



განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

Final Report on Re-Authorization of East European University LLC

Expert Panel Members

Chair: Ivan Leban, University of Ljubljana, retired, Slovenia.

Co-chair: Azim Mirzazadeh, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Iran.

Members: Lily Shatberashvili, CIM-Expert at TSU, Germany/Georgia.

Ketevani Kankava, Tbilisi State Medical University, Georgia.

Nino Zarnadze, Caucasus International University, Tbilisi, Georgia.

Mariam Bandzeladze, International Black Sea University, Georgia.

Giorgi Kurdiani (student expert).

Authorization Report Resume

General information on the educational institution

East European University (hereinafter EEU), a legal entity under private law, started with bachelor's and master's degree programmes in September 2013 in Tbilisi with the status of a teaching university.

Later EEU gained the right to pursue doctoral programmes and is now acting as a research university since 2015. By 2015, 8 educational programmes had already been introduced through the process of programme accreditation at the University.

The important governing bodies at university are Board of Governors, Rector, Representative Council, Vice-Rectors and Quality Assurance Service together with 18 auxiliary services.

There are 3 faculties Faculty of Law and Social Sciences, Faculty of Business and Engineering and Faculty of Healthcare Sciences together with 6 research laboratories.

There are altogether 19 educational programmes of which 15 are accredited, 4 programmes are taught in English. Of these 19 programmes there are two doctoral programmes in the Faculties of Law and Social Sciences and Faculty of Business and Engineering. The number of graduates of doctoral programmes for the current period is three.

According to the faculties, there are a total of 390 employed at EEU, this means 158 academic staff (of which 96 affiliated and 62 non-affiliated), 148 invited academic staff and 84 administrative staff.

The total number of students with active status is 1017, with suspended status 626. There are 281 international students with active status and 69 with suspended status (SER, p.10).

In 2019 similar evaluation to this one was done by a team from NCEQE which ended with conclusions of the group of authorization experts on the verification of the fulfilment of the authorization conditions by the EEU LLC with several recommendations.

Brief overview of the authorization site visit

The site visit of the panel at EEU in Tbilisi, Sakartvelo, took place on 19-21 April 2021. This was a re-authorization (institutional) evaluation visit as the blended (hybrid) visit in the difficult time of pandemic. The on-line zoom option worked pretty well for our visit during pandemic. A part of the team also visited two hospital premises and the new campus.

NCEQE provided us with all the documentation with annexes by 2 and 6 April 2021. The preparatory meeting (2.5 hours) of the panel was on 8 April 2021. EEU prepared a self-evaluation report (184 pages) with the additional data and we talked to different stakeholders during the visit at 23 interviews (approx. 40-50 minutes each). During the site visit we obtained some additional data from EEU. The panel made an evaluation based on the current situation of EEU considering the expected outcomes.

At the end of the extensive 3-days visit the general Key Findings were presented to leadership and representatives of services of EEU.

The draft report was rechecked by NCEQE officials for the completeness by 11th May 2021.

The Reasoned position by EEU upon the draft authorization report was received on 23rd May 2021, and the Final Report was prepared and sent to the representative of NCEQE on 25th May 2021 on his request.

Acknowledgement. The panel of experts would like to sincerely thank all members of leadership, the staff, and students of EEU together with all who participated in the interviews for their hospitality, pleasant acceptance providing us with excellent logistics and thus enabled us to work in these difficult conditions. The Chair and Co-Chair of the panel would like to thank all colleagues for help and many thanks are due to a skillful translator. The panel of experts would like to thank the two NCEQE representatives for their constant and invaluable support. There were, unfortunately, unintentional mistakes made for which we apologised.

Overview of the HEI's compliance with standards

Summary of Recommendations

1.2

- With each new action or strategic plan, the appropriate achievements and possible failures of the previous plans with explanations should be given.

2.1

- Management of the EEU should also financially support the academic staff mobility and helps with applying for the international projects.
- Since there is the Language Center at the EEU and the proficiency in English is the most important issue of the internationalization the language proficiency should be improved.

3.2

- Better alignments of teaching & learning methods and learning outcomes.

3.3

- Development of a tracking system for each student in different phases of the curriculum.
- Including formative assessment (those assessments which show student strengths and weaknesses without any contribution to the final grade of student in a specific course) as a major part of students assessment system.
- More elaborate use of workplace-based assessment.
- Early establishment of OSCE/OSPE type examinations even for students who enrolled on the old MD program.

4.2

- To overlook the policy of the academic workload, specifically for the affiliated academic personal, and to elaborate a reasonable mechanism to prevent the risk of teaching quality deterioration.

6.1

- Involve the affiliated staff more actively in research.

- Check the information on finished research projects on the university website for affiliation of some of the publications with the EEU.
- Rethink the system of academic staff workload in terms of both minimum and maximum load.
- Enable the broader involvement of students in the research activities of the university.

7.1

- Ensure that equipment and simulators are enough for all medical students to gain necessary skills during training.
- Ensure that all equipment is adequately used in educational process allowing students gain hands-on experience.

7.2

- Ensure that students have access to licensed books and e-books in the library and observe copyright law.

7.4

- To form Reserve fund for improving financial sustainability of educational programs.

Summary of Suggestions

- Perhaps do make the mission statement shorter, more concise, and explicit.
- Mission and vision should be displayed on the first page of the website with plausible explanations.
- The SER, strategic and action plan, annual reports, and other reports should be published regularly on the website of EEU.
- The various collected data at QA Service should be effectively used for further analytical work and to forecast trends. Some optimizations in the work of QA Service should be needed.
- There is a fear that QA service will be overload with quality assurance activity and it should need some optimization.
- Few lines on quality issues (quality assurance and enhancement, standards (NCEQE, ESG), authorization, accreditation, PDCA) should appear on the website of the EEU.
- The results obtained from the questionnaires should be always followed by the number: who were invited to survey and the percentages of respondents.
- In most cases you can get the good answers when you ask three questions: what to praise at EEU, what is not so good and what change is needed to improve.
- All the students coming to the EEU should have an extensive introduction course on all the possible malpractices.
- To organise a public lecture: «Why fraud, corruption and plagiarism appeared in the HE?» for staff, students, admin. staff.
- Some clarifications in the English version of the document (which may be the result of translation quality) could improve its comprehension.
- Further study to evaluate the level of implementation of revised programs (especially MD program) on the ground (difference between planned and implemented program).
- Implementation of at least some parts of revised programs for those students who enrolled before the revised program has been adopted by the Representative Council.
- More attention is needed for an individualized education program to be well known to students.
- To overlook and refine the university personal involvement in the University/Faculty management process through enabling staff members get engaged in various processes.
- To keep track of the number of the potential candidates applying for the academic positions and include analysis in the future self-evaluation report to demonstrate the competitiveness of the university with other HEIs operating in the country.
- To establish the practice of negotiating contracts with the potential employees to depict the individual needs of the recruited staff.
- To include statistical information of the staff (academic, invites, administrative) dedicated to the specific programs in the self-evaluation report to confirm the compliance with the university's policy.

- To oversee the staffing as well as the financial resources of the research centres to ensure the implementation of the planned projects.
- Enable as many researchers as possible to take part in the international events and stay in the international organizations and partner universities to the extent possible to integrate international components into ongoing projects.
- Elaborate a well-thought-out strategy of attracting especially young researchers for participating in the research projects.
- Reconsider the evaluation of the research centers and introduce a specific procedure as needed.
- Increase the number of inventory (mannequins, dummies, microscopes, etc.) for MD Program students.
- To rise the accessibility of students to modern equipment by conducting special trainings.
- To enrich the library paper-based fund of the University to maintain the growing number of students.
- To provide students with colored copies of the compulsory courses' books.
- The website (Georgian and English) of the EEU should have **a map of the website** or search option to easily find what you are looking for.
- All legal acts with annual reports, SERs, Evaluation reports, Accreditation data should be displayed on the web-site of the EEU.
- To raise competency and professional level of representatives of Department of Finance and Material Resources
- To increase scientific grants and income for research activities.

Summary of the Best Practices

- It is to commend that the EEU set up the limited number of achievable priorities in the action plan.
- Strong QA Service at EEU being one of the governing bodies at university EEU.
- The membership of EEU in the EUA is much appreciated.
- The whole process of internationalization including academic staff and students at EEU (mobility, projects, partnership, exchange programmes, study programmes in English).
- Introduction of the position of Students' Ombudsman.
- Business Problems Platform at the Scientific-research Center for Multifunctional research

Summary Table

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

Signature of expert panel members

1. Ivan Leban



2. Azim Mirzazadeh



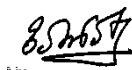
3. Lily Shatberashvili



4. Ketevani Kankava



5. Nino Zarnadze



6. Mariam Bandzeladze



7. Giorgi Kurdiani

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

By definition a mission statement is a short statement of why an organization exists, what its overall goal is, identifying the goal of its operations: what kind of service it provides, its primary customers, and its geographical region of operation.

The mission of the EEU is given in the Statute: “The introduction of international standards following Georgian, and world cultural values, create an educational environment based on integrity for all teaching and research activities. Help students and staff flourish academically, morally, and civically, by providing high quality teaching, scientific research, and fellowship. Contribute to Georgian and wider society through wisdom and dignity.”

Reading the SER and at interviews staff and students we found that they are aware of the mission and are well acquainted with the mission.

The mission is also the basis for creating strategy and action plan of the university.

From the SER it was found that the mission had minor changes in the past and all stakeholders participated in this action.

From the mission, it is also clear that teaching, research and internationalization are the main directions of EEU development.

It is the suggestion to mention broadly the care for public health and the new movements at university politics - innovations, digitalization, AI. This should be included either in the mission or in the new action plan 2022-2024.

