



განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი  
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

**Higher Education Institution Authorisation Experts’  
Final Report  
LLC David Tvildiani Medical University**

**Expert Panel Members**

Chair: Professor Mairi Gray Browning Scott, Centre for Medical Education, School of Medicine, University of Dundee, UK.

Co-Chair; Associate Professor Carol Sybil Hodgson Birkman, Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada

**Members:**

Salome Voronovi, Tbilisi State Medical University, Georgia

Tinatin Gabrichidze, New Vision University, Georgia

Mariam Gambashidze, Higher education expert, Georgia

Giorgi Mgvdeladze, Tbilisi State Medical University, Georgia

Tsotne Samadashvili, Caucasus Medical Centre, Georgia

Tbilisi  
2024

## Authorisation Report Resume

### General information on the educational institution

David Tvildiani Medical University (DTMU), formerly known as AIETI Medical School until 2011, was founded in 1992 with a commitment to leveraging international collaboration in public and medical education to influence the medical education system in Georgia and the broader region. Established on principles of academic integrity and ethical standards, the university aims to develop medical professionals capable of meeting the future needs of the healthcare sector.

Since its establishment, DTMU has shown exceptional resilience and a commitment to progress, maintaining high standards in teaching and learning through the development of excellent medical education programs. These programs integrate international best practices, such as PBL, CBL, integrated curricula, and clinical placements, with appropriately separated assessments designed to test the application of knowledge (quizzes and integrated MCQs) and skills development (OSCE and WBA). Additionally, the university provides modern teaching materials like Body Interact and Practicum Script. DTMU has also introduced a new 'Science' module to encourage student engagement in research, thereby contributing to medical research capacity in Georgia.

DTMU has a diverse student body, comprising both local Georgian and international students, fostering a multicultural and competitive environment. The university ensures equal opportunities for all students by offering tuition waivers for high performers and access to various self-governing student bodies and interest groups. Foreign students are taught Georgian language courses to facilitate their interaction with the local community and patients. The university also provides a supportive living environment on its Rustavi campus, complete with comprehensive household services and commodities.

To enhance its programs, DTMU has partnered with the European Board of Medical Assessors (EBMA) to provide additional quality assurance data and international benchmarking. The university's MD program is accredited by the Georgian Center for Educational Quality Enhancement and is listed in the World Directory of Medical Schools with a "sponsor's note." Graduates can apply for residency programs globally, with DTMU students consistently achieving high pass rates in exams like the USMLE, PLAB, and FMGE. DTMU also offers a doctoral program and maintains its commitment to students' futures by creating internships in internal medicine, family medicine, and plans to start one in general surgery.

DTMU has a dedicated and loyal staff, some of whom have been with the university for many years. The institution is now also employing its own graduates and supporting them through their PhD studies. This long-term commitment fosters strong relationships, and it is evident that students know their faculty well, resulting in excellent staff-student relationships.

DTMU is currently spread across several sites, some of which are aging and in poor condition. The university had developed comprehensive plans to construct a new joint campus and hospital, aimed at consolidating its facilities and addressing the limitations of the current infrastructure. However, these plans have very recently been delayed due to potential structural issues identified at the proposed construction site. This delay has forced DTMU to regroup and consider alternative strategies, which is particularly crucial given the impact of the current campus conditions on various aspects of the university's operations and compliance with Standard 7.

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

The Self Evaluation Report and associated documents were sent to the expert panel on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024. The panel members identified the standard section that best matched their expertise, and each was allocated as the lead for that standard. However, members did not restrict their interrogation of the data provided to just that one standard. Areas of enquiry were prepared for the site visit. During the visit, the panel identified additional documents that would add further information, and these were provided towards the end of the visit.

The site visit took place on the 15th, 17th, and 18th of June, following a schedule that included all meetings and site visits. Meetings were conducted with the school's senior management and administration teams, the quality assurance team, academic and invited staff, coordinating and PBL tutors, students, alumni, and employers according to the planned timetable over all three days.

In addition, there were site visits on:

- **Day 2:** Visits to three facilities accompanied by Professors Nino Tabagari and Tamar Talakvadze:
  1. M. Iashvili Children's Central Hospital
  2. Caucasus Medical Centre
  3. Didube Clinical Skills/OSCE Centre

- **Day 3:** Visit to the main campus

Several of the meetings had a few of the participants join by Zoom, however this was only on a few occasions when participants were out of the country.

All members of the expert panel asked questions of the DTMU representatives and contributed to the informal feedback given to DTMU at the end of the visit.

A draft report was submitted to NCEQE on 26.07.24, and DTMU's argumentative position was returned to the expert panel on 19.08.24. The expert panel fully considered all additional information and comments from DTMU, leading to some minor adjustments in the recommendations and suggestions in Standards 3, 4, and 7. DTMU was highly receptive to the report's recommendations, agreeing with most of its findings. They accepted that the report rightly addressed the challenges posed by their current premises and acknowledged that these issues are likely to be resolved with the acquisition of a new building, making the recommendations more achievable.

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

DTMU operates at a level that ensures successful student learning and achievement, and this is reflected in their high student satisfaction levels. They have developed MD programs that adopt significant elements of internationally recognized best practice and this is proving to be effective. However, challenges persist, particularly concerning the current campus facilities. The deferral of the planned new campus and clinic buildings due to external factors beyond their control, has negatively impacted compliance with Standard 7 and to some degree other related standards. This situation underscores the necessity for improved infrastructure to support and enhance DTMU's commitment to educational quality and student-centered learning environments.

## **Summary of Recommendations**

1.1 It is recommended that DTMU make the mission statement more specific, explicitly addressing how they plan to foster engaged and socially responsible graduates and prepare students for success in their professional careers. Linked to that, the principles in the mission statement should explicitly connect to the standards, specifying how principles like continuous improvement support student development and readiness for the workforce.

2.1 It is recommended to revise the functions, responsibilities, and accountability of the various structural units and define them clearly as there might be overlap and duplication.

2.1 It is necessary to revise the organogram of the university, so that it clearly shows interrelation and accountability of units.

2.1 It is recommended to strengthen the academic council's role as a representative body, raise awareness of its functions and role and revisit the rules for the council's completion. Having elections as opposed to automatic membership of the council can increase the role's ownership and contribute to the effectiveness of the council's work.

2.2 The overall level of knowledge on the internal QA function and processes, and knowledge on the extent of the work carried out by the QA office is insufficient , thus leading to a reduced level of quality culture. Closing the feedback loop, sharing the results of the evaluations and follow-up procedures would be helpful.

2.2 Ensure the effectiveness of the staff performance evaluation by ensuring that: the staff are made aware of the clearly documented process, every staff member is evaluated within the following year and provided individual feedback on their results, and areas for their improvement.

2.3 It is recommended that DTMU continue its efforts to ensure that the entire academic community shares a common understanding of academic integrity and academic freedom, aligned with the institution's standards.

4.1 The personnel evaluation system should be more systematic, diverse, and criteria-based, with clear communication to employees about mechanisms and frequency. Additionally, a multifaceted evaluation of human resources management effectiveness should be conducted by an audit, quality assurance service, or a specially appointed commission, with intensified feedback after analyzing results. `

4.1 The vacant position in the Human Resources Department should be filled as a matter of urgency.

4.1 The CVs of all the support staff should be updated to confirm that Davit Tvildiani Medical University is their place of work.

7.1 Due to disruption to DTMU's plan for a new campus building there is an urgent need for a new strategy including a contingency plan should there be further delays to meet the requirements of ongoing programs and the needs of the student body. Addressing the campus issues will improve many infrastructural difficulties.

7.1 Given that the criteria indicate that "teaching/scientific-research laboratories should observe safety regulations," all laboratory areas must be reviewed to ensure accessibility for persons with special needs. This will help safeguard the well-being of all students and staff.

7.1 Laboratory areas with limited access, such as narrow corridors or rooms accessed through other rooms, should be carefully reviewed, as they may pose hazards during accidents or emergencies. Ensuring clear and safe access in these areas is crucial to not endanger students or staff.

7.1 The laboratories in the university campus building require renovation.

7.2 Library space is limited, highlighting the need for a new building. Expanding these facilities should be a priority to support the academic and research needs of students and staff.

## **Summary of Suggestions**

2.1 Revisit the internationalization policy of the university, especially in regard to internationalization at institutional level, for it to be more the description of the institutional policy, rather than description of university's activities

3.3 DTMU might consider the development of a domain based integrated OSCE with complex stations particularly for students in their final years of study.

3.3 It may be beneficial for DTMU to continue seeking the views of both staff and students to maintain and support the policy of offering Georgian MD program students the option to take tests in either Georgian or English.

4.1 Enhance the overall academic staff awareness about the rules and conditions of affiliation.

4.1 It is suggested that DTMU might increase the frequency of the scientific report submission by academic/scientific staff to ensure more timely feedback.

