and administrative staff. However, detailed information on this matter is provided in the Internal Regulation document which is publicly available on the university website. The administrative and academic staff are aware of this document and the respective procedures.
The university has developed an anti-plagiarism policy with clearly defined sanctions in case of violation. The document concerns students and academic personnel, who are aware of the policy. It clearly explains what is considered as plagiarism (including self-plagiarism) and the preventative and detection measures the university undertakes in this respect. The university has a contract with the National Library to use their anti-plagiarism program. Each paper produced under the name of the university (Master's and PhD Theses, academic papers, etc.) is checked with this program for originality. CIU conducts regular preventive measures in the form of academic writing courses for students, where the details of this policy are explained, and students who met the Panel confirmed that academic staff regularly talk to them about plagiarism.
The professors and lecturers who met the Panel were asked indirectly about the involvement of the administration in their affairs. The only involvement from CIU administration relates to formal programme structures and various quality assurance mechanisms, but never to the academic process. The academic freedom of the staff and students is not restricted in CIU in any way, neither in teaching and learning, nor in research.
Evidences/indicators
Code of Ethics for Students Internal Regulations Plagiarism Detection and Response Rule Students' Guide University website
Interviews with students, teaching staff, Student Services Office
Recommendations: None
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
o   HEI has a policy for planning, designing, implementing and developing educational programs.
Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements
All CIU programmes listed on Page 2 of this Report are accredited, except for the PhD in Business (subject to appeal), and the authorized bachelor programme of Business in English aimed at students from India, for which accreditation has not been sought.
CIU has a detailed methodology for planning educational programmes, including a 5-year development plan. Programmes have a well-defined course and credit structure, depending on the level, with compulsory and elective components; surveys of academic staff and students are

undertaken to check that credit hours are assigned realistically. CIU also has regulations for evaluating, modifying or terminating existing programmes.

New programmes may be proposed centrally, by a faculty, or by an external partner, informed by market research and consistency with CIU strategy. They are developed by a faculty group appointed to work with a designated programme coordinator to define the structure of the programme and its constituent courses. These are in turn developed by academic staff according to clear specifications. The development takes account of the views of faculty members, of subject experts at other universities, of students (and graduates where relevant, as alumni confirmed), and of potential employers. Some employers teach on programmes as invited lecturers, being involved in lectures and seminars or practical studies, as well as in programme development. Overall, CIU is very responsive to feedback on programmes, and in particular has recently increased the proportion of practical work, as recommended by students, alumni and employers alike.

The programme proposal is reviewed by the QA office, and then by Academic Council. If both are satisfied, resources are released for market research, and if that is satisfactory, then the programme is finally approved.

The QA office reviews programme performance every two years (or sooner if needed) to see where development is required to build on strengths and reduce weaknesses. A range of relevant performance indicators is considered, including evaluation of the academic staff. During the reporting period various initiatives have been taken to refresh programmes and make them more efficient, including introducing, moving and removing courses.

When a programme is cancelled, the regulations expect students to be informed. They are given information about other institutions with similar programmes and helped to achieve maximum recognition of their achievements at CIU, e.g. by credit transfer.

Evidences/indicators
Annex 3.1.1   Annex 3.1.3   Programme specifications   Interviews with Academic Council, deans, programme coordinators, teaching staff including invited lecturers, Quality Assurance Office
Recommendations: None
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

CIU publishes an annual catalogue of its programmes, with appropriate brief information about programme content, entry requirements, the qualification to be gained, and potential employment. CIU follows the ECTS scheme and other relevant regulations and guidance, and prepares programme specifications in a standard format that includes aims and intended learning outcomes and programme structure in terms of courses. The documentation provided for programme approval also includes tables and mappings that show how the programme learning outcomes are met through the constituent course outcomes, and how programme competencies and subject skills, including any specific field standards, are developed by the courses. The documentation also serves to demonstrate that the programme learning outcomes are at the level specified by the National Higher Education Qualifications Framework for the relevant cycle.

According to the SER, experience shows that students can achieve the programme outcomes within a reasonable period because the components of the programme are logically connected. CIU checks the level and relevance of its qualifications by surveying graduates about their employment and subsequent education.

Students can get advice on planning their programme of study from a variety of academic and administrative personnel. Academic support is also available during their study from various sources including office hours for consultations with academic staff about their courses. Students who met the Panel said that additional support was readily available from lecturers outside scheduled office hours and by messaging. They also found the office of the relevant dean welcoming and helpful.

About 2% of students follow an individual academic schedule approved by the Faculty Council. Examples include students on exchange programmes, foreign students, students with sporting or family commitments, and students with disabilities.

The Panel was provided with details of the accredited Medical Programmes and the accredited Dental Programme, all taught in both Georgian and English. It met the Dean, Programme Directors, basic science and clinical teachers, students, employers and alumni of the programmes.