Although it is claimed in SER that the mission statement is public and is posted on the official website of EEU, it is difficult to find it there. Therefore, the mission should appear on the first page of the website.

The mission of EEU should constantly be discussed and if there is a need it has to be changed.

Evidences/indicators

Statute of the EEU

Self Evaluation Report, SER

Interviews with Rector, Vice-Rector, Deans, students.

Recommendations:

<p>Suggestions:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perhaps do make the mission statement shorter, more concise, and explicit. - Mission and vision should be displayed on the first page of the website with plausible explanations.
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements
<p>1.2 Strategic Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
<p>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements</p> <p>Using the mission and vision the EEU created the strategic (7-years) development plan and an action (operational) plan (3-years), which will implement the strategic plan. There exists also a monitoring plan.</p> <p>To develop the strategic plan, a working group at the EEU was studying the results of the research conducted by the university compared with the situation in the country. They discussed the results with academic staff, students and employers. The strategy regarding education and research practice in the country, taking into account the existing documents and the trends in other higher education systems was developed. The working group also got acquainted with the international experience and accepted best practices. For the research university the education and research activities are unseparable (Magna Charta Universitatum).</p> <p>To follow the mission, the EEU defined three strategic priorities and 2 additional, permeating priorities. These are: Increase of attractiveness, Expansion of research, Internationalization and additionally Strengthening management and Infrastructure development.</p> <p>We did not hear anything about the action plan for 2022-2024. Also, the recommendations of the NCEQE visit in 2019 were not mentioned in detail. We did not hear also about the strengthening the management. There is a considerable number of structural units with appropriate administration. Some of them could be merged together like the »Legal Department« and »Ombudsman's Office« as well as the "Department of Scientific Research and Development" and "Doctoral and Research Development Centre". This seems to be in agreement with a strategic priority mentioned before (Strengthening management). The combined unit will be more effective and efficient.</p> <p>The most important part of the strategy is the existing SWOT analysis, and it is noted that the priorities are correctly selected. The EEU is trying to attract high potential international academic/research staff, Georgian and foreign students and appropriate finance is dedicated to these tasks. There is evidently endeavour of EEU to internationalize EEU. 4 study programmes are in English, the EEU is a member of EUA, the number of partners and foreign universities increased as well as projects considerably from 2015 onwards. 6 research laboratories (Research Centre for Psychology and Neuroscience; Multifunctional Research Centre; Valram Cherkhezishvili Centre for Interdisciplinary Research; International institute of Marine Law and Politics; Architecture Research-Design Bureau; Research Centre for Migration and Diaspora) were established. The EEU started to issue bilingual scientific journal "Collection of Scientific Papers" (ISSN 2667-9019). The editorial board of this journal consists of Georgian and international scientists. The journal is published in print e-version is uploaded. This contributes to the visibility of EEU.</p>

The EEU jointly organizes various scientific, social meetings and conferences (eg. International Scientific-Practical Conference 2021, Digital Management in Covid 19 Pandemic and Post-pandemic times with Hochschule Fresenius University of Applied Sciences, Germany in Nov 2021). Contribution to the society is well documented as the University Corporate Social Responsibility Policy offering lifelong learning, supporting vulnerable groups, caring for the environment, helping university entrants. Unfortunately, we did not have the opportunity to talk to the people from local municipality. The panel was impressed with the ambitious task of EEU to build a new campus and admired the progress. The panel expressed the wish that the building of the new campus should continue despite the pandemic. The quality of teaching and learning will definitely improve and the number of the enrolled students should be higher.

Evidences/indicators

SER of EEU
 Strategy EEU 2019-2025
 Action plan 2019-2021
 Strategic Plan Development Policy and Procedure
 Internationalization Policy
 Interviews

Recommendations:

- With each new action or strategic plan, the appropriate achievements and possible failures of the previous plans with explanations should be given.
-

Suggestions:

- The SER, strategic and action plan, annual reports, and other reports should be published regularly on the website of EEU.

Best Practices (if applicable):

- It is to commend that the EEU set up the limited number of achievable priorities in the action plan.
- The membership of EEU in the EUA is much appreciated.

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 organizational structure of the HEI is defined by the Rector of the University on January 3, 2019, and is clearly given in the Statute.

There are 3 faculties: Faculty of Law and Social Sciences; Faculty of Business and Engineering and Faculty of Healthcare Sciences.

The governing subjects/bodies of the EEU are: Board of Governors; Rector; Vice-rectors; Representative Council; Quality Assurance Office; Representative Council and Quality Assurance Office.

For faculties, there are: Faculty Councils and Dean of the faculty.

The main structural units of the EEU are: Department of scientific research and development; Centre for the development of doctoral studies; Library; Department of Education; Department of learning process Administration and student services; Language Center; Lifelong Learning Center; Examination center; Office of the Student Ombudsman; Department of international relations; Human resources department; Legal Department; Document Processing Department; Marketing and Public Relations Department; Department of financial and material resources management; Information Technology Management Department; Security Department; Research Centers/units.

The powers, functions, rules of operation, selection and appointment of the management bodies and related issues are determined by the statute. They are transparent and typical for the private university. Thus ensuring effective management at the institution. However, the participation of the students and the academic staff in the governing of the EEU should be checked by Legal Department to be in line with the state laws.

The most important figures of the governing bodies are Rector, QA Service and Representative Council. The structure of the university (given in the organigram of EEU) and the defined tasks of the structural units ensure the effective implementation of activities and the strategic development plan of the university.

It should be noted that EEU also considered the results of external evaluations (verification) in 2019 by NCEQE. Quality Assurance Service included the issues concerning the strengthening of the role of the Representative Council and presenting the collegial bodies at the Faculty level.

It was clearly shown and confirmed with the talk with representatives of the Department of international relations and foreign scientists that the leadership of the EEU strongly supports international cooperation and the process of internationalization.

The evaluations performed by NCEQE experts in 2019 expressed concerns about balancing the power of the Rector. (SER, p. 29). The general observation was that the students and the staff should be more involved in the governing of the university also at the decision-making stage. However, there is a high agreement by students on their involvement in the internationalization process at university. The visit confirms that the management of the EEU supports the students financially and promotes international mobility. The same should apply also for the staff mobility and in raising the international projects.

The EEU has as a structural body the Legal Department. Procedures for election and appointment of the management bodies as well all the other legal documents of EEU should be carefully checked to be in line with the state legislation.

In the strategy of the EEU the strengthening of the management was one of the priorities. However, we did notice the broad development of management in the strategy of EEU 2019-2025 and in action plan 2019-2021. We would like to see how this will contribute to the strengthening of management to be efficient and effective.

Evidences/indicators

Strategy 2019-2025

Action plan 2019-2021

Statute of the EEU

Organigram of EEU

SER of EEU

Internationalization Policy

Interviews
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Management of the EEU should also financially support the academic staff mobility and helps with applying for the international projects. - Since there is the Language Center at the EEU and the proficiency in English is the most important issue of the internationalization it should be improved.
<p>Suggestions:</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Like to point out the whole process of internationalization including academic staff and students at EEU (mobility, projects, partnership, exchange programmes).
<p>Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements
<p>2.2 Internal Quality Assurance Mechanisms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
<p>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements</p> <p>One of the most important governing body for the young university is QA Service which helps the HEI in developing and maintaining a level of quality in its administrative and educational activities. The work of the service is based on the existing state laws (covering quality), on regulations of NCEQE and ESG standards.</p> <p>The quality service provides assessment and development of the EEU's activities in all areas – study programmes, teaching, administrative services, resources, internationalization, research, and management.</p> <p>Quality assurance mechanisms are presented in EEU in the form of internal and external evaluation mechanisms. (SER, p. 46).</p> <p>The predominant mode of work is using questionnaires.</p> <p>One of the achievements of QA service is a planning the optimal numbers of student and staff (the word »contingency« was wrongly used here in SER) at EEU. This mechanism regulates the method of calculating the number of places for a specific study programme using indicators set by EEU, such as human, material and information resources.</p> <p>It is to commend that the young university EEU set up QA Service as one of the governing bodies of the university. Besides questionnaires in most cases, we would support also round tables, webinars, interviews with rector/staff/students and the active collaboration of students. The acquired data should be analysed and only trends, weak points and possible action should be presented to the Board of Governors, Rector and Representative Council.</p> <p>The panel opinion is that QA Service should optimize its activities. For example, the academic staff are evaluated by the dean, by the programme head, by the head of the department of education, by the head of the examination office, by students and for research work. Furthermore, surveys of students, programme staff, and alumni? are conducted and analyzed on a semester basis.</p>
<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <p>Statute of the EEU</p>

SER of EEU Interviews Interview with SER group EEU Quality Assurance System
Recommendations:
Suggestions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The various collected data at QA Service should be effectively used for further analytical work and to forecast trends. Some optimizations in the work of QA Service should be needed. - There is a fear that QA service will be overload with quality assurance activity and it should need some optimization. - Few lines on quality issues (quality assurance and enhancement, standards (NCEQE, ESG), authorization, accreditation, PDCA) should appear on the website of the EEU. - The results obtained from the questionnaires should be always followed by the number: who were invited to survey and the percentages of respondents. - In most cases you can get the good answers when you ask three questions: what to praise at EEU, what is not so good and what change is needed to improve.
Best Practices (if applicable): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong QA Service as one of the governing bodies at university EEU.
Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements
2.3. Observing Principles of Ethics and Integrity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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
<p>The EEU is aware of the necessary existence of regulations regarding ethics of integrity. The University has developed ethical norms as the Code of Conduct (Ethics) which sets out the ethical principles for students and staff. The Code of Ethics has been in force at the University since 2015 and has been revised periodically with the participation of all stakeholders. In 2020 the position of Students Ombudsman was established.</p> <p>The EEU has an important role in the development of a democratic and free society. Consequently, the Code of Ethics is the formulation of ethical principles, values and behaviour of academic staff and students. It is aimed to facilitate to solve and identify ethical issues that may arise during their work or learning period.</p> <p>The academia is obliged to accept the values envisaged by the Code of Ethics and follow the rules established by this Code. The EEU reacts to all allegations of cheating, plagiarism, fraudulent or fabricated coursework or malpractice, corruption in examinations and assessments. Specially, the EEU put a lot of efforts to detect plagiarism and to the theft of the intellectual property and preventing fraud and cheating in the academic processes.</p> <p>It is emphasized that the priority of the EEU is not to respond to the violation of the Code of Ethics but to prevent its violations in time. For this reason, information is provided to the staff and students, also available on the website.</p>

It is noteworthy that the academic freedom is an important element of the university as freedom of thought and expression. The students and academic staff are well acquainted with it.