4.2 Effective workload management is crucial for the successful implementation of educational programs, so it's beneficial to account for as many elements of the workload as possible

5.2 It is suggested that DTMU take additional steps to promote exchange opportunities and actively encourage students to participate in international events

6.1 Given the low ratio of supervisors to doctoral students (1.1) relative to their target goal of 1.5, it is suggested that there should be enhanced mentoring and training of junior faculty to decrease the workload of academic and scientific staff in order to build over time more researchers capable of supervising doctoral student research.

6.1 Acknowledging that DTMU is not a research-intensive university, but is still keen to develop research as a key dimension, the current system for evaluating and analysing research activities, while effective, appears to be relatively slow. It is suggested that consideration should be given to developing a more efficient and proportionate system, particularly for experienced faculty members, which might prevent delays in their own research and thus negatively impact the workload of experienced academic and scientific staff in their supervision of doctoral students.

6.2 It is suggested that DTMU should consider establishing a systematic mentoring program where junior faculty members are paired with senior researchers to enhance research quality, securing international grants, and publishing in high-impact journals.

6.2 It is suggested that consideration should be given to merging the Research Development and Support team into a single, cohesive group. This consolidation would streamline processes, make procedures more understandable for students and staff, and encourage greater engagement in research activities across the university.

7.4 It is suggested that for institutional sustainability DTMU continues to actively seek additional income resources apart from tuition fees from programs.

## **Summary of the Best Practices**

2.2 The student QA club is an interesting approach to decentralising QA and enhancing the scale and scope of the quality culture within the university.

3.1 The development of residency programs in internal and family medicine, with surgery soon to follow, is commendable. Coordinated by the Medical Education Center (MEC), these programs provide valuable post-graduation training for those wishing to continue clinical practice in Georgia. DTMU has ensured these programs maintain high standards and deliver effective training.

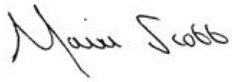
7.3 The university should be commended for not only purchasing the "Body Interact" and "Practicum Script" e-resources but also for their effective integration of them into the curriculum. These resources are effectively utilized in both the basic science and practical stages of education, enhancing the learning experience.

## Summary Table of Compliance of HEI with Standards and Standard Components

	Standard	Complies with Requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially Complies with Requirements	Does not Comply with Requirements
1.	<b>Mission and strategic development of HEI</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.1	Mission of HEI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2	Strategic development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	<b>Organisational structure and management of HEI</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.1	Organisational structure and management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2	Internal quality assurance mechanisms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3	Observing principles of ethics and integrity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	<b>Educational Programmes</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3	Assessment of learning outcomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<b>Staff of the HEI</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.1	Staff management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.2	Academic/Scientific and invited Staff workload	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	<b>Students and their support services</b>	<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	<b>Research, development and/or other creative work</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.1	Research activities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.2	Research support and internationalisation	<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	<b>Material, information and financial resources</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.1	Material resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.2	Library resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Signature of expert panel members

1. Professor Mairi Gray Browning Scott (Chair)



2. Carol Sybil Hodgson Birkman (Co-chair)



3. Salome Voronovi (Member)



4. Tinatin Gabrichidze (Member)



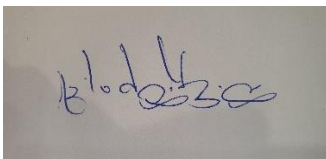
5. Mariam Gambashidze, (Member)



6. Giorgi Mgvdeladze (Member)



7. Tsotne Samadashvili (Member)



# Compliance of the Applicant HEI with the Authorisation Standard Components

## 1. Mission and strategic development of HEI

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

### 1.1 Mission of HEI

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

The mission statement of DTMU, while well-intentioned, lacks the specificity needed to clearly align with the subsections of Standard 1.1, particularly bullet points 2. The principles outlined in the mission provide more detail, but they do not explicitly connect to these standards, making the overall mission appear vague. Additionally, the university's goals in the vision and mission documents are broad and lack clear, actionable specifics.

As a result, the mission statement defines the role of DTMU in the higher education landscape and society but does not sufficiently detail how it plans to achieve its stated goals. Standard 1.1 requires the mission to reflect the institution's role in developing active members of society and ensuring students' competitiveness in the labor market, but the current mission does not explicitly address these points. Additionally, while the principles associated with the mission offer some guidance, such as continuous improvement and promoting an optimal environment for teaching and research, they do not explicitly tie back to the standard's requirements, making it difficult to see a direct link between the mission and its implementation.

This issue was noted in the Authorization report of 2019. When asked about this, the Senior team explained that they had engaged the staff in reviewing the mission statement; however, all felt it was an adequate summary of their collective view. During this visit, at interviews staff confirmed this sentiment.

Furthermore, the goals mentioned in the vision and mission documents lack concrete details of measurable targets, making it challenging for the university to monitor its progress on the delivery of the Strategic Development Plan 2024-30 and Action Plan 2024-26.

Finally, by revising the mission, vision, and goals, DTMU can more clearly demonstrate its commitment to the standards and provide a more concrete framework for achieving its plans as outlined in the Strategic Development Plan 2024-30 and Action Plan 2024-26

### Evidences/indicators

- DTMU Self-Evaluation Report
- DTMU Website
- Appendix 1; Strategic Development and Action Plan
- Appendix 2; Action Plan
- Appendix 3; Methodology of Strategic Planning
- NCEQE Authorization report 2019
- Interviews

### Recommendations:

- It is recommended that DTMU make the mission statement more specific, explicitly addressing how they plan to foster engaged and socially responsible graduates and prepare students for success in their professional careers. Linked to that, the principles in the mission statement



<p>should explicitly connect to the standards, specifying how principles like continuous improvement support student development and readiness for the workforce.</p>
<p><b>Suggestions:</b></p> <p>Non-binding suggestions for further development</p>
<p><b>Best Practices (if applicable):</b></p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions</p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements  <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements  <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements         </p>
<p><b>1.2 Strategic Development</b></p> <p> <input type="radio"/> HEI has a strategic development (7-year) and an action plans (3-year) in place.  <input type="radio"/> HEI contributes to the development of the society, shares with the society the knowledge gathered in the institution, and facilitates lifelong learning  <input type="radio"/> HEI evaluates implementation of strategic and action plans, and duly acts on evaluation results.         </p>
<p><b>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements</b></p> <p>The strategic development plan for DTMU, as outlined in the provided document, demonstrates a robust and comprehensive approach. The creation process involved a SWOT analysis and broad consultations with various university stakeholders, ensuring wide-ranging input and engagement. The plan is organized around four key areas: International and National University, Humans Create the University, Developing Organization, and Promoting Community Development in Patient-Centered Activities. Each area is supported by specific aims and responsible teams with due dates and a note of any partner organizations involved. However, the KPIs listed in the Action Plan, while well-defined in terms of specific actions, lacked numerical indicators of success and thus might limit the opportunity for them to track progress on the plan's delivery.</p> <p>The strategic plan's development followed a thorough and inclusive process, incorporating surveys, focus groups, and consultations, as well as recommendations from external evaluations and accreditation processes. However, there was some lack of awareness among some of the staff interviewed about the current shape of the plan. The strategic plan under each theme includes clear objectives, activities, and timelines, generally meeting the stated standard for goals to be 'achievable, time-bound, and measurable'.</p> <p>However, although the strategic plan is comprehensive and well-structured, the relative lack of specificity in the university's broader goals (as described in section 2.1) creates a slight disconnect. This reinforces the need for the university's mission, vision, and development goals to be expanded, as recommended in Standard 1.1. Addressing these issues will help DTMU's strategic development plan exceed the requirements of Standard 1.2 and optimize the benefits of having such a detailed and clear strategic and operational plan.</p> <p>DTMU contributes to the country's social development by sharing knowledge and expertise, and supporting professional organizations. It organizes conferences and educational events, collaborates with international experts (such as UEMS), and applies research findings to improve medical practice. Additionally, DTMU invests in residency programs, nurse training, and other</p>

initiatives to address national health care delivery needs. Students are encouraged to follow their teachers' examples and adopt leadership roles themselves when appropriate.

DTMU has an effective system for implementing and overseeing its strategic and action plans.. The updated strategic plan incorporates the principles of flexibility to ensure the university stays responsive. The Strategic Development and Management Committee have developed and inclusive process of development and monitoring with regular updates through a range of different methods to inform and capture all views and allows monitoring, evaluation and adjustments if needed. based on assessments. This monitoring system helps DTMU maintain alignment with its strategic plan.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

- DTMU Self-Evaluation Report
- DTMU Website
- Appendix 1; Strategic Development and Action Plan
- Appendix 2; Action Plan
- Appendix 3; Methodology of Strategic Planning
- NCEQE Authorization report 2019
- Interviews with staff and employers

#### **Recommendations:**

None

#### **Suggestions:**

Non-binding suggestions for further development

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

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

#### **Evaluation**

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

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

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

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

### **2.1 Organisational Structure and Management**

- Organisational structure of HEI ensures implementation of goals and activities described in its strategic plan
- Procedures for election/appointment of the management bodies of HEI are transparent, equitable, and in line with legislation
- HEI's Leadership/Management body ensures effective management of the activities of the institution

- Considering the mission and goals of HEI, leadership of the HEI supports international cooperation of the institution and the process of internationalisation.