The well-established Dental programme appears to be of a good standard with a dental facility near the University Campus. It has a core plus several options where students have a choice of areas to study. From year two students attend the clinic, which is well staffed with academic dentists and delivers high quality dental care to the surrounding community.

The current Medical programme is also well established, having been approved in 2013. It is traditional in structure, with pre-clinical science teaching followed by the clinical years. There is limited early patient contact. The assessments and teaching have limited integration but the Panel heard of new initiatives between biochemistry and physiology where teaching and learning have been integrated. The programme specification mentions step 2 integration with reference to Harden's paper 'Curriculum' describing eleven steps in integration [Medical Education **34**, 551-557 (2000)]. Step 2 refers to teachers' awareness of other teachers' teaching. This level is fairly limited, and more work needs to be done to move integration to higher levels for it to become useful for student learning. The clinical placement the Panel visited was of high quality, with a good patient mix, good clinical supervision, and good study space for students. The Panel was told there are other placements in other specialist areas including Mental Health. Teaching in primary medical care is integrated into the curriculum, but it was not clear exactly how.

A new curriculum was approved on 31 August 2018. Because medical programmes are so long it is hard to make major changes mid-programme, but the Faculty of Medicine has created additional modules to allow all students to transfer to the new programme. The programme leadership team showed drive and initiative in bringing in experts to cover certain important areas such as palliative care. There has been staff development on problem-based learning, portfolios and new clinical assessments. The programme outcomes for basic medical education are based on the new Georgian criteria, derived from the TUNING/MEDINE project to conform to the European Qualifications Framework. The 2018 programme has been planned, developed and mapped against the new 2019 standards, and meets the intended outcomes of the 2019 national curriculum.

Following the strategic planning for the new curriculum, full implementation will require strong leadership with innovative ideas and a major focus on change management. There are opportunities to make the new curriculum exciting and innovative, perhaps by introducing project work, more choice, and focus on areas of national priority such as mental health and care of the elderly.

Evidences/indicators

Programme catalogue
Programme specifications

Interviews with students, alumni, deans, programme coordinators, teaching staff

Visits to facilities

Recommendations: None

Suggestions: None

Best Practices (if applicable): None

Evaluation

☒ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

3.3 Assessment of Learning Outcomes

o   HEI has law-compliant, transparent and fair system of learning outcomes assessment, which promotes the improvement of students' academic performance.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The SER says the process of assessment identifies whether students "[have] developed problem-solving skills, are able to ask research-related questions, analyse, draw conclusions, formulate recommendations, use the necessary tools, organize [their] own work, share the results and defend [their] own points of view". These are generic rather than programme-specific learning outcomes, but CIU also requires assessment methods to match the specific learning outcomes of the course. The details of assessment are determined by the academic responsible for the course, in agreement with the QA office, and are made available to students in the course syllabus, accessible online or via staff.

Examinations are administered by the Examinations Office, which receives papers set by the lecturers, manages students sitting the papers, and returns the scripts to the lecturers for marking. It receives the marked scripts, enters the marks on the GONI learning management system, and transfers the scripts to Student Services Centre, where students may consult their own scripts. CIU uses some types of electronic testing and assessment such as multiple-choice tests, but there is scope to do more in order to use staff time better, and the current action plan envisages equipping two rooms for computerized assessment.

To evaluate learning outcomes and monitor students' academic performance, the QA office identifies deviations from a Gaussian mark distribution, and when such cases are identified, it works with the lecturer to enhance the achievement of the intended learning outcomes the next time. By way of illustration, the Panel saw a detailed analysis of the mark distribution across different generic skill areas for one of the medical courses. According to the document 'Monitoring Mechanism and Analysis of Students Academic Performance', lecturers are required to use a Gaussian distribution of marks in the interval between the pass mark of 50% and 100%, which appears to be a form of norm referencing as opposed to the criterion referencing customary in a learning outcomes approach. The Panel did not receive a clear reply when it asked about the statistical assumptions underlying CIU's choice of approach.

Each semester students undergo mid-term assessments of various types, and receive feedback on these assessments to help them to improve subsequently. The overall score for a course combines these mid-term assessments and the results of the final examination, weighted according to a defined scheme, from which grades A–F are allocated. There is provision for additional re-sit examinations.

On the Medical programme the assessment strategy is still developing, particularly in the clinical phase, though OSCE and OSPE are being introduced. The new national curriculum to be introduced in January 2019 requires an approach with integrated teaching and assessment, which is limited at present. New clinical assessments such as the OSCE and Mini Cex need to be extended.

CIU has a clear system for appeals against marks or grades. The process usually starts with the lecturer. After that, it goes to the dean's office if necessary, where issues are often resolved. If not, they pass to the Student Services Centre, which directs cases to the Appeal Committee. Students who met the Panel confirmed that they were well aware of the system, which they found accessible, responsive and supportive.