Recently, there is a common challenge at all universities to prevent the appearing of malpractices. There are several ways to detect malpractice, but all the efforts should be dedicated to preventing it. Therefore, constant suggestions and convincing are necessary aimed at the academic staff and students – to all stakeholders of the EEU. It is advisable to have a discussion at all level of EEU on the issue: Corruption in HE, by CHEA, USA. A global study was conducted during 2017-2018, performed during 2017-2018. However, no research yet is available on how the corruption, fraud and plagiarism appeared in the HE area. The position of the Students’ Ombudsman is new at EEU (established in 2020 and was occupied by staff in 2021), but he will contribute to the solution of the above challenges.

Evidences/indicators

Strategy 2019-2025
 Action plan 2019-2021
 Code of Conduct
 Interviews

Recommendations:

Suggestions:

- All the students coming to the EEU should have an extensive introductory course on all the possible malpractices.
- To organise a public lecture: «Why fraud, corruption and plagiarism appeared in the HE?» for staff, students, admin. staff.

Best Practices (if applicable):

- Introduction of the position of Students’ Ombudsman.

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

EEU policies for planning, designing, implementing, and developing educational programs are documented with details in “Educational Programs Planning, Development, Approval, the Rule and Procedures of Making Changes and Canceling It” which approved in 2019 and updated by the representatives’ council in 2020. It includes a full description of the types of educational

programs which EEU offered and the details of planning, development, approval, implementation of any changes in educational programs and policies and procedures on cancellation of an educational program.

The EEU policies for the above-mentioned items are clear, rational and includes all the information which is necessary for the fulfilment of 3.1 requirements.

Based on SER and the results of the interviews with different stakeholders of EEU, it is evident that during the process for development of new program (for example Master's programme in Digital Management) and also for development of existing programs, EEU used a participatory process and includes academic staff (affiliated and invited) and also employers and students (for new program students from similar level of another programs)

Review of SER and interviews with QA service staff and reviewing of Annex 2.2.3 (2019-2020 Progress Report on the Use of Quality Assurance Mechanisms) shows that EEU uses several methods for needs assessment and evaluating the quality of study programs including students, academic staff satisfaction, assessment of labour market needs (such as the development which happened in MBA in Finance) and the use of international expertise in development of programs. The joint project with Fresenius University is an example of such international contribution in development of the study programs.

The EEU one cycle MD program which had been revised at 2017, has been renewed on new developments specifically revision in MD program Sector Benchmarks. Base on this revision the level of integration especially horizontal integration has increased and also more practical and health related courses has been added to the program. The model of students assessment has been revised and OSCE in included in the assessment of clinical rotations. It is noteworthy that during our interview with medical students we found that the OSCE examination has not been implemented for previous students cohorts and will be started for newly admitted students. The review of the MD program and also syllabi shows that the learning outcomes are included in the program and relevant syllabi with appropriate teaching and learning methods. It is evident that the planned curriculum is not implemented perfectly and usually some deviations from the ideal picture of the program will occur on the ground. Meanwhile it is clear that EEU MD program has been revised thoroughly based on revised version of sector benchmarks.

There is a clear and well defined regulations for approving, amending and annulment of study programs in EEU under the title of "Educational Programs Planning, Development, Approval, the Rule and Procedures of Making Changes and Canceling It" (Annex3.1.1) which has been updated in September 2020. In this document, the details of planning, development, approval and any change in programs and finally their annulment have been described with full explanation of the steps which are mandatory for each of them.

EEU has clear regulations for helping students of annulled program to be mobilized internally to relevant programs in EEU itself or externally to other similar programs in Georgia.

Evidences/indicators

- EEU Educational Programs Planning, Development, Approval, the Rule and Procedures of Making Changes and Canceling It
- The rules for evaluating the implementation of educational programmes at the University
- 2019-2020 Progress Report on the Use of Quality Assurance Mechanisms

Recommendations:

Suggestions:

- Some clarifications in the English version of the document (which may be the result of translation quality) could improve its comprehension.
- Further study to evaluate the level of implementation of revised programs (especially MD program) on the ground (difference between planned and implemented program)
- Implementation of at least some parts of revised programs for those students who enrolled before the revised program has been adopted by the Representative Council

Best Practices (if applicable):**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

Reviewing of the Programs and also syllabi in all three faculties of Health Sciences, Business & Engineering and law and social sciences shows that all the programs are based on ECTS.

A review of a sample of several education programs and related syllabi in EEU including one cycle MD program revealed that the program learning outcomes have been defined in detail and based on the national requirements and to the level of higher education.

Reviewing several educational programs in different fields in all three EEU faculties shows that there is a logical relationship between different components of the the educational program which is necessary for graduation of average students. This judgement could be consolidated with the results of the survey from graduates and also the interview with alumni of EEU during site visit.

About the individualized education program, there is a full description in SER about it. Based on this report there is a comprehensive plan for developing individualized education program related to specific needs of students such as minority group. At least there is a case that EEU provided support and specific program for a student who is in the penitentiary. Despite the publicity of this program, the level of students' awareness of this program is 3.62 from 5 and it shows that it needs more attention based on the EEU SER. Meanwhile, according to SER, there is a document under the title "Individual Curriculum Development Rule" which should be provided as Annex 3.2.1. Search to find this Annex was not fruitful and it seems in Georgian version only. Reviewing it by Georgian member of the team shows that the guideline is clear and adequate, although it is not so detailed. In an interview with students, they said that there is a clear plan on the side of the university to individualize the payment of registration fee but based on the standards there should be more on educational individualization of the program for students.

The teaching and learning methods have been defined in all educational programs and syllabi. It is understandable that in educational programs the teaching and learning methods could not be correlate with each objectives and more or less a list of the methods that exist and suitable for the outcomes. Meanwhile the relationship between learning outcomes and teaching and learning methods are more clear in syllabi. Despite the variety or T&L methods that have been mentioned in educational programs and even syllabi, the methods which really used in the program are usually limited and in some part could not be considered adequate. For example in many of early phase courses in MD program, the implemented T&L methods are lecture and seminar. Despite the emphasis of the MD program sector benchmark on integration (both horizontal and vertical), there aren't any multidisiplinary sessions (by basic scientists and clinicians) in which by using PBL or CBL, the students capability of applying basic sciences to understand the underlying mechanisms of diseases, or defining the relevant questions and finding their answers be improved.

Despite emphasis of MD sector benchmark on communication with patient as the main methods for achieving several learning outcomes including history taking, physical examinations, communication skills with patients and colleagues, management skills and

prescription skills, and professionalism and ethics, the direct observation of clinical rotations and also interviewing with clinical faculties shows that students encounters with patients are limited and usually occurs during attending visits of patients.

There is an updated (last version: 2021) and comprehensive catalogue which provides a lot of information about all the study programs in EEU including undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral programs. It is accessible on EEU website (<https://bit.ly/3pCZDwb>) in both Georgian and English languages.

Evidences/indicators

- Educational programs and syllabi of different programs including BA, MSc and also One cycle MD programme
- Annex 3.2.1: Individual Curriculum Development Rule (only in Georgian)
- EEU Catalogue of Educational Programmes available at: <https://bit.ly/3pCZDwb>

Recommendations:

- Better alignments of teaching & learning methods and learning outcomes.
-

Suggestions:

- More attention is needed for an individualized education program to be well known to students.

Best Practices (if applicable):

Evaluation

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

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

3.3 Assessment of Learning Outcomes

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

There are a clear and comprehensive description of students' assessment system in the general policies and procedures of the University i.e. "Regulatory rules of educational process" based on this documents there are assessment system in each educational program and also syllabi which describes the system relevant to that program or course. It includes full description of the methods of assessment, number of assessment during each course with their contribution in final grade of students. It is consistent with the University regulations and consistent in all disciplines and educational programs. The assessment system in each program and syllabus is clear and accessible for all students. The appeal mechanism has been described fully in the regulations and educational programs.