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

Organisational structure of DTMU overall ensures implementation of the strategic activities, however, the functions and responsibilities of the structural units are not clearly defined and separated, lacking distinct remits and accountabilities leading to the overlaps and risk of lack of coordination and effectiveness.

Namely; after the study of the organisational structure and organogram of DTMU and the functions of different units, it is apparent that there are some areas in need of improvement, as the current organisational structure and division of responsibilities may lead to duplication of the responsibilities and in some cases, issues with accountability and responsibility:

- **Research function** – In the structure of DTMU there is the vice rector in science (under vice rector, one unit – central scientific-research laboratory); There is a vice-dean in research, who, based on organogram is accountable to the faculty of Medicine and the dean of the faculty and the scientific research department, who is also under the faculty of Medicine and accountable to the dean. The engagement and interrelation of the units are unclear both from the organogram and the interviews, as the clear division of responsibilities and engagement could not be adequately described.
- **Medical education** – In the structure of DTMU, Medical Education Center falls under the direct accountability to the rector, while it is headed by the dean of the faculty of medicine. Based on the study of the functions of the unit and the management of the unit, it appears that the unit should fall under the Faculty of Medicine. It should be further noted that the dean of the faculty has the role of vice dean in medical education as well, even though the vice dean is the member of the medical education center, structure-wise the division of responsibilities, accountability and responsibility is not clear.

Based on the SWOT analysis provided in the strategic plan of DTMU, research activities of the university is one of the areas of improvement (weaknesses). Most of the activities in terms of research in the action plan are the responsibility of the scientific research department. In terms of further development of the scientific research activities and the relevant structures/units devoted to the research function, the number of the units and at the same time, vague division of the responsibilities can lead to the lack of a unified approach to research and strengthening the research. Consideration might be given to merging this team into a unified group to encourage more staff and students to engage in research and to strengthen research development across the University.

There are some minor errors in documents describing the functions and responsibilities of the units, for example, in the dean's job description, it is indicated that the dean is the head of the academic council. Another example is in the functions of the chancellor (annex 6) we read that the chancellor represents university in financial-economic relations, while chancellor is not responsible for the financial planning and budgeting of the institution, the functions fall under rector's council's and rector's responsibility.

The founders and/or rector appoints the administrative managerial bodies. All of the managerial bodies are appointed. It is recognized that DTMU is a private institution and is not restricted by the legislative regulations to have an election for the managerial bodies' representatives.

Academic Council is one of the management bodies of DTMU and the representative body in charge of educational and scientific activities. Expert panel had the chance to meet some of the academic council representatives during interviews, but based on the results of the interviews, awareness on the formation of academic council, or the principles of decision-making of the council is limited – for instance, the answers received were different in terms of composition, number, decision-making process, etc. Based on the existing regulation of academic council and its formation, as well as some of the answers received during the interviews, academic council is composed of all of the professors and associate professors of DTMU. Academic council also includes representatives from students. Therefore, there is no selection procedure for academic staff and all of the representatives of professors/associate professors are in the council. The rector leads academic council. Faculty council was abolished, based on the logical consideration that the faculty council would have duplicated the academic council's functions.

With the current number of professors and associate professors, it already seems hard to manage the academic council, which can be linked to the evidently low awareness of the functions and work of the council. It also might be leading to the lower recognition and ownership of the individual role in decision-making at the university. The representatives of the academic council when asked what took place at the Academic Council mostly stated it was the approval of PhD topic/opponents. This was confirmed in the minutes of the council meetings; however, the strategic development plan was also discussed. Also, when asked, they could not recall how the voting is carried out, what is the minimum number of council members to allow the meeting to be quorate or how decisions are made. These issues will become more pressing with the increase in staff members and the institution's growth. Furthermore, strengthening academic self-governance is one of the aims of DTMU.

The second representative body of DTMU is the rector's council, composed of the heads of the administrative structural units. Therefore, there are no election procedures as well and the heads of the units become the members of the rector's council.

DTMU has a document processing regulation in place, which is compliant with the current legislation and maintains a registry of educational institution. DTMU uses modern technologies, including the electronic document processing system.

DTMU also developed a business continuity plan to ensure the continuity of every major process at the institution. The business continuity plan includes the registry of risks, with the level of probability and impact, as well as the ways for risk mitigation. The concrete responsible units/persons are not included in the business continuity plan, as the risk mitigation is the responsibility of specially composed group.

DTMU developed an internationalization policy, which describes internationalization on three levels: institutional level, program level and individual level. At the institutional level, participation of DTMU in the international projects, including research projects and capacity-building projects is described. On the study programme level, internationalization is understood in terms of developing programs based on the best international practice, activities to support harmonization of DTMU doctoral education with European, and collaboration in doctoral education.

On individual level, internationalization policy describes internationalization as integration of international students, and the support of staff and students in terms of participation in international activities, etc.

Information about the number of staff and students participating in the international mobility projects could not be found in the SER, however awareness on the available mobility/exchange programs, or the students participating in the programs, was low. It is well understood that internationalization is not only exchange/mobility programs, but it is one of its components and it is suggested to foster the exchange of students and staff. Also, the policy of internationalization of DTMU represents the description of DTMU's activities in terms of internationalization more rather than an institutional policy, especially regarding internationalization on the institutional level, which describes the ongoing international projects at DTMU.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

- SER;
- Rule for appointment/election of managerial bodies (Annex #7 of the SER);
- Statute of the academic council;
- Statute of the rector's council;
- Functions of the structural units (Annex #6 of the SER);
- Webpage of the institution;
- Interview results;
- Regulation on document processing;
- Internationalization policy.

**Recommendations:**

- It is recommended to revise the functions, responsibilities, and accountability of the structural units and define them clearly as there might be overlap and duplication.
- It is necessary to revise the organogram of the university, so that it clearly shows interrelation and accountability of units.
- It is recommended to strengthen the academic council's role as a representative body, raise awareness of its functions and role and revisit the rules for the council's completion. Having elections as opposed to automatic membership of the council can increase the role's ownership and contribute to the effectiveness of the council's work.

**Suggestions:**

- Revisit the internationalization policy of the university, especially in regard to internationalization at institutional level, for it to be more the description of the institutional policy, rather than description of university's activities.

**Best Practices (if applicable):**

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

**Evaluation**

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

**2.2 Internal Quality Assurance Mechanisms**

- Institution effectively implements internal quality assurance mechanisms. Leadership of the institution constantly works to strengthen quality assurance function and promotes establishment of quality culture in the institution.
- HEI has a mechanism for planning student body, which will give each student an opportunity to get a high quality education.

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

DTMU allocates adequate human, material and information resources to effectively implement the internal QA function. QA function is delivered through the QA office. As a good practice in implementing QA function, the student QA group should be commended. Students interested in the quality assurance participate in the QA processes through analyzing surveys, identifying challenges and proposing the ways to solve the problems.

QA policy of DTMU is based on ESG standards and utilizes focus-groups and interviews, together with surveys for gathering feedback from the stakeholders.

However, when asked questions about surveys, students, as well as alumni provided different answers, in terms of periodicity of evaluations. E.g. some alumni said they have never participated in the surveys, while some said they have participated once. Based on the interview with the QA office, this is because of the different timings of the evaluations – alumni survey is carried out once in 5 years (institution might want to reconsider the period of evaluations as well). However, still, the awareness on internal QA function and the work carried out by QA office is not sufficient.

Staff of DTMU, whether academic or administrative, also have a little knowledge on how their performance is assessed, by whom, what are the indicators and how the results are being used. This leads to questioning the effectiveness of the staff performance evaluation.

Results of the evaluations carried out by the QA office show that DTMU evaluates different processes and resources, e.g. the targeted study was carried out for the graduates of the Georgian language courses, survey of graduates of years 2019-2023, evaluation of laboratory practice, survey on internationalization, evaluations of the programs, etc. DTMU also has the mechanisms for monitoring academic performance. The utilisation of the results of evaluations for development of educational programs or other areas of university activities is evident.

DTMU has the student body planning mechanism at place, which ensures utilization of different benchmarks for planning student quota, including benchmarks regarding staff, material resources, etc. it was also noted that the student had set up their own special interest group on the theme of QA and that through this group were able to increase awareness of the importance of quality enhancement within the student body.

DTMU also developed the mechanisms for monitoring the management effectiveness, however, the results of the monitoring, though requested, were not provided.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

- SER;
- Interview Results;
- Results of the QA mechanisms implementation;
- QA policy;
- Management Effectiveness evaluation mechanisms;
- Mechanisms for planning student body.

#### **Recommendations:**

- The overall level of knowledge on the internal QA function and processes, and knowledge on the extent of the work carried out by the QA office is insufficient, thus leading to a reduced level of quality culture. Closing the feedback loop, sharing the results of the evaluations and follow-up procedures would be helpful.
- Ensure the effectiveness of the staff performance evaluation by ensuring that: the staff are made aware of the clearly documented process, every staff member is evaluated within the following year and provided individual feedback on their results, and areas for their improvement.