Evidences/indicators
Programme specifications Monitoring Mechanism and Analysis of Students Academic Performance
3.6.4 Learning outcomes assessment
Interviews with Academic Process Management Service, Quality Assurance Office, Student Services Office, Examination Centre, teaching staff, students

Recommendations: None

 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.   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
o   HEI has staff management policy and procedures that ensure the implementation of educational process and other activities defined in its strategic plan. o   HEI ensures the employment of qualified academic/scientific/invited/administrative/support staff.
Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements CIU has a staff management policy and procedures, and the Human Resources (HR) department is constantly developing the personnel management policy. In particular, it works out strategies for retention and development of selected and designated personnel together with the QA office and faculty programme coordinators. CIU has special regulations, clear procedures and a reporting system regarding the appointment of academic staff, including affiliation, subject to the Georgian Law of Higher Education. Specialists with proper qualifications and experience working in specified fields serve as invited lecturers. Competence of academic and invited personnel is shown by their scientific publications for the previous five years. For Dentistry invited staff must be certified doctors, and for Medicine they must be certified doctors with clinical experience in the last five years. A priority is to involve foreign professors in the academic process alongside local highly qualified academic staff in order to strengthen internationalization. Hence CIU holds a public competition to engage foreign professors. As the result of the competition held in spring 2018 five highly qualified foreign professors with practical experience were hired. CIU has clear contracts that specify duties and salaries, which are determined on the basis of the Ranking Rule of Academic Personnel and the Salary Ranking of Administrative Personnel. Professional development, promotion, financial incentives, social assistance and training are used to increase staff motivation, including financial support to increase staff qualifications. As noted later under Standard 7, there is also financial support for research. Training is provided to support professional development and teaching and assessment activities, including some specialized for Medicine, as mentioned under 3.2. In assessing staff the HR department uses self-evaluation by the personnel, evaluation of the supervisor, interview and test results, and the results of various surveys. International mobility of staff is supported by the Erasmus+ exchange programme; during the last academic year 12 academic and invited staff and 10 administrative staff were involved. The language centre provides training for staff members, with the costs covered by CIU.
Evidences/indicators Annex 4.8 1 The Rule of the Academic Staff Ranking Annex 2.1.3 Provisions of HEI Structural Units Annex 2.1.5 Contract Samples of Administration and Academic Personnel Annex 2.1.10 Human Resource Management Policy and Mechanisms Annex 2.1.14 Erasmus+ mobility Annex 4.1.1 Competition Documentation of Academic Personnel Annex 4.1.2 Administrative Staff Satisfaction Survey 2017–2018 Interviews with Human Resource Management Service, Legal Affairs Service, senior staff, deans, Academic Council, teaching staff, other staff
Recommendations: None
Suggestions: None
Best Practices (if applicable): CIU provides generous funding for staff development including language skills development
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
o   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 academic staff ranking rules specify the work expected of the various categories of academic staff and the contact hours per week. The total workload has to be no more than 40 hours per week. Data provided to the Panel by CIU showed the individual workload in hours of all academic staff by department divided into lecture/seminar/practical, interim/final exams, consultations, programme development, supervision of doctoral students, supervision of master students, administrative position

at CIU, total for the semester, and weekly load at other higher education institutions. The load therefore includes the part of the research workload associated with student supervision, while scientific productivity is evaluated separately. These measures between them provide CIU with an overview of staff teaching, administrative and research workloads. Academic staff who met the Panel said they were generally content with their workloads.

The overall ratio student:academic staff ratio is 18:1 with appropriate subject-related variations between programmes. CIU also invites staff to teach part-time in areas where current practical experience is needed to keep programmes up to date, for example as already mentioned under 3.2 for medicine. Students who met the Panel had no complaints about class sizes and said they found academic staff readily available for consultation.

Overall, staffing levels and workloads appear fully adequate for the needs of teaching and research, and CIU also plans to recruit more academic staff. The Panel felt that staff at all levels from the leadership down are highly motivated to improve, and for this they have the necessary vision and an appropriate budget.

Evidences/indicators

Annex 1.1.1 CIU Strategic Development Plan (2018-2025)
Annex 1.1.9 Budget of Caucasus International University (2018)
Annex 1.2.2 Three-Year Action Plan for CIU (2018-2020)
Annex 2.1.5 Samples of Administration and Academic Personnel Contracts
Annex 2.1.6 Ranking Rule for Academic Personnel
Annex 2.1.7 Regulation for Determining Number of Academic, Scientific and Invited Personnel
Annex 4.2.1 Personal data of academic personnel
Annex 4.2.3 Results of Survey on Satisfaction of Academic Personnel
Annex 4.2.8 Individual schedule of semester workload (for academic and invited staff by faculty)
Annex 6.1.1 Evaluation system of scientific productivity

Interviews with Human Resource Management Service, Legal Affairs Service, deans, Academic Council, teaching staff, other staff

Recommendations: None

Suggestions: None

Best Practices (if applicable): None

Evaluation

☒ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

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

o   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.
o   HEI ensures the protection of student rights and lawful interests.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The university has all the necessary regulations for the assignment, suspension and termination of student status; they are transparent and fair, and are in line with current legislation. These documents are public and accessible. Also, the recognition of credits is fair. One student who met the Panel had transferred to CIU from a different university abroad. He said that the procedures for credit recognition were fair, and CIU had ensured that he had an individual study plan. Students were aware of the code of ethics and of the document of internal regulation of the university.