Although EEU assessment system is clear and comprehensive, there are certain concerns about institution's capability to fulfil the requirement on ensuring promotion of students' academic performance. Most of the assessments are summative in nature and there is not any continuous tracking system to show the progress trends of each student in each learning outcomes of that program. The assessment system is also insufficient in terms of workplace-based assessments during students' rotations in clinical placements. The only assessment which shows the students' ability to apply most of the exit outcomes of the MD program for example is the OSCE examination. Regardless of shortcomings of OSCE in the assessment of many aspects of clinical competencies, it is not in place in most of the rotations. According to the interviews, the OSCE will be held for thos students which enrolled in MD program after the MD program revision in 2020 and the students who started their study of medicine have not

such an examination as a routine mode of assessment which lead to a major deficits in assessment of student achievement of learning outcomes. .
Evidences/indicators Annex 3.3.1. Relevant information regulating the educational process Annex 3.2.1. Educational programmes Syllabi of different programs
Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of a tracking system for each student in different phases of the curriculum - Including formative assessment (those assessments which show student strengths and weaknesses without any contribution to the final grade of student in a specific course) as a major part of students assessment system - More elaborate use of workplace-based assessment - Early establishment of OSCE/OSPE type examinations even for students who enrolled on the old MD program
Suggestions:
Best Practices (if applicable):
Evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements

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 documentary analysis of the universities' internal policies and regulations confirms that **higher education institution has adequate, development-oriented, personal management policy**. The Statute of the University contains a declared mission to help staff flourish academically, morally, and civically, by providing high quality teaching, scientific research, fellowship. Moreover, Chapter III of the Statute provides general principles of regulating the aspects related to the University personal: composition of the academic personal and selection principles, legal relationship with the staff, rights, and responsibilities of the personal, invited lectures, administrative and auxiliary personal, staff development mechanism, code of conduct. University's charter (initially approved in 2015 and revised in 2020) outlines working conditions offered at the university in detail. University's Policy on Personal Management has been adopted in 2020. The document outlines the general aspects

and principles of the personal management, the recruitment and selection principles, labour relationship, evaluation of the personal and utilization of the evaluation results, conducting labor satisfaction surveys and the utilization of the results, supporting personal professional development, regulating dismissal procedure, developing HR system, and leading personal management documentation, referral. The Rule of Academic Personal Affiliation adopted in 2019 outlines the procedure of affiliation of the academic staff with the university, as well as outlines criteria for affiliation, rights, and responsibilities of the university towards the affiliated staff and vice versa, withdrawal of affiliation, etc. The regulation of Evaluation of Academic and Invited Personal's Scientific and Academic Activities approved in 2020, stipulates the evaluation based on qualitative and quantitative indicators and is carried out at the end of the academic year. The document entails two major indicators for evaluating scientific-research activities of the academic and invited personal: quantity and the quality of the work. Moreover, the detailed evaluation criteria for both indicators are clearly outlined in the document. Statute of the Representative Council demonstrates the possibility of engaging academic staff in the decision-making process at the university level.

Interviews conducted during the site visit confirmed that university personal are aware of the internal policies and regulations. They declared that, if necessary, they can resort to the assistance of the HR department to clarify certain aspects related to the internal policies of the university. They use the opportunities and benefits offered by the university and participate in the program development process or any other decision-making process determined for the academic staff. However, the results of the survey on Evaluating Staff Activities and Satisfaction indicate that vast majority of the respondents (68.6%) is not involved in the University/Faculty management, whereas 20% is partially involved and only 11.4% is actively involved in this process. The aforementioned indicates, that the university has to take measures to ensure the involvement of personal in the university management process to guarantee the participatory approach of decision-making processes.

The staff recruitment process employed by the university is open and transparent.

The process is led collaboratively by the HR department and the educational units, with HR department mostly responsible for the technical aspects of the process, while the needed qualifications and number of openings are determined by the relevant education units. The vacancy announcement is posted on the university website. The selection process entails initial screening of the applications, face-to-face interviews with the candidates, and if necessary, conducting demonstrative lectures. The university has a unique practice of recruiting the staff on the probation period, which enables both the employer and the employee to demonstrate their ability to cooperate and share the work ethics. The Board of Governors confirmed that recruiting competitive personal is one of the priorities for the university and they always try to attract people with international experience. The rector and vice-rectors confirm that the academic environment offered by the university, as well as the availability of various internal grants for research and overall teaching quality, makes the university a desirable employee for the qualified staff. However, the overall number of the potential candidates provided by the university concerning one specific recruitment was not impressive (with maximum of 3 candidates for 2 openings and/or 1 candidate for 1 available opening). It is recommended that the university keeps track of the number of potential candidates applying and includes this type of analysis in the future self-evaluation report. This would help to demonstrate the competitiveness of the university with other HEIs operating in the country.

The scrutiny of the academic, invited/ administrative staff resumes demonstrated that **staff employed by the university is highly competitive and qualified**. They have relevant degrees in the relevant fields, engage in academic and scientific work as per the university's policies and regulations. However, it seems that invited lecturers are more engaged in the research activities compares with the affiliated personal (to be addressed in more details under Standard 6); In the SWOT analysis provided in the 2019-2025 Strategic Development Plan, the university justly lists qualification of the staff under the strengths of the educational institutions. However, the availability of qualified academic personal is also mentioned under the threats, in response to which 2019-2025 Strategic Development Plan stipulates attracting, maintaining, developing qualified human resources as one of the strategic priorities of the university.

The samples of the employment contracts comply with Labor Code of Georgia, including the recent requirements stipulated by labor code reform related to job safety, security, and the remuneration of the overtime. The contract provisions are fair. However, there is little leverage from the side of the potential employees to negotiate contract provisions per their individual needs.

University actively utilizes staff evaluation and satisfaction survey results in the process of staff management. University personal are evaluated by the students according to the pre-determined questionnaires. The analysis of the latter enables the university to issue specific recommendations to the staff for the improvement of the educational process. Moreover, the academic personal engages in self-reflection and outline the needs for their professional development. University considers and supports the need for further trainings, qualification enhancement, etc. Representatives of the lifelong learning center declared that the unit sets the benchmarks for staff professional development based on the innovations implemented at the university and the assessment of the actual teaching/learning process. The recent examples named were the trainings on the distance education tools, the utilization of the new database of the educational process, usage of the international electronic databases, etc. The success of the conducted trainings is measured by the number of participants, as well as by the pre and post evaluation questionnaires for the participants and the trainers/experts.

Evidences/indicatorsEvidences/indicators

- Statute of the University
- Eastern European University Charter
- Eastern European University Personal Management Policy
- Eastern European University Academic Staff Affiliation Rule
- Eastern European University Evaluation of Academic and Invited Personal's Scientific and Academic Activities
- Eastern European University Planning Methodology for Determining the Amount of Student Contingent and Implementing Staff of the Educational Program
- Eastern European University Statute of the Representative Council
- 2019-2025 Strategic Development Plan
- Resumes of the academic staff, invited lecturers, and administrative staff
- Samples of the employment contracts
- Academic staff activities assessment questionnaires
- Interviews conducted during the site visit

Recommendations:

Suggestions:

- To overlook and refine the university personal involvement in the University/Faculty management process through enabling staff members get engaged in various processes.
- To keep track of the number of the potential candidates applying for the academic positions and include analysis in the future self-evaluation report to demonstrate the competitiveness of the university with other HEIs operating in the country; and
- To establish the practice of negotiating contracts with the potential employees to depict the individual needs of the recruited staff.

Best Practices (if applicable):

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 other functions assigned to them

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The number of academic personal, invited lecturers and administrative staff is relevant to number of the students currently enrolled at the university. The Policy of Planning Methodology for Determining the Amount of Student Contingent and Implementing Staff of the Educational Program clearly outlines the methodology for calculating the number of academic and invited personal in ratio to the students enrolled. Moreover, the document stipulates that academic staff implementing the program must comprise at least 50% of the total volume of the program, while at least 50% of the academic staff implementing the program must be affiliated with the university. The number of the invited lectures is determined according to the educational components. The self-evaluation report claims that the overall number of the University staff is 390 (158 academic staff including affiliated, which constitutes 40.5% of the total staff number; 96 affiliated – 24.6 % of the overall staff number; 148 invited – 37.9% of the overall staff number; 84 admin. Staff – 21.5 % of the overall staff number). The a forementioned is confirmed with the number of resumes submitted by the university. The same report shows that the number of the affiliated personal for 2020 has been 92, which is a slight decrease from the previous number. Since the policy determines the percentage of the required staff per program, it would have been convenient if the self-evaluation report also contained statistical information of the percentage of staff dedicated to specific programs to confirm the compliance of the practice with the policy.

Self-evaluation report claims that academic workload is determined based on four components: educational activities, scientific-research activities, consultation hours, participation in university's events/activities. The policy determines maximum mandatory weekly workload per component according to the different status of the academic staff (professor, associated professor, assistant-professor, invited lectures). **The academic workload scheme provided by the university demonstrates that academic staff exceeds the mandatory weekly workload established by the university** (For example in case of Lili Bibilashvili, Avtandil Gagnidze, Shalva Machavariani, Mikheil Tokmazashvili, Davit Bostaghanashvili, Giorgi Gakheladze, Besik Meurmishvili, etc.). Moreover, the scheme shows that workload of the academic personal in other HEIs. The HR department usually asks academic staff to provide the written certificate of the academic workload in other HEIs to ensure the compliance with the requirements of the Georgian Legislation **Overall, the workload of the academic staff complies with the requirements of the Labour Code of Georgia, which stipulates 40 working hours per week.** However, the excessive workload of the academic staff might have impact on the life-work balance of the personal, and other hand in might jeopardize the quality of teaching at the university. It is thus advisable to overlook the policy of the academic workload, specifically for the affiliated academic personal, and to elaborate the mechanism to prevent the risk of teaching quality deterioration.

The university has in place the regulation on affiliation. The rule of affiliation determines the procedures, as well as the rights and responsibilities of the parties in case of affiliation. The policy strictly determines the person should have affiliation only with the university if he/she deems conditions of affiliation acceptable.

<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Methodology for Determining the Amount of Student Contingent and Implementing Staff of the Educational Program - Eastern European University Academic Staff Affiliation Rule - Interview results
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To overlook the policy of the academic workload, specifically for the affiliated academic personal, and to elaborate a reasonable mechanism to prevent the risk of teaching quality deterioration.
<p>Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To include statistical information of the staff (academic, invites, administrative) dedicated to the specific programs in the self-evaluation report to confirm the compliance with the university’s policy.
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI’s compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> 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

- 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

According to the information on the University website: <https://eeu.edu.ge/> and as pointed out in the Self Evaluation Report (SER) as well as after assessing the contract samples, provided by the university prior to the site visit – it is justified to say that, regulations for assignment, suspension and termination and/or reinstatement of student status, mobility, qualification granting and recognition of education are transparent and fair, and are in line with current legislation. The information regarding these issues is public and accessible to everyone. – above mentioned documents are available both in Georgian and in English languages and they have been provided to the expert panel for assessment, and these documents could be found and viewed on the highly mentioned webpage.