#### **Suggestions:**

Non-binding suggestions for further development

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

- The student QA club is an interesting approach to decentralising QA and enhancing the scale and scope of the quality culture within the university.

#### **Evaluation**

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

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

### 2.3. Observing Principles of Ethics and Integrity

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

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

DTMU has developed relevant regulations and mechanisms to support ethical conduct and academic integrity at the institution, the regulations are publicly accessible. Students' ethics code describes the ethical conduct norms for students, while the regulations relevant for staff, including disciplinary sanctions are provided in the internal labor regulation of the institution.

DTMU has also implemented plagiarism detection software (TURNITIN) used to detect plagiarism in students' work. The regulations for plagiarism prevention and detection, and the tools, including software, are at place. DTMU also carries out informational activities. The existing regulations on plagiarism detection and prevention also classify academic dishonesty in different types and levels of violation (level 1, level 2 and level3). The sanctions are also differentiated, based on the violation level and whether the person is violating the norms first or consecutive times. The regulation is comprehensive, and the institution has carried out extensive work in terms of continuous improvement of the process, including the revision of the regulatory documents, training of staff, awareness-raising activities. During the visit, information on using Turnitin software was requested and provided, which shows utilization of the software.

However, awareness on the topic is low, based on the interviews, as the students, including PhD students attending the interviews did not have information on the tools and mechanisms used at DTMU for plagiarism detection. Therefore, it is important to increase the level of awareness among students on plagiarism.

Another important issue, which can be linked to the discussion in standard component 2.1 is the responsible unit/person for plagiarism detection (evaluation of works). Based on the Scientific Research department's job description, evaluation of works for plagiarism is the responsibility of the named unit; however, according to interviews, the responsibility falls on the vice-dean of the faculty in research. As the issue is related to division of responsibilities, the recommendation is already issued in relevant standards' component and will not be duplicated. Vice-dean for research clarified that plagiarism detection software is used for the works of the PhD students and during the written case assignments, where students work with sources and the results are used for explanation, clarification of the plagiarism-related issues and formative assessment/feedback.

According to the documents, DTMU webpage and interview results, academic freedom is one of the fundamental values of DTMU, together with academic integrity. However, the concrete ways that the institution supports, or ensures academic freedom could not be named during some of the interviews. Given that there is a desire to support DTMU's commitment to enhancing academic integrity and academic freedom, and considering the efforts put into developing and improving relevant tools, mechanisms, and policies, it is crucial to ensure adequate awareness and understanding among the academic community, including students.

DTMU also considers research ethics as an important part of their policies and continuously works on improving the regulations and practice related to the support of research ethics, including through participation in the international capacity building project (ERASMUS+) and sharing good EU practice.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

- SER;
- Interview Results;
- Procedures for identifying the academic dishonesty and issuing sanctions (Annex 16 of the SER);
- Internal Labor Regulation (Annex 17 of the SER);
- Students' ethics code (Annex 15 of the SER);

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Functions of the structural units (Annex 6 of the SER).</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is recommended that DTMU continue its efforts to ensure that the entire academic community shares a common understanding of academic integrity and academic freedom, aligned with the institution's standards.</li> </ul>
<b>Suggestions:</b> Non-binding suggestions for further development
<b>Best Practices (if applicable):</b> Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective, and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions
<b>Evaluation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements</li> </ul>

### 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

<b>3.1 Design and Development of Educational Programmes</b>
HEI has a policy for planning, designing, implementing and developing educational programmes.
<b>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements</b> <p>DTMU currently runs following accredited educational programs: One-Cycle MD Program – Georgian; One-Cycle MD Program – English; One-Cycle DTMU MD ePBL Program and Doctoral program in Biomedical and Health Sciences.</p> <p>DTMU state in the SER that 'Increasing opportunities of learning for the students is one of our key priorities' and so they are committed to integrating modern approaches to curriculum planning and design so as to improve all their programmes.</p> <p>As a result the university uses an acting planning methodology, based on the Tuning Project`s model for planning, implementation and transfer of curricula ("Tunning Quality Development Cycle"). The rules and procedures are outlined in Annex 18 and application of these is evident in the entire processes of planning, implementation, evaluation of obtained products which are continuously conducted with the involvement of the quality assurance team and was confirmed during the interviews.</p> <p>In the last several years DTMU utilizes their quality assessment criteria to modernize curricula making it more student centered and competency based/ The goal has been to achieve better integration of knowledge, skills and attitudes, by using more modern methods of teaching and assessment. Examples include the development of the MD ePBL program and the adjustments made during the Covid-19 pandemic and all of DTMU's programmes have been awarded 7-year accreditation from the NCEQE.</p>



Educational programs are elaborated in collaboration with the following stakeholders (faculty, students and employers), and their feedback is actively considered. The University supports continuous programme development including testing of current courses and modules and planning, piloting and implementation and new initiatives such as innovative teaching formats, new types of exams, and modern educational resources. The university has a curricular committee and along with the quality assurance service are involved in every stage, from the initial planning and implementation to evaluating results and shaping future development plans.

As stated in the self-evaluation report, during the interviews the curriculum development group of Medical Education Center (MEC) confirmed that they work constantly on specific activities and implemented changes. These changes are already tested and based on the report of analysis of the results obtained from polling of students, graduates and employers aiming development of programs as detailed in Appendix 1. Below are several examples:

- An Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) was developed for a surgery and pediatrics course and conducted for 6th year students.
- EBMA exam was held with the students' progress test within the framework of external assessment
- From the 2022-2023 academic year, laboratory practice courses have been introduced in certain basic disciplines and it is already a mandatory component of the relevant modules.
- Based on the new sectoral benchmark requirements, the 7.5-credit course of the Georgian language, which is provided to foreign students before the start of the clinical course (I-V semester), was revised and increased up to 12 credits.
- Elaboration of Lab Basic Skills Logbook (Labster) for Programs (MD, MD ePBL), also logbooks for basic clinical skills, patient management and etc.
- The course "Fundamentals of laparoscopic surgery" was developed and introduced for students interested in surgery specialization; Students' satisfaction with the course is high.
- 

DTMU has also developed residency programs in internal and family medicine, with surgery soon to follow. These initiatives have been coordinated by the Medical Education Center (MEC) and the internships provide continuation of training postgraduation for those wishing to remain and work in clinical practice in Georgia. These programs are properly developed and implemented by DTMU, ensuring high standards and effective training.

Additionally, DTMU collaborates in postgraduate education by participating in the working group for the revision of European requirements for training (residency) in internal medicine. This collaboration ensures that the university's residency programs align with international standards and best practices, further enhancing the quality of medical education and training provided to its students.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

- SER
- Annex 18. Policy for planning, elaboration, development of programs and procedures for approval, making amendments and repeal at David Tvildiani Medical University
- Annex 21. Report on analysis of the results from polling of students, graduates and employers aiming development of programs and use of the results.
- Interviews

#### **Recommendations:**

None

#### **Suggestions:**

Non-binding suggestions for further development

**Best Practices (if applicable):**

- The development of residency programs in internal and family medicine, with surgery soon to follow, is commendable. Coordinated by the Medical Education Center (MEC), these programs provide valuable post-graduation training for those wishing to continue clinical practice in Georgia. DTMU has ensured these programs maintain high standards and deliver effective training.

**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

**3.2 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**

DTMU operates 3 MD educational programs, MD (Georgian); MD (English) and MD ePBL (Georgian).

MD Programs lasts for 6 years and comprises of 360 credits, among which is a choice of elective courses, in accordance with legislation and sectoral benchmarks. The 6-year period of study includes 3 stages: I - basic medical and clinical sciences course, II - clinical medicine and III- Clinical Clerkship. Information about the programs is accessible through a catalogue of educational programs, which is regularly updated and published on the university's website.

The educational programs are designed to support diverse learning needs, providing appropriate formats and conditions for teaching, learning, and assessment. This includes the use of modern teaching materials and resources, such as Body Interact and Practicum Script, and offering Georgian language courses for foreign students.

Learning outcomes of the programs are clearly stated and are in line with the level of higher education and qualification to be granted.

The program is an integrated educational course - horizontal integration with elements of vertical integration at Basic Stage. The curriculum is integrated around organ system and achieves levels 7 or 8 on Harden's Integration Ladder, content of teaching, methods, assessment, and the spiral organizational structure of the program are designed to support the stepwise attainment of the intended (declared) learning outcomes. The majority - 95% - of subjects in the curriculum are mandatory and serve to support achievement of intended outcomes by ensuring relevance to competencies. The program considers at least 10 credits for elective educational courses.

Clinical courses are taught using a modular approach in progressive stages. For example, modules such as Life Cycle, Life Protection, Life Support, Life Maintenance, Life Structure, and Life Control are continued through clinical medicine and the general specialization stages and the teaching of internal medicine deepens vertically from the foundation years to advanced levels, PCD (2nd -3rd years), within clinical specialties (3rd-4th year), differential diagnosis of internal diseases and treatment (5th year), and syndrome differential diagnosis and urgent therapy (6th year). The volume of each program

component is defined by its content, learning outcomes, and field-specific requirements. This is evident in the detailed program descriptions and the integrated curriculum approach.