The student contract with CIU (including that for foreign students) protects their rights and lawful interests. Students who met the Panel said that they were informed about their rights when signing contracts.

CIU has a mechanism to ensure that students' rights are protected. Students know that they can

appeal regarding any issue and CIU will respond. The appeal can be related to dissatisfaction with a grade or with the work of staff, and the response is quite quick, typically starting with the relevant member of staff or the dean. Student membership of faculty councils (but not of Academic Council) gives them a voice and helps to protect their interests.

Foreign students who met the Panel said that they found the atmosphere very friendly. CIU helps them with any problems, including some staff who go far beyond their normal duties to help. Foreign students would like a stronger relationship with the Georgian students, both socially (where they would welcome the chance to celebrate their own cultures) and academically (where they would value sharing parts of their programmes with Georgian students). Such developments would also contribute to 'internationalization at home' by widening the experience of the Georgian students.

Evidences/indicators

Document of Internal Regulation
Ethics Code
Student Contract with CIU
Document of regulation of academic process
Rule of Planning the Student Body and Student Enrolment

Interviews with Academic Process Management Service, Legal Affairs Service, students, Student Self-Governance

Recommendations: None

Suggestion: CIU could enhance the experience of foreign students by strengthening their interactions with Georgian students.

Best Practices (if applicable): None

Evaluation

☒ Complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

5.2 Student Support Services

o   HEI has student consulting services in order to plan educational process and improve academic performance
o   HEI has career support service, which provides students with appropriate counselling and support regarding employment and career development
o   HEI ensures students awareness and involvement in various university-level, local and international projects and events, and supports student initiatives
o   HEI has mechanisms, including financial mechanisms to support low SES students

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

CIU students receive proper consultation and support in the planning of their education process. If necessary, CIU provides them with individual study plans. Academic staff offer consultation hours that are indicated in the course syllabus. Students who met the Panel reported that staff were also readily contactable outside those hours, via the GONI system or by email. CIU has also started a peer mentoring program where students from later years help new students settle in.

Students are familiar with the CIU Career Development Office. It conducts job fairs, and students are kept informed about vacancies. The service helps students to prepare their CV and other important documents, as indicated in the statute of this department.

Employers who met the Panel said they have a strong relationship with the university. Their advice was often sought and usually acted on. CIU had followed the recommendation of one employer to buy a commercial hotel reservation program to enhance the tourism curriculum, and later the Panel heard that this gave tourism students a competitive advantage in the job market.

Students are kept informed about CIU's various mobility programs, and most of the students who met the Panel had participated in international exchange programs.

The student self-government organization supports extracurricular activities, and provides a means for students to set up a new club for their own interests. Student self-government also provides a bridge between students and the university administration. CIU regularly supports student initiatives financially, once proposals have been discussed with student self-government or the office of the dean.

HEI provides scholarships for students, including foreigners. They offer a reduction in fees for siblings, and fees can be paid in instalments, a facility that students who met the Panel said they used and

appreciated. CIU also provided the Panel with a document about other initiatives to support socially vulnerable students.

Evidences/indicators
Statutes of departments
Statistics for exchange programs
Activities undertaken to support socially vulnerable students
Interviews with students, alumni, teaching staff, Career Development Office, employers
Recommendations: None
Suggestions: None
Best Practices (if applicable): None
Evaluation
☒ Complies with requirements
☐ Substantially complies with requirements
☐ Partially complies with requirements
☐ 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

6.1 Research Activities
o   HEI, based on its type and specifics of its fields, carries out research/creative activities.
o   Ensuring the effectiveness of doctoral research supervision
o   HEI has public, transparent and fair procedures for the assessment and defence of dissertations which are relevant to the specifics of the field

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

In the reporting period CIU undertook a modest amount of research, with only nine PhD completions in the last two years, but within the last year or so it has taken steps to systematize its approach. In line with its mission CIU has made innovative research an important strategic direction, aiming at the promotion of research activities, international collaborations and publications, high standards, and integration of research and teaching. In particular, its research strategy refers to a number of financial initiatives: grants to fund fundamental research, co-funding to help secure external grants, facilitating international research partnerships, providing advice and training, and covering expenses associated with securing grants. The medical school currently has no explicit research strategy but there is research activity and a little basic science research. This is an area for development.