University has a student guidebook which is available on the webpage and it represents a single document which contains all relevant information and regulations described to have it clear and easy to understand.

For English: <https://eeu.edu.ge/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/INTER.-STUD.-GUID-2021.pdf>

For Georgian: eeu.edu.ge/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/EEU-სტუდენტის-გზამკვლევი.pdf

According to SER in the paragraph about Quantitative data, it is pointed out that University has a marginal number of students 1200 with an actual number of students being 1017 among which 626 students with Suspended status. The new requested marginal number of students is 2100.

The main issue for students who suspended their status could be Financial cause due to COVID-19 pandemic, as mentioned students have simply not registered for upcoming semester, but University and Student Support Services have multiple methods introduced at the university to help them financially and keep them encouraged and interested in East European University. (These mechanisms and description of support services could be viewed in sub-standard 5.2.) During interviews, it became clear that EEU strives at creating student centered environment, which is done by allocating student support mechanisms to separate departments. For the sake of this sub-standard, the Department of Student ombudsmen is a single unit tasked for keeping students updated and informed about their rights and lawful interests. This Department is newly established. As such it was impossible for a panel of experts to objectively evaluate the actual success rate of the ombudsmen's office, but EEU has dedicated Human and material resources for the department and panel of experts believes that if the support from the university will remain, this unit has a big potential. Responsibilities of students' ombudsmen are to assist students in legal matters, be it an issue with a student contract, status suspension and/or termination, or any other similar legal matter.

University has three faculties, all of which represent completely different fields of education, and are in need to have their individual methods of assessment. (as described in standard 3.0) As such the examination center was particularly interesting for panel of experts. This Unit is responsible to control the quality of studies and education in all manners of written exams. Any field specific examinations are managed by the faculties themselves. All written examinations are carried out in the computer facilities of the previously authorized building. It must be mentioned that site visit, as described in standard 7 consisted of visiting two sites, one of them was newly built campus of EEU. On the premises of this campus the examination center, together with a laboratory for research activities is an independent unit. This building is a two-story structure, with ground floor as an examination center and second floor research labs. This building was not yet completed and as such it was impossible to evaluate the new facilities for the examination center, yet the high pace of construction was visible. Until the completion, this center will have to remain in the old department and use the old facilities. During site visit it was evident that examination center is equipped with all necessary resources for accurate assessment of acquired knowledge within any discipline taught at the university. During interviews – interviewees assured the panel of expert's that Examination center has close collaboration with IT department which is the reason for avoiding fraud and/or cheating.

One of the aspects which were pointed out by University representatives during interviews is that University is a student-centered institution. Students are present at the representative council, and at the faculty council. They take part in all legal activities of these departments and have their input in the matters discussed.

As outlined during interviews the procedures for issuing diploma/certificate and diploma supplement is done in time in one- or two-month period after graduation, according to legal procedures and university regulations.

University has multiple independent departments to keep all students informed about their rights, which includes timely and effective procedures, as well as electronic systems and platforms. All mechanisms for the protection of student lawful interests, for the discussion of students' appeals, related to the work of academic and administrative bodies, questionnaires and anonymity are more prominently pointed out in the paragraph 5.2 in the section of Student support services, which in following is outlined as one of the best practices of the East European University.

Evidences/indicators

- Student Guidebook:
For English: <https://eeu.edu.ge/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/INTER.-STUD.-GUID-2021.pdf>
For Georgian: eeu.edu.ge/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/EEU-სტუდენტის-გზამკვლევი.pdf

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://eeu.edu.ge/ • Online Meeting with students; Alumni; with Academic Staff; with University representatives; with representatives of IT department; with the IQA office; Student Self Government; Unit of Learning process administration and support Services; Lifelong Education department. • Self Evaluation Report, Annexes and other relevant documents provided prior o site visit.
Recommendations:
Suggestions:
Best Practices (if applicable):
Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements
5.2 Student Support Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HEI has student consulting services in order to plan educational process and improve academic performance ○ HEI has career support service, which provides students with appropriate counselling and support regarding employment and career development ○ HEI ensures students awareness and involvement in various university-level, local and international projects and events, and supports student initiatives ○ HEI has mechanisms, including financial mechanisms to support low SES students
Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements <p>EEU’s Student Support Services are very comprehensive and includes collaboration among multiple departments or Units. These units are: The Ombudsmen’s office- which is responsible for students’ legal problems and all legal assistance (as described in sub standard 5.1); Student Self Government, which mainly deals with circulating updated and accurate information among students–and also is responsible for Student oriented extracurricular activities carried out at the institution, such as: Sport Activities, different student clubs, etc.; International Relations Department – which deals with incomings or outgoing students. This means counselling them, helping them to prepare the required documentation, managing internal or external scholarships and planning for the whole exchange semester. Main Unit of Learning process administration and support Services – which in collaboration with the Department of Lifelong Education centre - is responsible for career support for students and for Alumni, they support integration of international students and students with special educational needs. These Departments also manage the on-time collaboration and exchange between all departments of student’s services. There are other aspects that also must be mentioned: such as Position of a program Coordinator, - which as understood by a panel of experts is like a consultant to the head of the programme and as pointed out by students that the Program coordinator for them is a contact person in case of any problems and/or issues with the educational matters.</p> <p>University uses multiple Electronic/software Platforms for different functions: EEU-EL (Electronic Process Management system) – which was also pointed out by students during interviews – is main platform which incorporates different uses. This system is responsible for students to receive assignments – assessment / feedback, as well as lecture materials and etc... EEU-EL incorporates Microsoft teams and which is used for lectures and</p>

online classes, and as mentioned during interviews it proved successful during pandemic. Students have mentioned that at the start of COVID19 pandemic, University promptly contacted them, assisted with the installation process and activation of Microsoft Teams, - also provided links to YouTube tutorials for extra assistance.

The internal QA office of the university carried out QA surveys of many diverse types among different audiences and disseminates the results to relevant persons and services. Academic staff and service personnel confirmed the usefulness of the information gathered and claim to use it to improve their own performance. EEU-EL incorporates the online survey properties, which together with "survey monkey" provides accurate and comprehensive responses. Answering surveys is not compulsory for students. - These platforms allow students to have freedom of choice whether they would like to fill the questionnaires or not. The use of two platforms surveys, was justified that Survey monkey allows EEU to circulate the more complex questionnaires, which for now is not yet possible through survey properties of EEU-EL only. EEU-EL also allows students to fill in the complaint - if any - regarding any problems related to these platforms.

Students receive information through personal University E-mail addresses, which is given to students at the moment of acceptance in EEU. They also receive text (SMS) messages. News and other relevant Information is also updated on EEU Facebook page.

Lifelong education department, which also manages Employment office of EEU-s large network of employers, helps students to prepare for effective job search. Through Electronic platforms and E-mail they remain in contact with students and even with Alumni and keep them informed regarding possible job vacancies.

Students at EEU are encouraged to get involved in some of the many extracurricular activities, clubs, sports, or cultural activities offered by the university or run by students themselves. Football team of EEU has a good success rate, they also have different events for table tennis, also they have a chess club.

Students organize local and international events and activities where they show their ability to take initiatives, be creative, manage a budget and find sponsors. EEU has a special budget line aimed at supporting those activities that contribute to the educational goals of the University. In the budget of 2021 - University has allocated a substantial sum for Student Self-government - as well as for Scholarships and other types of funding for students, student support and student encouragement. This document and Sum could be viewed in annex 7.4.1 budget. (provided prior to the site visit). Also, must be mentioned that the budget for marketing and advertisement is separate.

As mentioned in 5.1, due to Covid-19 pandemic many students have simply not registered for upcoming semesters which resulted in high number of students with suspended status. As such University allowed students indiscriminately to go through administrative registration for a symbolic fee of 50 GEL. University has also started to support students financially and even encouraged them to propose the individual payment scheme - each student can have an individual payment scheme and as mentioned during interviews students confirmed that some of them have used this opportunity.

One of the best practices of this university is the methodology for individual study plan. Which allows students in need to have schedule adjusted to their needs. Individual study plan is Done by a collaboration between Heads of the program and the faculty Dean. University already has a unique case of an individual study plan created for a student in the penitentiary system. University managed for this student to be part of all classes online and have access to all literature and other materials needed for completion of the program.

Evidences/indicators

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site visit; observing facilities; Computers; laboratories; examination rooms; • https://eeu.edu.ge/ • Online meeting with students; Alumni; with Academic Staff; with University representatives; with representatives of IT department; with the IQA office; Student Self Government; Unit of Learning process administration and support Services; Lifelong Education department. • Self Evaluation Report, Annexes and other relevant documents provided prior o site visit.
Recommendations:
Suggestions:
Best Practices (if applicable):
Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements

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

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

Since the University in 2015 has changed from a teaching university to a teaching and research institution, research has been declared as a priority direction in the University's mission. The goals and objectives of research development are defined in the Strategic Plan for 2019-2025 and the Scientific-research Activity development Strategy for 2019-2025 (Annex 6.1.3). Thus, scientific research is one of the three strategic priorities of the University.

Research activities at the university are carried out by both faculties and research centers and - in accordance with the development strategy - at the institutional level.

A Department of scientific research and development has been established whose tasks are

- To develop a strategy for the development of scientific-research activities and ensures its implementation

- To develop and implements mechanisms for supporting scientific-research activities

- To develop the University's research potential and productivity assessment system.