The program is based on spiral curriculum model which is a recognized approach for achieving integration and developing clinical reasoning skills through both horizontal and vertical learning, incorporating clinical scenarios via case-based discussions or bedside teaching.

The curriculum consists of cycle makes 3 spirals:

First spiral is basic and clinical sciences stage, which focuses on organ systems-based modules covering the mechanisms of normal and pathological processes, clinical assessment, manifestations of diseases, diagnostics, patient management and communication skills. Second spiral is the stage of clinical medicine. It is the transitory stage between directed and self-directed learning. It involves in-depth revisions, working on real patient cases within medical specialties, having more focus on medical and social problems, healthcare issues, and patient communication. Third spiral is clinical clerkship and is based on the knowledge and skills acquired in the previous spirals and focuses on consolidating students' competencies and preparing them for future clinical practice (residency programs).

At each module of the MD program international best practices such as PBL and CBL methods are integrated (along with assessment methods described in Standard 3.3) which have increased focus of the study materials (fundamental and clinical sciences) on clinical significance and patient benefits. Third year of MD ePBL program (6th semester) is organized as a form of the interdisciplinary educational course of basic and clinical sciences (based around main functions of the human body) and serves as a preparatory step for the next, clinical studies stage.

DTMU also provides modern teaching materials like Body Interact and Practicum Script. DTMU has also introduced a new 'Science' module to encourage student engagement in research, thereby contributing to medical research capacity in Georgia.

Looking at the Biomedical and Healthcare Sciences Doctoral Educational Program, it is clear that it is structured around an interdisciplinary approach that covers critical research areas such as Structural, molecular, biologic and functional basis of normal and pathological processes, (modern use and future perspectives of biomarkers and molecular and cellular responses of human organism to pathologic processes, disease management and the professionalisation of medical education.

Similar to the MD programmes this programme includes clearly defined generalist subjects to support a strong foundational knowledge along with individualized educational plans based on the qualification and experience of the PhD student. Together with the supervisor(s) and doctoral committee, the PhD student forms an individual plan for "obtaining" credits for general educational courses.

The university has developed and launched a Mentorship Program, which outlines the types of relationships, principles of agreements, and student reporting forms. This is detailed in the Roadmap of the Mentorship Program and the document "Mentorship and Mentor at DTMU."

In addition, although not a credit-bearing program, DTMU offers support to school leavers before they are accepted into any of the DTMU programs by providing pre-entry courses to enhance their knowledge of basic sciences. This further demonstrates DTMU's commitment to ensuring that applicants have the necessary prerequisite knowledge to succeed in their studies.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

- SER
- Annex 19.1. MD program (Georgian)
- Annex 19.2. MD program (English)
- Annex 19.3. MD ePBL program
- Annex 19.4. Doctoral Educational Program in Biomedical and Healthcare Sciences

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annex 20. Syllabi of the educational programs</li> <li>• Annex 23. Regulation of Academic Process at DTMU</li> <li>• Annex 24. Methodology for Development of Individual Learning Plan</li> <li>• Annex Mentorship DTMU</li> <li>• Interviews</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendations:</b> None
<b>Suggestions:</b> Non-binding suggestions for further development
<b>Best Practices (if applicable):</b> Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions
<b>Evaluation</b> Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements</li> <li><input type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements</li> </ul>
<b>3.3 Assessment of Learning Outcomes</b>
HEI has law-compliant, transparent and fair system of learning outcomes assessment, which promotes the improvement of students' academic performance.
<b>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements</b>  DTMU has in place a transparent and fair assessment system compliant with the legislation and adequate to learning outcomes. The assessment system and the related regulations are well described in the syllabi, are appropriate for both undergraduate and PhD programmes as suitable tests of competence at all the various levels and complaint with Georgia regulations.  The methods used include various methods and forms for assessment of knowledge and skills are used at DTMU, specifically Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQs), Mini-Cases, Questions of Problem Analysis, Objectively Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE), Clinical Cases - Mini-CEXs (communication with standardized and/or real patients), Direct Observation of Procedural Skill (DOPS), Case-Based Discussions (CBD) , Portfolio, Oral Presentations and Posters, Critical Appraisal of the Journal Article, Research Project, Patient`s Data Interpretation, Using of Drugs` Electronic Formulary. Teaching/Learning activities and relevant assessment forms are defined for each educational course. Information on assessment methods and criteria for passing the course is available in the module syllabi by each subject block and explained by the teacher.  Balance of formative and summative assessments is appropriate and enable decisions regarding students' learning and academic progress. Students are able to receive feedbacks almost on daily basis, during practical classes (practical classes, Mini CEXs etc.), weekly during working in PBL format, in each subject block of the module (oral exam), during discussion of modular summative exam results (by the students wish) and 39 stage exam results, with simulation, standardized patient and/or real patient upon communication with them, portfolio analysis.  During the visit it was noted that the online MCQ tests are delivered only in English even for the MD Georgian programme. The reasons given for this was that the University's experience of translating a

growing question bank into Georgian had led to variations and even inaccuracies as a result of the difficulties in translating medical terminology. The University explained that they set a high level of English competency when enrolling students, students were made aware that the MCQ tests would be in English and that given all other elements of the examination are conducted in Georgian then their decision was supportive of and was fair to students. Additional information provided confirmed that they would seek consent of staff and students to continue with this policy.

As stated in the SER, summative OSCEs are organized primarily in clinical disciplines such as Internal Medicine, Paediatrics, Obstetrics & Gynaecology, and Surgery and the students are instructed in the process of the examinations. In addition, students in their sixth year are given the opportunity to refresh their learning of technical skills achieved earlier in their course.

DTMU plans to move towards a more integrated OSCE examination with longer, more complex stations, particularly for final-year assessments, to better test students' readiness for practice. However, currently, DTMU uses a largely checklist-based approach to marking students' performance rather than a domain-based approach, which is increasingly used for high-stakes OSCE assessments such as final MBBS evaluations.

DTMU has methodology in place for the planning and development of individualized educational programs and plans to create more opportunities to increase this and all The information on the programs is available on the university website.

In conclusion DTMU's assessment system complies with all criteria of Standard 3 as it ensures that learning outcomes are adequately assessed, regulations are transparent and fair, students are well-informed, and an effective appeal system is in place. The integration of diverse assessment methods and continuous feedback mechanisms reflects DTMU's commitment to maintaining high-quality education and fostering continuous improvement.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

- SER
- Annex 18. Policy for Planning, Elaboration and Development, Approval, Changes and Cancelling of the Educational Programs at David Tvildiani Medical University
- Annex 22. Regulation of Planning, Implementation and Assessment of the Scientific Research Component
- Annex 24. Methodology for Development of Individual Learning Plan
- Interviews

#### **Recommendations:**

None

- .

#### **Suggestions:**

- DTMU might consider the development of a domain based integrated OSCE with complex stations particularly for students in their final years of study.
- It may be beneficial for DTMU to continue seeking the views of both staff and students to maintain and support the policy of offering Georgian MD program students the option to take tests in either Georgian or English.

**Best Practices (if applicable):**

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

**Evaluation**

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

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

**4. Staff of the HEI**

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

**4.1. Staff Management**

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

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

The University has developed a human resource management policy that addresses human resource management both at a strategic and operational level. Regulatory documents state that all managers in the organization are responsible for human resource management, emphasizing the importance of a comprehensive approach.

According to the human resource management policy document, the University has a "Strategic Management and Development Committee" that reviews the interim and annual reports of various entities. When repeatedly asked by the expert group about human resource management, none of the interviewees mentioned the committee (Even HR). This may indicate a lack of awareness among staff about the committee and its ineffectiveness. All responses confirmed the statement in the human resource management policy that all managers in the organization are responsible for human resource management. While this is a good practice, the expert group found it difficult to see it successfully implemented in practice, perceiving the situation as somewhat disorganized.

The HR department of the University operates principally at an operational level. Its functions include registering employee admissions and transfers, issuing certificates of employment at Davit Tvildiani Medical University, and certifying copies of employee documents, among other tasks. It should be noted that according to the job descriptions, there are 3 positions in the Department of Chancellery and Human Resources: The head of the department, the assistant to the head of the department (in the direction of the chancellery) and the archivist. As the expert group was told, currently, there is only one person in the Human Resources Department (Head of the department), who performs all the functions, however, in her CV, there is indicated that she only performs the functions of Chancellery. During the interview, it was mentioned that there is a vacant position in the Human Resources Department (Position: The assistant to the head of the department (In the direction of Chancellery)). No one has mentioned if an archivist is in place. The group of experts recommends filling this vacancy with appropriately qualified staff promptly.

The University establishes terms and conditions of affiliation that comply with standards. According to university policy, academic staff are required to declare their affiliation status. An appendix in the regulatory document, "Agreement on Affiliation with a Person Holding an Academic Position," outlines these terms. The expert team checked the affiliation status of the University's academic staff on the Education Management Information System portal and verified that the academic staff are affiliated with only one university. However, interviews with academic staff revealed that some were unaware of what the terms of affiliation meant. It is suggested that information about the rules and conditions of affiliation be provided more extensively.