CIU shows considerable research potential. Considerable steps have been taken towards developing research, including annual university conferences; research projects in collaboration with commercial organizations; round tables; publication of conference materials written by students and academic staff; publishing its own research journal; implementing a new internal grant system oriented towards integration of research achievements into teaching; involving undergraduate students, young academics, post-doctoral scientists and foreign researchers in research projects; and establishing a research portal.

Information about the internal grant and research support system is widely disseminated among academics. One feature of the internal grant system is a division into small and large grants, with a success rate of about 2 in 3 for small grants. Hence although the system is new, a considerable number of projects have already been funded and since 2017 prizes for research efficiency have been awarded.

To further its mission, CIU has introduced a research component not only at the level of doctor and master but now also at the level of bachelor. Hence a thesis is now a mandatory component of the bachelor degree. To support research, CIU has introduced stand-alone research skills courses at each level of its educational programmes.

For students at all levels, CIU has regulations that cover academic research and citation standards, technical and academic requirements, rules for research thesis supervision, and the rights and obligations of scientific thesis supervisors. These regulations have been developed together by the Scientific Research department, the QA department, programme coordinators, and members of academic staff, taking account of CIU's aim to develop its research. The rules allow students to choose supervisors who are external native or foreign researchers with the necessary competence and experience in the research field, and to support this possibility CIU provides remuneration to invited

supervisors. These rules ensure research quality and take proper account of the student's interest in new fields of research. Supervision of research theses is taken into account in calculating academic staff workloads.

Although research thesis supervision is governed by these rules and regulations, scrutiny showed that some PhD theses that had already been defended contained weaknesses in their treatment of literature and citations that should have been caught by the supervisor (who has to approve the thesis before it can be defended). For instance, the standards for citations were not always observed, and literature referred to in the text did not always appear in the footnotes, while one thesis did not describe the research methodology on which the cited paper was based. These weaknesses mean that the risk of plagiarism is not fully excluded by current practice, although the Panel was told that training on this is planned. CIU needs to ensure that PhD students are fully aware of the rules governing academic honesty and citation standards, and that through training in research supervision skills research supervisors are fully aware of their responsibility to check that students follow the rules.

CIU should also take measures to increase citations of modern research literature and encourage wider usage of international scientific databases in scholarly papers produced by academic staff and PhD students. This will guarantee that contemporary research is suitably reflected in scholarly publications.

Evidences/indicators

Annex 1.1.9 CIU Budget for 2018
Annex 4.2.2 Science Development Strategy
Annex 6.1.1 Memorandum of Cooperation Concluded with Economic Agents
Annex 6.1.2 Provision for Dissertation Board and PhD Studies
Annex 6.1.3 Guidelines for Doctoral Program Students
Annex 6.1.4 CIU Scientific Portal www.research.ciu.edu.ge
Annex 6.1.5 University Publications, Ongoing and Planned Research
Annex 6.1.6 Research Abstracts
Annex 6.1.7 Regulating Documents and Outcomes of CIU Competitions
Annex 6.1.8 Scientific Activities of Academic Personnel
Annex 6.1.9 Training activities

Interviews with Scientific Research Department, scientific staff, academic staff, research supervisors, doctoral students

Recommendation: CIU should ensure that research supervisors are trained to check that student research work and publications fully meet established academic standards.

Suggestion: CIU could develop an explicit research strategy for the medical school.

Best Practices (if applicable): None

Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☒ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

6.2. Research Support and Internationalization

o   HEI has an effective system in place for supporting research, development and creative activities
o   Attracting new staff and their involvement in research/arts-creative activities.
o   University works on internationalization of research, development and creative activities.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

CIU has developed a flexible funding system to facilitate research development, improve the research infrastructure and increase the effectiveness of staff research. Participation in research and projects funded by the university is available not only for academic staff, but also for invited personnel, post-doctoral workers, and doctoral, post-graduate and undergraduate students. In order to attract foreign researchers and integrate them into research at CIU, the system requires most internal grants to involve a foreign research expert or institution, which is a significant step towards internationalization. Integration of research activities in teaching is also a criterion during evaluation. CIU offers cost-sharing and co-funding to encourage scientists to submit grant proposals to external agencies, national or international, where a series of grants has already been secured. The budget for co-funding is considerable and constitutes an effective mechanism of research support. CIU promotes foreign language proficiency among its academics by offering English language courses free of cost,

which can also be considered as a mechanism to support involvement of academics in international research projects and international teaching mobility.

Previously research support was implemented only at the faculty level, but now the new Scientific Research department evaluates grant proposals and their compliance with established standards, following recommendations from faculty councils. Accordingly, the administration of the grant system is centralized but is still determined by interests and priorities identified at faculty level. This combination and balance of the functions ensures the proper implementation of research support throughout CIU.

The department organises individual consultations, informational meetings and effectively disseminates information among academics about internal and external grant possibilities and research scholarships. It provides training for academics in drafting research proposals and funding applications and provides technical guidance for grant application procedures. It also provides technical guidance in the effective use of international scientific databases and electronic resources, which should increase the number of references to foreign scientific resources in research papers.