The university runs two doctoral programs. At the level of the Bachelor and Master programs, the requirements for the research component are considered within the requirements for the respective educational level.

To support the implementation of the doctoral programmes, a Doctoral and Research Development Center has been established, headed by a British academic. The tasks of the

centre include developing the study-teaching and research process at the doctoral level, supporting the students and teaching staff.

Another structural unit - Research Ethics Committee, which is to provide additional support for research, has been formed. The committee is to ensure the implementation of the Code of Research Ethics and Rule for detecting, preventing, and responding to plagiarism.

The University actively supports the organisation of international and national scientific and student conferences. The conference materials are usually published in the conference volumes. A great deal of information about the conferences that have taken place and those that are planned is available on the website.

Since 2019, a bilingual academic journal has been maintained in which works by academic staff as well as doctoral students are published. The editorial board of the journal is international.

The dynamics of research development since 2015, documented by the corresponding report (Report on the research and scientific activities 2015-2019) and presented in Self-Evaluation Report (SER), is impressive: according to this information, for example, the number of publications in impact factor journals has increased 4 times, participation in international conferences 5 times, publication of monographs and textbooks 8 times. This development testifies to the serious will of the institution to build a solid research.

The extensive and significant work is carried out at the university to develop the research infrastructure. A new separate building (994 m²) was constructed on the new campus for research centres and laboratories.

In Scientific-research Activity development Strategy 2019-2025, P. 4 is declared, that Research should be based on the scientific priorities of the University.

- *Also in SER, p. 114: EEU is research-oriented institution that conducts research in accordance with the scientific research priorities. Since this is a young research university these priorities are not yet clearly defined. Also, during interviews, it was not possible to clarify the priority directions that account for the institution's special interest and its special position in the higher education landscape. It seems that the research priorities are tailored to the specific researchers currently working at the university. At the same time, the fact that research priorities are thought of gives reason to assume that the institution is motivated to find and establish them.*

The total number of research projects carried out, both at institutional levels and by research centres, and by faculties, is very impressive: almost 100. The number of projects carried out is no less impressive.

- *However, on closer research of the implemented projects, which are indicated on the university's website, it has been found that many of them were carried out by researchers who are currently part of the academic staff of the EEU but have been published on behalf of other universities. This affects both affiliated and unaffiliated personnel. It is of course possible that in some cases the persons were not yet affiliated staff of the EEU at the time of publication, but then the question arises whether these projects can be presented as research of the EEU.*

There are 6 research Centers, some of which have already carried out several research projects, and all of them are currently carrying out many research projects.

The Research Center for Psychology and Neurosciences, which was founded in 2019, deserves special mention. In 2019 was established Laboratory Z, which was equipped with high-tech behavior and neuro-marketing research equipment. In the first stage, the center's staff was trained by European experts to use the equipment and tools. To date, the Center has implemented up to 10 research projects and is currently implementing two research projects. This is said to be the first psychological laboratory of its kind in Georgia.

Also noteworthy is the creation of a business problems platform and an integrated communication and information network at the Scientific-research Center for Multifunctional research. After a company registers on the Business Problems Platform, an application to solve the problem is placed on the platform. Expert groups registered on the platform publish their proposals on the platform to solve the problem. Companies could choose the most acceptable proposal for them and sign a contract with experts. After the company receives an offer from the Eastern European university, the university experts (with the participation of PhD and

postgraduate students) have access to the business accelerator and multifunctional equipment to fix the problem.

In the short time since its establishment, the Center has also conducted the first large-scale labor market research in Georgia in relation to educational programs, carried out in cooperation with three other Georgian Universities.

The number of ongoing and planned research projects at the Migration and Diaspora Research Center, which was founded in 2020, is already 18.

- *However, more detailed information about the staffing and financial resources, and in some cases relevant project information from some centers, could not be found on the university's website and could not be clarified during interviews. Upon request, the institution provided some information on some of the centers. In any case, the desired scope of research projects can only be managed by involving the certain number of stable, qualified and motivated staff.*

According to the documents there are a total of 158 academic staff, of which 96 are affiliate staff (SER_eng. P. 114).

- *Of the staff involved in the ongoing projects, half are affiliated with the university. On the one hand, this means that the university can interest and attract external researchers for its own projects, but on the other hand, it raises the question of whether this relatively low level of involvement of its own staff in the projects is optimal for building sustainable research.*

To ensure the involvement of affiliated academic staff in research, the EEU has developed Compulsory Weekly Workload of Academic Personnel, which applies to both the affiliated and non-affiliated academic staff employed at the University (Table 4.2.1 of the SER). According to this table, academic staff are obliged to complete certain numbers of research hours in addition to teaching hours.

- *However, the workload table of the academic staff, which was made available at the request of the expert group, shows that this rule cannot be retained in many cases, because for many affiliated and non-affiliated persons, no research load can be determined at all. As a result, the meaning of this binding rule is called into question.*

In the Scientific-research Activity Development Strategy 2019-2025, is declared as task 4. Integrating scientific research into the learning process. Concrete examples of the integration of research results into the curriculum could not yet be provided during interviews.

- *According to the information available on the website, only 5 ongoing research projects foresee student involvement. The university itself has also noted a lack of student involvement in research as one of the weaknesses in its SWOT analysis. Accordingly, it can be assumed that efforts are being made in this direction.*

Doctoral programs at the university have been operating since 2016 and as of the last day, 3 doctoral theses have been defended. Regulations of the Doctoral Studies and PhD Dissertation Council have been updated and the minimum standard for doctoral studies has been created in Rules for Evaluating and Planning of the scientific-research component of the doctoral program. The "Guide for PhD Students" has been refined and updated.

The requirements for doctoral theses are clearly and comprehensively defined. The norms of scientific ethics are considered. The functions and responsibilities of the doctoral supervisors are also clearly stated.

The a forementioned Doctoral Research and Development Center plays a major role in this. An important agreement was reached with the program of training for doctoral supervisors at UCL (University College London), the Professional Doctorate Supervision Skills Development Workshop series will be held for the academic staff of the EEU in May and June 2021.

The rules of defense of the doctoral thesis are regulated in detail by the Minimum standard for doctoral studies. The regulation provides, among other things, a detailed procedure for checking the submitted work for plagiarism.

Before defending the dissertation, the doctoral candidate must publish at least two articles in international journals, at least one of which in an international journal indexed by Scopus, PLH Web or Science or ERIH PLUS. This regulation has only been introduced in 2019, so it could not be examined on the three dissertations completed so far.

The defense of the dissertation is carried out at the session of the Dissertation Defense Committee. The dissertation will be assessed confidentially by the members of the Dissertation Defense Committee according to the 100-point scale. The stipulation that at least one member of the Dissertation Defense Committee must be a person from Georgia or abroad who does not belong to the academic staff of the EEU is very much to be appreciated.

Evidences/indicators

Annex 1.2.1. University Strategic Development Plan 2019-2025
Annex 6.1.1. Report on the research activities of EEU in 2015-2020
Annex 6.1.3. Scientific-research Activity development Strategy for 2019-2025
Annex 1.2.2. University Action Plan (2019-2021)
Annex 3.3.2. The minimum standard for planning, implementation, and evaluation of the scientific-research component of the master's programme
Annex 3.3.3. Minimum Doctoral Standard
Excel sheet of the workload of the academic staff
University website <https://eeu.edu.ge>
Interviews results

Recommendations:

- Involve the affiliated staff more actively in research
- Check the information on finished research projects on the university website for affiliation of some of the publications with the EEU
- Rethink the system of academic staff workload in terms of both minimum and maximum load
- Enable the broader involvement of students in the research activities of the university

Suggestions:

- To oversee the staffing as well as the financial resources of the research centres to ensure the implementation of the planned projects.

Best Practices (if applicable):

- Business Problems Platform at the Scientific-research Center for Multifunctional research

Evaluation

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

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

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

The institution consistently and systematically strives to support research at all levels of university life. A number of relevant regulations have been developed in order to create the basis for supporting high-quality and well-functioning research, e.g. Research Funding Rules and The Rules for financing student activities.

A special bonus system to financially support scientific research activities was introduced at the EEU in 2019. According to the self-evaluation report, 78 academic staff have already

benefited from this system. More than 25 academic staff benefited from the research activities and more than 45 student projects were financed. The researchers are encouraged to participate in international projects and in national and international conferences. Scientific conferences and workshops are also planned and carried out based on the university. The relevant information can be found on the university website. The researchers are supported in publishing in the impact factor journals. A good example is the publication of an article by a PhD student of the.

The university provides considerable financial resources in the form of internal grants and supports the research units and individual researchers in attracting external funds for research. According to information from the HEI, the institution has invested more than 400,000 GEL in the development of the research infrastructure in 2020 (SER_eng. P. 130). This includes the establishing and equipping of 6 scientific research centres, a simulation centre for medicine, development of library resources and international scientific electronic databases.

As mentioned above, several external researchers take part in the university's research projects. When studying the vita of the researchers affiliated with the university, many well-known personalities who have made careers at other universities have been won over to the EEU. However, there is a lack of a structured and well-thought-out strategy of attracting well-known and especially young researchers in order to ensure solid and sustainable research.

The internationalization of research activities is of crucial importance for ensuring the high quality of research and verification of research results.

The EEU has currently signed partnership agreements with 29 foreign universities and has joined 13 international organizations. In 2019 EEU became a member of the European Universities Association (EUA) alongside 6 other Georgian universities. Membership in EAU is important because the association provides a valuable support for further improvement and internationalization of research and especially in the field of doctoral studies. In recent years, the institution has held more than 15 international conferences and workshops and won several grants from international organisations and foundations.