Based on the human resources policy, the expert group can confirm the institution's willingness to involve academic and scientific staff in the decision-making process regarding educational and research issues. This was confirmed when interviewing members of the academic and rectors' council.

The policies for staff activities and development at DTMU have been established and executed in accordance with the guidelines for calculating and utilizing the workload for DTMU academic staff: norms for teaching and non-teaching work, norms for additional teaching load (hourly) for reimbursement purposes, that would be important to the quality assurance service for the future analysis of academic staff to student ratio norm calculations and proper planning of future development analysis. Quantitative target marks are defined in the self-assessment document which is reasonable (see self-evaluation document, p. 8).

Regarding the professional development of personnel, the institution's management policy ensures the promotion and support of a collegial attitude among employees, involving all staff directly in the process and helping each of them recognize and understand their importance. This was clearly highlighted during the interviews, where interviewees mentioned that the current processes, including the preparation for Institutional Accreditation, contribute to their development, foster collegial relationships, and emphasize their individual roles. This was observed by the entire staff and can be considered a commendable practice.

The institution has a Medical Education Center that organizes training and courses for employees (Including academic personal) and provides funding for external training centers when necessary. Interviews with staff revealed that they feel supported and satisfied with the university's professional development measures.

The University outlines mechanisms for integrating new employees into the work environment. During the first three weeks after hiring, the supervisor and a representative from the human resources department meet with the new employee to discuss any initial problems and ways to solve them, facilitating their full adaptation to the new work environment.

After hiring a new employee, a human resources representative, along with the supervisor, conducts an orientation meeting to cover various issues such as job functions and duties. They explain the essence and significance of the probationary period (if applicable), provide information about remuneration, job benefits, and future professional prospects, send labor regulations via email, and create an electronic university email account. During the interview, it was confirmed that the Human Resources Department and the supervisor are actively involved in this process.

To motivate staff, the institution offers cash bonuses, sends gratitude letters, and gives gifts. During discussions with various groups, some mentioned that the cash bonus takes the form of a 13th salary, while others noted receiving gratitude letters from the university. According to some interviewees, they did not place much importance on these mechanisms because their job duties and responsibilities were already outlined in the document regulating their roles and it was their duty to perform all the activities. Encouraging staff and supporting their professional development is one of the goals outlined in the university's strategic and action plans.

The existence of encouraging activities was also confirmed by the academic staff, who noted that they were sent to international forums, trainings, and membership in professional international organizations was financially supported.

As for staff evaluation. Based on the management efficiency monitoring mechanism and evaluation system document (Appendix 9), monitoring and evaluation tools are:

- Performance monitoring mechanism of the action plan (as well as the work plan written in accordance with the action plan);
- Existing mechanism for internal self-assessment of quality assurance service;
- Strategic Development Committee reports;
- Administrative staff development plans and performance reports;
- Comparison of actual results determined by normative documents
- Control System; data on discipline, initiative and work ethic ;
- Studies of existing management efficiency monitoring mechanisms

Regarding the assessment of academic staff, there is a multifaceted evaluation of their activities. This is supported by the document titled "On the Workload of Teaching Staff at the University" (Appendix 25.3). Evaluation of staff includes feedback from students, encompassing both quantitative and qualitative research components.

According to the staff recruitment rules, a professor has signed an open-ended agreement contract. In addition, every 5 years professors are subject to attestation (Annex 25.2.)(Certification procedure according to the law of Georgia on higher education). During the interview, the professor was asked about the rules and conditions of attestation, although the professor had no information about it, the person mentioned had more than 5 years of work experience at the university.

As an appendix to the Institutional accreditation self-assessment document, the scientific productivity evaluation system document (Appendix N45) is presented, where it is stated that the evaluation of scientific productivity is based on quantitative and qualitative analysis. The document mentions that activities such as the number of published articles, abstracts of conference proceedings, number of textbooks, monographs and books published by staff are evaluated for quantitative analysis. In addition, the criteria for qualitative assessment of the performed activities have been established, among which - articles and works published by academic staff in peer-review journals, published in Pubmed (abstracts reported and published in the field/specialization field at international congresses/conferences and symposiums); Manual, monograph, book (chapter included in it) in international editions, etc.

According to Appendix 37, titled "Information on the Scientific Activities of Academic and Scientific Personnel of the University," academic and scientific personnel are required to submit a report on their scientific activities to the university. It is also stated that academic staff must submit this report at least once every three years. However, during the visit, the productivity within this three-year interval was not confirmed but in general terms the more frequent the feedback the more effective it is and so DTMU might benefit from reviewing this.

Regarding the evaluation of administrative and support staff, according to the human resources management policy, the University assesses staff based on the implementation of events and daily operational actions outlined in the University's action plan. Based on these results, the University analyzes and identifies existing challenges, gaps, and areas for improvement. The University states that all this information is documented in reports prepared by the staff. The second method of evaluation is periodic survey assessments, which, according to the university, allow employees to express their initiatives and opinions regarding career advancement or changes in position.

At each meeting, the group of experts posed a question about how their work performance was evaluated. Some said that if the University faced financial penalties then it would indicate poor performance in regard to their financial practices. The majority of interviewees indicated that student



surveys, administered by the quality service, provided insights into areas needing improvement. This perspective was also shared by staff members whose roles were less directly connected to daily student interactions. It should be noted that student surveys may not comprehensively assess the performance of all functions and duties. Depending on the nature of the work, not all aspects of job responsibilities may involve direct interaction with students.

During the visit, some employees initially mentioned the practice of presenting performance reports in a fragmented manner. This suggests that report submission is not systematic and that staff members lack information regarding the evaluation of their work. One interviewer, who has been with the organization for 8 years, confirmed that his assessment had been based solely on student surveys. He has not received any other form of feedback since the beginning of his employment until now.

It is noteworthy that the personnel management policy document emphasizes the importance for the institution to define "what is considered as a good work result" and "how it should be measured". The expert group observed documentary confirmation of this approach only in relation to the staff implementing programs, but this was not the case for the administrative and support staff. Merely having an action plan is insufficient as a measure; the action plan itself requires areas of improvement to be measurable in an appropriate way.

The expert group found it challenging to observe systematic, diverse, and criteria-based staff evaluation. Additionally, as mentioned, a significant portion of university employees lack information about how and how often they are evaluated. Interviews also revealed a lack of feedback on the effectiveness of work performed within the institution.

Detailed information about the duties and responsibilities of administrative and support staff is outlined in the job description forms however on checking the CVs of the staff it was found that some CVs (Support staff) are out of date and do not indicate Davit Tvildiani Medical University as the place of employment.

The university establishes procedures for the recruitment (as well as termination of employment) of academic and scientific personnel, guest teachers, tutors, administrative, and support personnel through its personnel recruitment procedure document. Information regarding their rights and obligations is specified in the contract forms. The proposed rules align with legislation. However, particular attention should be given to the record on the recruitment of academic staff:

When hiring academic staff, the university follows the personnel admission procedure, which outlines the evaluation criteria (Chapter III, Article 2). The document also specifies the list of documents required for applicants competing to fill vacant academic positions.

Overall, it was apparent that DTMU is a highly collaborative organization where people maintain strong, long-term, and loyal connections. The dedication of the staff, particularly in the QA department and among the teams involved in medical education delivery, exemplifies this commitment.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

- Human resource management policy;
- Terms and conditions of affiliation;
- Management efficiency monitoring mechanism and evaluation system;
- Workload of teaching staff at the university;
- Scientific productivity evaluation system document;
- Information about the scientific activities of the academic and scientific staff of the university;
- The mechanism for evaluating the quality of research activities and Evaluation results
- Job description forms;
- Function-duties;
- bylaws;
- The procedure for receiving personnel;
- Competitive materials for academic positions;
- Interviews

<p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The personnel evaluation system should be more systematic, diverse, and criteria-based, with clear communication to employees about mechanisms and frequency. Additionally, a multifaceted evaluation of human resources management effectiveness should be conducted by an audit, quality assurance service, or a specially appointed commission, with intensified feedback after analyzing results.</li> <li>• The vacant position in the Human Resources Department should be filled as a matter of urgency.</li> <li>• The CVs of all the support staff should be updated to confirm that Davit Tvildiani Medical University is their place of work.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Suggestions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the overall academic staff awareness of the rules and conditions of affiliation.</li> <li>• It is suggested that DTMU might increase the frequency of the scientific report submission by academic/scientific staff to ensure more timely feedback.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Best Practices (if applicable):</b></p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions.</p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements  <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements  <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements </p>
<p><b>4.2. Academic/Scientific and Invited Staff Workload</b></p> <p>Number and workload of academic/scientific and invited staff is adequate to HEI's educational programmes and scientific-research activities, and also other functions assigned to them</p> <p><b>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements</b></p> <p>There are provisions for staff activities and development formulated and implemented at DTMU (see Annex 25.3). This document includes norms for calculating and utilizing workload for DTMU academic staff, covering standards for teaching and non-teaching duties as well as norms for additional hourly teaching loads for reimbursement purposes. These norms are crucial for the quality assurance service to analyze future academic staff-to-student ratio norms and for proper planning of future development analyses. Quantitative target benchmarks are outlined in the self-assessment document, which is a reasonable approach.</p> <p>In DTMU the academic load for academic staff in educational programs of higher educational level is differentiated according to the positions of Professors and teachers' staff - maximum 900 hours (and minimum 200 hours) during academic year (in the framework of official salary). Following academic load is defined for DTMU professors and teachers' staff (teaching staff):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professor: 300 (intraauditorium work);</li> <li>• Associate professor: 400 (intraauditorium work);</li> <li>• Assistant professor: 500 (intraauditorium work);</li> <li>• Assistant (position held by PhD students): 220 (intraauditorium work).</li> </ul>

Invited teachers are selected in agreement with the course lead and the educational department to participate in delivering lectures, practical classes, and other teaching activities, as well as to contribute to scientific research processes. A contract is signed accordingly. Their academic workload is determined per semester based on an updated load scheme ranging from 50 hours to 900 hours, depending on the educational course requirements of the program.