The funds allocated are adequate to support CIU's research priorities, including motivating young scholars and attracting new academics. In 2018 the proportion of the budget for research increased from 5% to 6.6% to support the internal grant system and other mechanisms to encourage research, but, as noted under 7.4 below, will need to increase further to support CIU's ambitions. The system also includes post-doctoral grants to attract young scientists who will help to develop CIU's research priorities, and some of these have become academic staff at CIU. Grant decisions are made publicly, objectively and transparently, using paid external evaluators from other academic centres and HEIs in Georgia. CIU provides financial support for international student conferences, for publication of conference materials, and the translation of textbooks and monographs. It supports PhD students through financing their research visits abroad and granting internal scholarships for proper implementation of their research.

CIU has identified that it needs to have more scholarly publications in international journals and secure more international research funding. It has therefore introduced financial mechanisms to encourage publications in international peer-reviewed and highly-ranked journals; purchased access to international scientific databases; and introduced co-funding for grant applications for joint research projects with foreign institutions. To support research internationalization CIU also needs to increase the quantity of foreign scientific literature available in the library.

The CIU quarterly journal *Caucasus International University Herald*, with an editorial board of Georgian and foreign scholars, is not indexed in any international scientific research database. It publishes conference materials from CIU and from students from other HEIs. To further internationalize its research, CIU should continue working to include more academic publications in international databases and to have university journals and university publications indexed in Google Scholar. CIU regards publishing suitably indexed specialized journals as a priority, but should not let this distract academic staff from publishing in existing high-ranking international journals.

CIU has concluded MOUs with numerous public and private institutions and with foreign academic partners in various countries. To further its mission CIU needs to identify potential new national and international partners that match its research priorities, seek and develop institutional collaboration with more international scientific centres, and increase the proportion of international research projects that involve foreign scientists.

Although CIU is working to foster innovation and start-up companies, it does not appear to have a policy on securing and sharing revenue from its research and development. It would be useful for CIU to explore systematically how best to benefit from its intellectual property.

Evidences/indicators

Annex 1.1.9 University Budget
Annex 6.1.7 CIU Competition Regulating Documents and Outcomes
Annex 6.1.11 Documents proving funding scientific trips
Annex 6.1.12 Documents proving co-funding
Annex 6.1.13 Submitted and winning projects in Shota Rustaveli National Scientific Foundation

Interviews with senior staff, Scientific Research Department, scientific staff, academic staff, research supervisors, doctoral students, Financial Service, Library

Recommendation: CIU should further its internationalization agenda by (i) developing more collaboration with scientific centres and seeking more international funding, and (ii) introducing mechanisms to enhance the international visibility of its publications.

Suggestion: CIU could enhance the international context for its research by making more foreign scientific literature and electronic databases available.

Best Practices (if applicable): None

Evaluation

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

6.3. Evaluation of Research Activities
o   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.
Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements
CIU has adopted mechanisms, procedures, indicators and regulations to evaluate the research activity of academics and invited personnel. It has introduced corresponding financial mechanisms to encourage research impact, which is basically measured by the number of international publications in peer-reviewed and indexed journals in a range of relevant scientific research databases; participation in international grant and joint research projects between foreign and local researchers; and the publication of monographs. This constitutes a clear system to evaluate and enhance the quality and increase the volume of its research and related activities in an international context, and CIU ensures proper implementation and wide dissemination of this system among its researchers.
CIU requires academics to report regularly on their research under 35 headings, with supporting evidence, and to critically evaluate their own progress and achievements. It recognizes the importance of publication in developing a research profile for individual academic staff and hence for itself. This will be helped by challenging academic staff to undertake more demanding work that can be published in higher-ranking international journals; publication in CIU's own journal provides experience in academic writing but should be the basis for further publications rather than an end goal. Encouraging the citation of more modern research literature and wider usage of international scientific databases in the scholarly publications produced by academic staff and PhD students would help to ensure that they properly reflect contemporary research achievements.
Evidences/indicators
Annex 6.1.5 University Publications, Ongoing and Planned Research Annex 6.1.6 Research Abstracts Annex 6.1.8 Scientific Activities of Academic Personnel Annex 6.1.10 Scientific Productivity Assessment System
Interviews with senior staff, Scientific Research Department, scientific staff, academic staff, research supervisors
Recommendations: None
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.   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
o   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. o   HEI offers environment necessary for implementing educational activities: sanitary units, natural light possibilities, and central heating system. o   Health and safety of students and staff is protected within the institution. o   HEI has adapted environment for people with special needs
Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

According to the SER, CIU owns a principal building with an area of 4500 m^2 and another property of 7000 m^2 at the same address (based on a lease agreement). It owns a cellar of area 270 m^2 and another facility of 3000 m^2 at the same address (based on a lease agreement). The total area used for academic purposes is 9700 m^2, and the total auxiliary area is 4800 m^2. CIU has renovated older buildings to a good standard and has constructed new buildings, with more currently starting, as the Panel saw. The inventory of items in the different buildings complies with the requirements for the educational process. CIU has all necessary spaces: a foyer, recreation spaces, classrooms for theoretical teaching, administrative offices, spaces for group work, sanitary and hygienic units, library, laboratories appropriate to the specifics of the programmes, learning classrooms and an archive.