There are some foreign - mainly British, German and US-American - scientists involved in the teaching and research of the university.

Of the internationally oriented projects are worth mentioning the ongoing research funded by the British Council on "Racism and Ethnicity in Wider Europe and its Impact on the British Council". The project aims to investigate issues related to racism in 15 countries of the Wider Europe region.

Another project is the ongoing joint research –Research on the Practice of Teaching and Learning in Georgia, which is conducted by EEU in collaboration with Ivane Javakishvili Tbilisi State University (TSU) and the International Institute for Educational Policy, Planning and Management (EPPM).

The university has already successfully completed the first phase of the grant competition of the Visegrad Countries Science Foundation on the joint project "Multifunctional Laboratory - Platform and Network for Business Innovation Solutions" (Participants: East European University, Prague University of Finance and Administration, Budapest Entrepreneurship Agency, University of Lodz, and the University of Žilina, Slovakia).

Also, at the Embassy of Austria, the project "Opportunities for Green Economic Development in the Mountainous Regions of Georgia" was submitted to the competition announced by the programme GRETA. The programme is funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA).

.International contexts are also created for the doctoral programs and doctoral students are supported in learning about and being trained in international experiences.

A special support agreement between East European University and Middlesex University (UK) and EEU provides a full access to Middlesex University research and teaching materials for university PhD students.

An agreement with the Program of Training for Doctoral Supervisors at UCL (University College London), provides for the training of the professional doctorate supervision skills (see also above in 6.1).

Also the membership in EUA - as mentioned above - creates many opportunities for the development of Doctoral Studies on the international level.

As a concrete example, the publication of a paper of a PhD student from the Programme of Business Administration in the International Atlas of the University of Minnesota (USA) (<http://atlas-tjes.org/index.php/tjes>) can be mentioned.

- *However, of the more than 62 ongoing university-wide research projects - at least according to the information provided on the university's website - only 3 or 4 projects are internationally oriented. It is obvious that efforts for further opening of the projects in the international direction need to be intensified and deepened. It is a positive sign that the university has recognised this deficiency and noted it in the SWOT analysis as a matter for improvement.*

Evidences/indicators

University Website <https.eeu.edu.ge>

Annex 6.2.1. Research support mechanisms

Annex 6.1.1. Report of the research activities 2015-2019

Annex 2.3.5. Code of Ethics for Research and Academic Integrity

Annex 2.3.6. The rule of detecting plagiarism, preventing it, responding to cases of plagiarism

Special bonus system for financial support of scientific-research activities

Annex 6.1.3. Strategy for the development of scientific-research activities of the University for 2019-2025

Annex 1.2.1. University Strategic Development Plan 2019-2025.

Annex1.2.2. University Action Plan 2019-2021

Interviews results

Recommendations:

-

Suggestions:

- Enable as many researchers as possible to take part in the international events and stay in the international organizations and partner universities to the extent possible to integrate international components into ongoing projects
- Elaborate a well-thought-out strategy of attracting especially young researchers for participating in the research projects
-

Best Practices (if applicable):

Evaluation

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

6.3. Evaluation of Research Activities

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.

HEI has a system for evaluating and analysing the quality of research activities. There is a well-developed system of evaluation of academic personnel, which is recorded in "Assessment rule of Academic and Invited personnel scientific and academic activities". Several questionnaires and self-evaluation sheets have been developed to evaluate employee performance. The system is worked out by the Quality Assurance Department, implemented in cooperation with the faculty management and finally assessed again by the QA Department.

The demands on the staff regarding the scope of the research activities and their results are quite high. The evaluation is carried out once a year and forms the basis for the promotion of staff as well as financial incentives (bonus system, see above comment on 6.2).

At the faculty level, the research is assessed based on the annual reports. The reports are viewed by the Faculty Council and the Research and Development Department and then forwarded to the QA.

The institutional research is evaluated by the QA based on specially developed questionnaires and is recorded in annual reports by the QA Service. Since the current questionnaires have been used for only one year, there is not much experience yet. As it is stated in the QA report (Report on the Application of Quality Mechanisms in 2019-2020, Appendix 222), no low ratings of academic staff were found during the reporting period.

- *How the evaluation of the research results of the research centers is carried out is not explained in the HEI documentation. During interviews it was found that there is no specific procedure for evaluating the centers.*

Evidences/indicators

University Website <https://eeu.edu.ge>

Annex 4.1.6. Rules for evaluation of staff scientific-research and academic activities

Annex 2.2.1. QAS – Quality Assurance System

Annex 2.2.2. 2019-2020 Progress Report on the Use of Quality Assurance Mechanisms

Annex 1.2.1. University Strategic Development Plan 2019-2025.

Annex 1.2.2. University Action Plan 2019-2021

Annex 6.1.3. Strategy for the development of scientific-research activities of the University for 2019-2025

Questionnaires developed for evaluation of research activities

Interview results

Recommendations:

-

Suggestions:

- Reconsider the evaluation of the research centers and introduce a specific procedure as needed

Best Practices (if applicable):

Evaluation

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

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

7. Material, Information and Financial Resources

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

7.1 Material Resources

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

For achieving goals stated in the Mission Statement the EEU possesses and owes: two legally owned buildings- one is temporarily owned by the University based on a lease agreement and one new campus, consisting of one main building and three ancillary buildings. Both buildings house auditoriums, administrative rooms, computer classrooms, small and large conference and rooms, cafeteria, gym, stadiums, archive, laboratories, exam centers and other ancillary areas. Right to note, that after making an external evaluation in compliance with the authorization standards in 2019, the University has taken into account recommendations and today both buildings adequately respond to the requirements of educational programmes and research activities and corresponds to the existing number of students and planned enrolment. During the site visit, authorization experts observed, that the EEU building has the following compulsory sections: educational-administrative building, separate building for research centers and three laboratories, appropriate to the specifics of the field, foyers, separate building for Cafeteria, recreation spaces, Sports field, classrooms for theoretical teaching, administrative offices, space for group work, spaces for public events and recreational areas, conference hall, sanitary/hygienic units, library, well-equipped learning classrooms, archive. Educational space is equipped with necessary facilities for educational programme, including teaching/scientific-research laboratories, inventory needed for implementing practical component, IT equipment, that provide achieving the objectives and learning outcomes. The campus is fully equipped with security, a central heating-cooling system, constant cold and hot water, ventilation ducts and fire safety systems. All floors have sanitary facilities, which are supplied with hot and cold water, have ventilation, and are provided with lighting, adapted for people with disabilities (sanitary facilities, elevator, etc.). Hygienic-sanitary norms are observed and the follow the authorization standards. Classrooms have natural as well as artificial light possibilities. The uninterruptible artificial lights and ventilation are provided by the University.

Lawful possession of fixed assets is certified by the extract from the Public Registry. Educational and auxiliary spaces of HEI are separated based on the measurement drawings of the building. Educational space is for teaching and learning purposes, namely: teaching classrooms, conference hall, professor offices (where professors provide counselling to students), teaching/scientific-research laboratories, library and other spaces based on the specifics of an educational programme. The EEU new campus is a combination of buildings and recreational areas created using the modern architecture, equipped with modern infrastructure and the latest technologies. In comparison to 2015, the growing number of laptops, printers, projectors, smart monitors, etc. support implementation of educational programmes and research activities.

During the site visit, the experts observed the mock trial courtroom is equipped like the hall of the City Court of Georgia for students of Law and Social Sciences; Psychology and Neuroscience Research Center, Laboratory Z with high-tech behaviour and neuro-marketing research equipment; The Scientific-research Centre for Multifunctional Research; the Clinical and Practical Skills Development Center.

The University has conducted a presentation of a multifunctional interactive anatomical table, which allows studying 11 systems of the body in 3D format (anatomical, histological, pathological, radiological, traumatological, endoscopic and in other directions). The interactive anatomical table is the fully segmented real human 3D anatomy system. Users can visualize anatomy exactly as they would on a fresh cadaver. Anatomy is presented as a fully interactive, life-sized touch screen experience, in operatory bed form. The table allows for exploration and learning of human anatomy.

While observing the Medical Degree Program equipment, the University side has also presented inventory: microscopes, different parts of body dummies, mannequins, test tubes and other equipment.

It must be noted that all lab equipment, equipment for simulation-based learning and mannequins are in the new building and those observed during the site visit are completely new, not been used for practical sessions. Based on the information gathered from university representatives there is no clinical skills centre currently operational in the old building and all classes for skill training are postponed until the end of May, when the new building is planned to become operational. Neither is anatomy table used for distant teaching, which could have been a useful approach especially in the time of pandemic.

The equipment of clinical skills lab needs to be enriched as experts could see single examples of mannequins of certain type, which are expected to be damaged soon after they start to use them. The actual state of simulators being used could not be checked as experts could not gain access to the skills lab in old building (which is currently being used) with old (used) equipment.

The University is constantly monitoring the safety and health of students and staff for which safety and first aid procedures have been developed. EEU organizes safe evacuation of persons in the building, helps students/staff with special needs to move around the university building (if necessary). EEU also takes care of the electricity supply and administers medical aid. The building has fire safety systems. In a visible place there are placed firefighting equipment and detailed instructions for their use, evacuation plans and indicators, smoke exhaust system and detectors, alarms, and fire sprinkler, which, in case of fire, will automatically disperse water to the appropriate location.

The University has qualified medical staff with whom it has concluded employment contracts. There is a medical office at both addresses of the university, equipped with all the necessary equipment for first aid.

During the site visit, experts were insured, that the University provides an adapted environment for students with special educational needs (a special stairway (ramp), adapted toilets, an elevator, etc.)

The EEU has also security video recording and storing facilities installed both inside and outside of the buildings. The contracted security guards hired by the University and subordinate to the Department of Security maintain order. All buildings of the University and the surrounding area are guarded 24 hours a day.