During the visit, individual workload charts of academic staff for the current and previous year, which were requested to assess workload during the academic year, were not provided. However all staff interviewed acknowledged their workload whilst busy was not excessive. Additionally, the education management information system displays only academic and scientific workload, omitting other types of academic activities such as auditory studies, consultations, assessments, practical, supervision of scientific-pedagogical staff, etc.. As adequate workload management is essential for the successful implementation of education programmes capturing as much of the elements of workload is beneficial.

In documentation, as well as during the interview, it was confirmed that the institution considers and checks the workload of the staff in another university or institution. Also, during the meeting with the academic staff, it was confirmed that the institution tries as much as possible individually, considering their schedule and adjusts timetables to the lectures needs.

To ensure the sustainability of the program, when planning the number of academic, scientific, and invited personnel, the University considers the existing and accepted contingent of students and the specificity of the program. The university has sufficient staff to carry out educational programs effectively. This was confirmed during the interview with the students as well as program implementers. In addition, the results of students' academic performance are reliable and valid. This leads us to believe that the system is working effectively. In the process of calculating the number of program implementers, the total number of hours of lecture and practical classes in a specific subject is determined. This methodology is based on the "Academic Staff Workload" document. The student contingent planning mechanism takes into account such components as the peculiarity of the programs: modular organization, prerequisites for enrolment in the module; the threshold (contact hour) norms established for the pedagogical load and the necessity and possibility of additional invitation of teachers etc.

As it was noted in standard 4.1. The University determines the terms and conditions of affiliation that complies with the standards. According to university policy, academic staff are required to state their position on affiliation. There is an appendix on a regulatory document "Agreement on affiliation with a person holding an academic position". The expert team checked the affiliation status of the university's academic staff on the Education Management Information System portal, and the expert team verified that the academic staff is affiliated with only one university.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

- Methodology of defining number of academic, scientific, and invited personnel by programs
- Human resource management policy
- Document on pedagogical load
- Terms and conditions of affiliation of academic staff load
- Interviews

#### **Recommendations:**

None

#### **Suggestions:**

Effective workload management is crucial for the successful implementation of educational programs, so it's beneficial to account for as many elements of the workload as possible

**Best Practices (if applicable):**

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

**Evaluation**

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

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

**5. Students and Their Support Services**

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

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

- For each of the educational levels, HEI has developed regulations for assignment, suspension and termination of student status, mobility, qualification granting, issuing educational documents as well as recognition of education received during the learning period.
- HEI ensures the protection of student rights and lawful interests.

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

The University's website (dtmu.ge) the SER and the interview results, together with sampling the contract templates provided by the University demonstrate that the regulations for assignment, suspension and termination of student status, mobility, qualification granting and recognition of education are approved by the Rector's Council and are transparent and fair and are in line with current legislation. Also, the recognition of credits is fair. This information is public and accessible by everyone.

HEI has enrollment criteria of the English language for the category of applicants who are admitted to the university without national exams. The applicant must have an internationally recognized certificate confirming at least B1 level of English by a foreign citizen (IELTS, TOEFL, Cambridge English, UNICert®, English Score, etc.).

DTMU has a mechanism to ensure that students' rights are protected as described in the Code of Ethics and there is an effective communication and awareness of this across the university. During the interview, it was mentioned that the coordinator introduces students to their obligations regarding the contracts.

Students know that they can appeal if there is something they do not agree with in the learning process. Foreign students stated during the interview that they found DTMU to be a friendly environment.

The Code of Ethics is communicated frequently to all students, and according to interviews they all feel well-informed about their rights and responsibilities and the consequences of cheating or plagiarism.

Students are members of various councils and committees, including the Rector's Council, Curriculum Committee, Faculty Council, Quality Assurance Self-Assessment Group, and Disciplinary Committee. The university also supports a self-governing student body, the Students' and Young Scientists' Scientific Association (SYSSA), which participates in academic and scientific discussions and decision-making processes. All of this enables students to have a voice and helps to protect their interests.

According to the SER, interview results and the regulatory documents assessed, the institution ensures protection of student rights and lawful interests.

#### Evidences/indicators

- SER
- University Web page
- Interview results
- Appendix 32. Samples of the agreement signed between DTMU and the student
- Appendix 33.1 Rules for obtaining, suspending, terminating, restoring, mobility of student status
- Appendix 33. 2 Rules for obtaining, suspending, terminating, restoring, mobility of student status (PhD)
- Appendix 33.3 Mechanisms for protection of students' rights and legal interests (registration rules)

#### Recommendations:

None

#### Suggestions:

Non-binding suggestions for further development

#### Best Practices (if applicable):

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

#### Evaluation

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

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

#### 5.2 Student Support Services

- 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

Students of DTMU receive appropriate information upon the planning of learning process and improvement of academic achievement, which is achieved via usage of web page and e-mails, giving opportunity for every student to track their achievements in studies, as well as communicate with representatives of the Administration and lecturers. The students interview revealed also that students are getting appropriate communication from HEI staff, especially from students' coordinators. These coordinators observe students' performance, identify students at risk and provide additional support such as additional classes by peers or teacher. Also, students felt supported by staff at the Simulation Center, who offer extra help to improve their clinical skills.

The student self-government organization supports extracurricular activities, and provides a means for students to set up a new club for their own interests. Student self-government also provides a bridge between students and the university administration.

In DTMU, there are several interest groups in Surgery, Gynecology, Neurology, Rehabilitation, Orthopedic Surgery and Sports Medicine, which organize extracurricular workshops to provide for DTMU students possibilities to increase integration between Georgian and foreign students, which was mentioned by students during the interviews and is something they really appreciate. The student clubs based on special interest groups encourages students to focus on one particular area which might help inform their future career choices.

Students Youth Scientists` Scientific Association (SYSSA) and interest groups SIGA and GIGA are organizing 2 scientific conferences every year for the last 10 years: "Nobel's Day" and the annual scientific conference.

Students are strongly involved in some of the many extracurricular activities, excursions, clubs, sports or cultural activities offered by the university or run by students themselves. Students organize events and activities where they show their abilities. Students mentioned that HEI was supportive of these activities and gave as examples the support given for the cultural day and Basketball competition.

HEI has developed a flexible tuition payment system which been very successful and also provides scholarships for students, including foreigners. Davit Tvildiani scholarship for second-sixth year students, rector's scholarship and benefits for outstanding students. Also. HEI provides funding for students sitting the USMLE examinations. DTMU takes into consideration student socio-economic status and has developed a flexible tuition payment system (3 times per semester or individually according to the defined plan.)

There is some lack of student 'connectiveness' when in Rustavi and to the Centre and between the international and Georgian students and being in Rustavi for such a long time might need to be reconsidered pending the development of the new DTMU campus and hospital.

HEI has exchange programs. One student mentioned that he knows about exchange program in Lithuania and Center of Metabolism and Hormones in the city of Mainz, Germany; but some students from both campuses were not aware of student exchange programmes and seemed to have less of information about international exchange programs. DTMU Support students in the meetings and work of the International Federation of Medical Students Associations (IFMSA)

The university has the Department for Student Career Development and Alumni Services. They are providing professional orientation, information on extracurricular opportunities, and other information regarding employment ,personal and career development. The international graduates told us that although DTMU were unable to be directly involved in the process necessary to obtain licenses to practice e.g. in India they were as helpful as possible in providing certified documents/letters of recommendations etc. The student clubs based on special interest groups encourages students to focus on one particular area which might inform their future career choices and this is much appreciated by the students.

Students confirmed that university conducts surveys focused on quality of teaching and student satisfaction regularly.

During the on-site visit at CMC and Iashvili Hospital, expert panel had the chance to see study rooms for students. These were adequate for the group sizes of 1-12 max. At the time of interviewing students, noted that they would like to improve student's spaces at university. They would like to improve campus infrastructure and add library reading halls and individual working spaces.