The distribution of various units supports effective implementation of educational and administrative processes. The Panel saw lecture and seminar rooms, reading rooms, a multi-media centre equipped for print and broadcast journalism, laboratories, and a new suite of rooms for practical work in viticulture and winemaking (both modern and traditional), including a wine-tasting auditorium. The Multi-Media Centre is particularly well equipped and gives students experience of industry-standard work, including a feed into a local TV channel. In a chemistry laboratory the Panel was told that students must sign to confirm that they have received and understood the laboratory safety instructions, given in Georgian and in English, but contrary to good practice, no safety instructions or warnings were displayed.

Educational spaces are equipped with the necessary facilities, for all programmes. On the Medical and Dental programmes, the basic sciences use common facilities, laboratories, library, etc. Specialized facilities include various laboratories and skills centres, as well as clinical placement sites and a dental skills laboratory. There is a dental facility near the CIU campus, and the Dental Centre has a phantom head skills laboratory. From year two students attend the dental clinic, which is well staffed with academic dentists and delivers high quality dental care to the surrounding community. All the facilities were satisfactory, but the Medicine and Dentistry programmes need more space and laboratories, for example OSCE stations (currently 6 up to 8), the clinical skills centre (more space and manikins for best implementation of the programme requirements in the MD benchmarks for January 2019), laboratories for the Medicine programme (microscopes and histology labs), and phantoms for dentistry.

CIU has an uninterruptable power and water supply, and a full heating system. All classrooms have both natural and artificial light. Safety of students and staff is ensured by a security team and by video surveillance all round the internal and external perimeter. Entry of strangers to the facilities is controlled at the entrance, and movement within the perimeter is monitored by security staff. CIU has an emergency management regulation which defines the actions to be taken in time of emergency.

The university operates a first-aid medical facility supervised by a qualified doctor; medications and means available there can ensure primary and emergency medical care. The facility is constantly supplied with cold and hot water, and there is a window to provide ventilation.

All university spaces are accessible for individuals with disabilities. Elevators available in the buildings allow students to move to every floor. In spaces where there is no elevator, the appropriate service can be obtained on the first floor (for example, Student Services and the Chancellery). Accessible toilets are distributed through the buildings.

Evidences/indicators

Annex 7.1.1 Real estate ownership documentation
Annex 7.1.2 Personal property ownership documentation

Interviews with senior staff, Financial Service, Material Assurance Service, Security Service

Visits to facilities

Recommendations: CIU should provide more space and equipment to ensure that the Medicine and Dentistry programmes achieve the best outcomes and fully support compliance with the 2019 MD benchmarks.

Suggestions: CIU could enhance safety by displaying key safety instructions and warnings in Georgian and English at the entrance to laboratories.

Best Practices (if applicable): CIU's well equipped Multi-Media Centre gives students practical experience of industry-standard work.

Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☒ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

7.2. Library Resources

| o | Library environment, resources and service support effective implementation of educational and research activities, and HEI constantly works for its improvement. |

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

CIU constantly works to improve its library resources and services. In September 2018 it opened a new enlarged library, which is open for 60 hours across 6 days of the week. It contains a book storage area, a reading hall (for group or individual work), a working area for the library staff, and space for studies equipped with the relevant books, computers and a catalogue. All services of the library are accessible for individuals with special mobility needs by means of ramps. Regulations for using the library and informative guidelines are placed in accessible areas.

There are 36 computers with internet access (plus 31 more in a separate reading room), and printing, photocopying and scanning services are available. Wi-Fi access is ensured in the library. Students are able to access electronic versions of the books, copies and CDs in the library. The main literature in printed or electronic form and supporting materials specified by the syllabuses of the higher educational programmes are available at the library. Currently the book stock comprises 22,459 units: 17,208 textbooks of the educational programmes and 5,251 units of supporting materials. However, the stock of international text books is rather low, and the Medicine programme in English needs to be supported by more up-to-date literature, though a start has been made.

Caucasus International University operates an electronic library, which is bilingual in Georgian and English; this e-resource is available only for CIU students and academic personnel. The books are categorized according to the fields in the electronic library. The available books are catalogued in the library system 'openbiblio', which is accessible for any authorized user who is connected to the internet. CIU library is a member of the National Library of the Georgian Parliament. CIU is eligible to use a range of international electronic resources.

Annually, the library staff attend training for professional development. They are well trained with high responsibility and manage the library processes well.