The old building of the EEU amounts reasonable parking places, which enables easy access to the buildings for people with disabilities. As the new building of EEU is under construction till May 2021 and some works are still to be finished, the parking places could not be observed by the group of experts. According to the Rector of the EEU and the Masterplan of the new building, the University provides compulsory parking lot for people with disabilities in the new campus area.

Evidences/indicators

- Observation and interview;
- Agreements made with practice/research-scientific institutions;
- Student and staff survey results;
 - Uninterruptible power supply system;
 - Document certifying orderly operation of heating and ventilation systems, and timeframe for their validity;
 - Document certifying compliance with sanitary norms.
 - Fire prevention and safety, First Aid, and Order mechanisms;
 - Documents certifying the approval of evacuation plans;
 - Documents certifying the possession of fire prevention and medical inventory as well as security cameras;
 - Employment agreements made with staff responsible for security and provision of medical assistance;

Recommendations:

- Ensure that equipment and simulators are enough for all medical students to gain necessary skills during training.
- Ensure that all equipment is adequately used in educational process allowing students gain hands-on experience.

Suggestions:

- Increase the number of inventory (mannequins, dummies, microscopes, etc.) for MD Program students;
- To rise the accessibility of students to modern equipment by conducting special trainings.

Best Practices (if applicable):

Evaluation

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

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

7.2. Library Resources

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

The library of the EEU consists of book archive, reading hall, library staff office space, meeting and group workspace, IT equipment space. Two reading halls, observed during the site visit, were equipped with the computers, printers, copy machines. The wireless internet was provided in the library. Also, the library is equipped with special equipment (alarm), fire-fighting system. According to the SER and the library staff members, the library fund, including the international scientific databases has grown during the period 2015-2020. Students and others may use library resource six days a week, 61 hours.

The University has an electronic library catalog program – OpenBiblio and KOHA. KOHA is capable of processing more than 5 million bibliographic records. The electronic library allows users to search for demanded literature remotely. Besides, MS Teams has opened a virtual library room, through which the librarian remotely provides full assistance / advice to students regarding finding and delivering study materials. Student study material is also available in MS TEAMS and EEU-EL systems.

The library has access to the obligatory/basic literature provided by the syllabi of educational programmes. Library also has several the additional literature defined by the syllabus.

The University has signed an agreement between East European University and Middlesex University (UK) and full access to Middlesex University research and teaching materials is allowed for university PhD students and staff for the Doctoral Programme in Education.

According to the library staff, EEU is a member of the UK Vitae programme which provides full access to Vitae online resources (textbooks, training materials, research projects, reports, etc.). In addition, the University actively cooperates with the Ilia Chavchavadze National Library of the Parliament of Georgia and the memorandum signed with it envisages sharing the book fund of the Public Library and borrowing books.

The University has access to such international electronic databases as Cambridge University Press Journals, Sage Journals, and others. The access to Scopus, Science Direct and other international databases is suggested by the University as well. The interruptible work of electronic databases and information platforms has been tested by the group of experts during the site visit.

HEI has technical possibility to observe the usage of e-databases, the printouts were provided on request. Monitor activities of students and staff in terms of using e-resources needs to be monitored better and more often, reasons of low activity must be investigated and addressed properly.

A group of experts has checked the Universities regulations for using library and informative instructions.

Librarians have appropriate competence in library science and can aid with using international library databases. According to the Librarian, library staff provides orientation sessions to students and staff on the resources and services offered by the library, help with finding appropriate literature and other resources, including from external sources (other libraries, purchasing), holding workshops and trainings. Students may get copies of the demanded books for free as well.

Nevertheless, the group of experts has found black and white copies of compulsory literature in the library, located in the old building of the University. In addition, HEI could not provide the documentation of legal ownership and permission to reproduce the e-books that they are using.

The amount of compulsory literature, required by the experts, amounted 3-4 copies. The library room in the new building of the University is still under construction up to May 2021 according to the Rector of the University and cannot be evaluated so far.

Evidences/indicators

- Documentation certifying the possession of library resources;
- Electronic catalogue published on the web-site;
- Compliance of library books with core literature indicated in educational programmes;
- Documents certifying involvement in international electronic library database;
- Electronic catalogue;
- Documents certifying possession of equipment of the library;
- Statistics for use of electronic library databases;
- Mechanisms for the development and renewal of library resources and services;
- Meetings, consultations, and other events held;
- Regulations and instructions for using library;
- Student survey results;
- Dynamic of funding allocated for provision and development of library resources during last 5 years;
- Interview results.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that students have access to licensed books and e-books in the library and observe copyright law.

Suggestions:

- To enrich the library paper-based fund of the University to maintain the growing number of students.
- To provide students with colored copies of the compulsory courses' books.

Best Practices (if applicable):

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

- 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

University Uses multiple Electronic/software Platforms for different functions: As pointed out in substandard 5.2 EEU-EL (Electronic Process Management system) is mainly addressed at students and acts as main platform for student services and their use.

As confirmed during interviews, University (both the old Campus and new Campus buildings) are equipped with high speed WIFI and internet. All Computers are online and as checked during the site visit Computers for Architects are much more advanced. These computers Have All required computer Programs installed and activated. SketchUp, Archicad (Graphisoft), Autocad (Autodesk), Revit, and other Adobe programmes. It must be mentioned that as a gift from Lenovo to University, all computers have official access to Adobe Photoshop. As was confirmed during the interviews with the IT department, all other programmes which were checked during site visit, are Also official and Licensed for student use.

New Campus of the university had multiple smart Screen monitors (10 according to Self Evaluation report) present during the site visit, but not unpacked and Not connected to the system or mounted to the wall. As mentioned in the part on material resources the building is yet incomplete and it was justified by the rector and experts agree that it does not make sense to mount such an expensive technology while some on site works are still ongoing and there is a chance for damaging. It was same reasoning for not having the University Server set up as any slight damage to such an expensive and delicate technology is not affordable. It was possible to observe the single Asclepius Interactive anatomic table for learning human Anatomy on an incredibly detailed 3D model, but as was clarified all Smart screens are interconnected and have access to this interactive table, as such it is possible to share the presentation among multiple classrooms to all students, what also makes distant learning extremely easy.

The servers Which were not yet installed will be located on the basement floor of the new campus. Will be accessible only to the members of IT management. According to members of this department, Information and data will be all stored on mentioned servers and will be constantly backed up through back-up system. They assured panel of experts that all e-based platforms at the institution use encrypted and well protected software. All information - Included person's e-mail, passwords contact details etc are all well protected. Computer Network Association "GRENA" was brought up during interviews numerous times, as this company is a subcontractor, and is eligible for performing periodically back-up of the information and, they guarantee secure functioning of the university webpage, and e-mail.

EEU-EL -Electronic process management system, Electronic Document management system ELMA and Human resources management system – HR platform – function independently from one another and are equally protected from hackers and external attacks.

University currently uses OPAC – electronic catalogue system which was checked during site visit and it was confirmed that this platform is functional and works. Also, it was confirmed that the KOHA platform which was mentioned in the Self Evaluation report Also is available, and when it will become integral part of the institution, it could become a good asset to the Library of the EEU.

Evidences/indicators

- SER of EEU
- Strategy of the EEU 2019-2025
- Action Plan 2019-2021

Interviews
<p>Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fully complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements
<p>Recommendations:</p>
<p>Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The website (Georgian and English) of the EEU should have a map of the website or search option to easily find what you are looking for. - All legal acts with annual reports, SERs, Evaluation reports, Accreditation data should be displayed on the web-site of the EEU.
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p>
<p>7.4 Financial Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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
<p>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements</p> <p>During the interview process, the group of experts had an opportunity to meet with representatives of Department of Finance and Material Resources and raise questions about financial resources of the EEU, their adequateness and sufficiency to effectively perform activities described in strategic and action plans.</p> <p>As EEU representatives of Department of Finance and Material Resources did not give clear answers to given questions, the Financial standing of HEI ensures performance of activities described in strategic and mid-term action plans may be described based only on financial reports and documents, which HEI provided.</p> <p>According to the Budget and Balance 2021, EEU financial standing ensures performance of activities described in strategic and mid-term action plan.</p> <p>Universities financial resources are focused on effective implementation of core activities of the institution: trainings, costs related to raising qualification, scholarships, and other types of funding for students, student support and encouragement, student self-management funding, organizing conferences, workshops, seminars, funding of scientific activities, purchase of stationary, library development, etc. So, EEU budget provides funding for scientific research and library functioning and development. In addition, the expenses on salaries and Investment Costs are reflected. The University also provided experts with Profitability Ratio (23%), Liquidity Ratio (1,86) and ratio of liabilities to capital (1.16). Based on Profit and Loss Statement 2020, the main income of EEU is income from tuition fees and the income from Grant projects and other Revenues are significantly less. During the interviews, the dependence of University on tuition fees is named as one of the main threats to the HEI sustainability.</p>

Need to note that Representatives of Department of Finance and Material Resources said that the HEI do not Reserve Fund, which in case of unforeseen circumstances will be used to maintain the sustainability of the education process. According to their words, the Business Program is the most cost-expensive (per-student) in comparison to Medical and other programs.

Evidences/indicators

- Budget 2019
- Budget 2020
- Budget 2021
- Financial ratios of EEU
- Balance sheet 2021
- Interview with representatives of Department of Finance and Material Resources
- Interview with EEU Rector, Vice-rector

Component evidences/indicators including the relevant documents, interview results, etc.

Recommendations:

- To form Reserve fund for improving financial sustainability of educational program;

Suggestions:

- To raise competency and professional level of representatives of Department of Finance and Material Resources
- To increase scientific grants and income from research activities

Best Practices (if applicable):

Evaluation

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