Evidences/indicators

Annex 1.1.9 Budget of Caucasus International University (2018)
Annex 7.2.1 Library Regulations (Development and Renewal Mechanisms for CIU Library Resources and Services)
Annex 7.2.2 Service agreements on electronic databases from 2014
Annex 7.2.3 Purchase and Donation agreements
Annex 7.2.4 Inventory materials of books

Interviews with Library, teaching staff, students

Visits to facilities

Recommendation: CIU library should acquire more up-to-date literature to support the MD programme in English and more international text books.

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

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

CIU has information technology resources and infrastructure, suitably administered and accessible, in compliance with its needs. The IT infrastructure includes: 411 computers; 82 laptops; 91 projectors; 4 servers; 80 multifunction printers; 29 microphones; 4 mixers, 7 video cameras; and 28 external discs. Projectors and personal computers are installed in the auditoria. CIU has field-specific laboratories equipped with appropriate digital technologies and software for implementation of the educational programmes. CIU's computer technology is integrated into the internal network of the

university and is connected to the global network. The IT technology infrastructure uses four types of networks: Global network, internal network, VPN network (particularly for secure connection between different buildings) and the telephone network.

The Wi-Fi network is accessible throughout the university. To assure constant access to the internet, two providers serve the university. The servers contain important and confidential data, and access rights to the data are granted only in case of necessity.

Official email addresses to communicate with faculties and departments function at the university. Management of the educational process is carried out through the portal to the learning management system GONI; work support and instruction on the system's functionality are carried out by the Department of Informational Technologies.

An inventory monitoring system operates at the university. Servers and systems allocated on the CIU server are administered and technically supported by the Service of Information Technologies and Innovations.

The CIU website is bilingual in Georgian and English, and is technically supported by an external service provider company 'Indigo'. The contractual commitment of the company includes its responsibility to ensure the website's uninterrupted technical operation. The administration of the webpage, as well as the timely response to received messages, is ensured by the Department of Public Relations. The website is informative and frequently updated.

Evidences/indicators

Annex 1.1.11 Caucasus International University web page www.ciu.edu.ge
Annex 7.3.1 Documentation proving the ownership of the hosting and of the domain
Annex 7.3.2 Contract with the company 'Indigo'
Annex 7.16.1 Information Technologies and Electronic Systems Management policy

Interviews with Information Technology and Innovation Service, Material Assurance Service, administrative staff, teaching staff, students

Visits to facilities

Evaluation

☒ Fully complies with requirements

☐ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements

Recommendations: None

Suggestions: None

Best Practices (if applicable): None

7.4 Financial Resources

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The CIU budget shows that 45% of the income comes from tuition fees of foreign students. The number of foreign students has been increasing, helped by CIU's use of recruitment agents, and CIU argues this will ensure that its income increases. Other income includes rental from the proprietors of the dental clinic, which provides a service to the public as well as skills training for students; income from the sale of intellectual property including that created by the Multimedia Centre; fees from various certificated training courses offered by the lifelong learning service; various international and state grants; and reinvestment of the profits received in previous periods. To date the owners have ploughed all surpluses back into CIU.

CIU has an agreement with a partner bank that guarantees a loan facility of $400k within a period of not more than two weeks. There is also an agreement with the owners that in case of financial need in the university, they will provide additional investment within a maximum of one month.

The main financial resources of CIU are oriented for renovation and improving the facilities and material resources of the university. CIU plans to spend 6.6% of the budget on research and 5% on the library building and resources. Given the intention to strengthen research, the budget for this will need to continue increasing.

Financial management and control are done at three levels: the financial service, internal and external audit, and the owners' meeting. This system minimizes the risk of incorrect financial accounting or adoption of financially inaccurate decisions. The outflow of any amount from the university is controlled by the financial service, and the main responsible person is the Chancellor, who acts under powers delegated from the owners. Budgets are delegated to various areas of CIU's activity, including programmes (where the details were not always clear to the Panel), but expenditures are all signed off in the Chancellery.

Staff, students and external stakeholders who met the Panel all said that in general CIU was able to find the resources to sustain and develop its activities. CIU appears to have entirely adequate measures to guard against immediate financial risks, but given the high proportion of the income that comes from recruiting foreign students, which is vulnerable to external changes that cannot be controlled, it would be prudent for CIU to continue to grow further sources of income.

Evidences/indicators

Annex 1.1.9 Budget of Caucasus International University (2018)
Annex 7.4.1 Regulations of Financial Management and Control System
Annex 7.4.2 Financial reports

Interviews with Chancellor, Deans, Financial Service, Lifelong Learning Service

Recommendations: CIU should continue to increase the budget for research to strengthen it further.

Suggestions: CIU could reduce its financial dependence on tuition fees from foreign students by continuing to increase the proportion of its income from other sources.

Best Practices (if applicable): None

Evaluation

☐ Complies with requirements

☒ Substantially complies with requirements

☐ Partially complies with requirements

☐ Does not comply with requirements