The students are a cohesive body and are clearly engaged and enjoying their studies and appreciate the strong connections they have with the staff.

#### Evidences/indicators

- SER
- Interview results
- Strategic plan
- Appendix 34; Career Support Guide
- Appendix 35; The results of the study of graduates about their career (including the rate of employment by the received qualifications) and academic development
- Appendix 36. Tools for supporting socially vulnerable and disabled persons

#### Recommendations:

None

#### Suggestions:

- It is suggested that DTMU take additional steps to promote exchange opportunities and actively encourage students to participate in international events.

#### Best Practices (if applicable):

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

#### Evaluation

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

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

## 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

There is evidence in the MEQRA and SER that DTMU carries out research and creative activities, which contribute to scientific, social, and cultural needs of the nation and at the international level. They conduct research and publish their research results and present at conferences. They keep track of the number of publications, the impact factor, the number of monographs, and the conferences where work is presented. From the interviews, we learned that the types of research include clinical research in the following areas: neurology studying chromosome 20 and other neurodevelopmental studies in their centre; early intervention research in cerebral palsy in patients under 6 months of age; visual

impairment research; and Tuberculosis research at the TB Centre. Many or most of these studies include international colleagues, such as those in Switzerland and Australia. Most of the studies aim to benefit the people of Georgia and frequently involve PhD students or postdoctoral students, conducting clinical research off campus. One ongoing study is with Switzerland in clinical immunology research. Relative to PhD research is training in research methods and training and preparation of grants. The Scientific Research (SR) Office trains PhD students on research methods and how to apply for grants, although they did state that this is not done for all doctoral students, since the course on grant funding is an elective and not offered every year.

The process for assessment and defense of doctoral dissertations is transparent and follows established rules and regulations (Regulation of Dissertation Council [RDC], p. 2). There are multiple points of oversight for dissertations: the supervisor, the Dissertation Council, and the Academic Council, which helps ensure the quality of the research. . The ratio of supervisors to doctoral students is reported in the SER (p. 9) to be 1.1 with 30 supervisors to 27 doctoral students, which does not meet their target goal of a ratio of 1.5 supervisors to doctoral students (SER, p. 2). To reach their target, given their current number of graduate students, would require about 10 additional supervisors. At this ratio, supervisors could be overburdened with doctoral students.

The Dissertation Council has 10 members, and additional appointed experts relevant to specific doctoral research topics. Supervisors of the doctoral research cannot be members of the Council. It was learned during the interviews that research results from medical education studies are used as part of the curriculum's continuous quality improvement.

Evidence that they conduct and publish their research results, as well as present at conferences (i.e., number of publications [n=164], in journals with an impact factor [n=112], number of monographs [n=14], international grants [n=10], defended dissertations [n=15], and conferences, etc.) can be found in the MEQRA (P 3). According to the SER (p. 56), the types of research include "patient welfare-centered professional entrepreneurship and "DTMU academic staff and PhD students address local social and societal needs. (SER, p. 56). In addition, the societal benefits of research are included in the University's mission (SER, p. 56). In addition to evidence from the MEQRA and SER, there were statements made during the interview process that indicated the types of research conducted, which is provided in the summary above.

Evidence relevant to the review of dissertations can be found in the RDC. In addition to the RDC, the MEQRA indicates that the assessment of the quality of research includes the evaluation of the publication (MEQRA, p. 2). "For publication, peer-review evaluation from external (by the editor) sources is required. Peer-reviewed journals and indexing in PubMed, as publication in various journals with different impact factors." (MEQRA, p. 2). This document does not distinguish between faculty-level vs. dissertation-level research. In the RDC, the fourth dissertation requirement is "The main results of the thesis should be published in peer-reviewed and refereed scientific journals, abstract book and monographs in the corresponding field in Georgia and abroad. The minimum number of scientific works is 5, with **at least 3 in the format of articles**. (RDC, p. 3). It is not specifically written in the dissertation requirements that their publications must be in journals with impact factors; however, this is an expectation of research conducted in DTMU. Doctoral students are required to produce at least 3 articles, but there are no specific requirements listed in terms of being in journals with impact factors, even though this is generally understood within the university to be required for higher quality research. One of the evaluation criteria for 6.1 is that there are "high standards for the evaluation and defense of dissertations" which is ensured by "the involvement of highly qualified academic and scientific staff in the process. A high standard is not defined in the criteria for doctoral students; however, it is defined overall for research within DTMU.

The Dissertation Council anonymously votes on the awarding of the degree when there is a quorum present. The decision by the Dissertation Council is presented to Academic Council that does its own evaluation.



During the interview with the Vice Dean Medical Education and the Vice Rector, Education it became clear that medical education research, although new to the institution, is being used to improve the educational program.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

- SER
- Interviews
- Regulation of Dissertation Council [RDC]
- Annex 44 MEQRA
- Annex 38. Development strategy of the University as a research activity institution
- Annex 37.1 Report on the scientific activities of the academic and scientific staff of DTMU
- Annex 37.2 The brief descriptions of current and/or planned projects by departments/faculties

#### **Recommendations:**

None

#### **Suggestions:**

- Given the low ratio of supervisors to doctoral students (1.1) relative to their target goal of 1.5, it is suggested that there should be enhanced mentoring and training of junior faculty to decrease the workload of academic and scientific staff in order to build over time more researchers capable of supervising doctoral student research.
- Acknowledging that DTMU is not a research-intensive university, but is still keen to develop research as a key dimension, the current system for evaluating and analysing research activities, while effective, appears to be relatively slow. It is suggested that consideration should be given to developing a more efficient and proportionate system, particularly for experienced faculty members, which might prevent delays in their own research and thus negatively impact the workload of experienced academic and scientific staff in their supervision of doctoral students.

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

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

#### **Evaluation**

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

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

#### **6.2. Research Support and Internationalisation**

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

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

There are several areas to support research primarily for academic staff and Master's and Doctoral students: Vice Rector, Research; Vice Dean, Research; and the Scientific Research (SR) Department. In the interview with students, it was indicated that the medical students are not primarily research focused however the Director of SR Department reaches out to the students to try to meet their needs, although sometimes the students' needs go "beyond their ability." He also said, , that there is a system

to try to find research mentors and projects for students, but this may need more work. He said that the students develop their own research groups.

Through different offices, but primarily in the SR Department, there are courses on research for graduate students and academic staff, for example, how to write an accurate manuscript, advising on how to write abstracts, on research design, sample size, statistics, on different journals, etc. (interview). There is some training on how to write grants, but this is an elective and not taught every year. The SR Department does provide advice on funding for grants, including international grants (interview). This type of training for academic staff is one way that the SR Department helps with the Vice Rector, Research and Vice Dean, Research to attract more faculty to research. They also have a practice to have more senior faculty mentor more junior faculty who are supervising graduate students. "University has established an internal grant system for research funding, supporting all research activities (for students, PhD candidates, postdocs and other researchers)" (SER, .64).

During interviews, it was clear there is much support for internationalization of research, through research collaborations, grants, conferences, and journal publications. In the SER, they indicate various examples of collaboration with European partners to indicate international research. One is the work with the Association of Medical Schools in Europe and how they organized their conference in 2022. They provide examples of at least 3 research projects conducted with colleagues in the EU. They also mention work with the EUA-CDE and ORPHEUS to demonstrate international research work. During the interview with researchers and the SR Department Director, they described several international research projects being conducted with their doctoral students.

In the strengths section of the SER for category 6, they state, "In relation to the internationalization topic (stated strategic priority of the country and DTMU), mandatory requirements and practices in the program delivery: language of articles and one copy of the abstract - English, other relevant activities, foreign supervisor (co-supervisor), etc." and "DTMU's active membership in European organizations aimed at research and development of PhD programs (ORPHEUS, EUA-CDE)" to indicate international engagement in research.

Given the relatively small size of the Research Development and Support team, there is some lack of a unified approach to ensuring that students and staff understand processes and procedures. This is reflected in there being no systematic faculty development program to train new and aspiring researchers was described in the documents or during the interviews after specifically being asked about it. In addition there appeared to be limited awareness within the Research Development and Support Team of all the various research interested parties and their specific research areas of interest.

The administration and the researchers are enthusiastic about research; this is a good first step toward developing a more rigorous and productive research program, especially in clinical research.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

- SER
- Interviews
- Annex 44 MEQRA

#### **Recommendations:**

None

#### **Suggestions:**

- It is suggested that DTMU should consider establishing a systematic mentoring program where junior faculty members are paired with senior researchers to enhance research quality, securing international grants, and publishing in high-impact journals.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is suggested that consideration should be given to merging the Research Development and Support team into a single, cohesive group. This consolidation would streamline processes, make procedures more understandable for students and staff, and encourage greater engagement in research activities across the university.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Best Practices (if applicable):</b></p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions.</p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements  <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements  <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements  <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements         </p>
<p><b>6.3. Evaluation of Research Activities</b></p> <p>HEI has a system for evaluating and analysing the quality of research/creative-arts activities, and the productivity of scientific-research units and academic/scientific staff.</p> <p><b>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements</b></p> <p>There is a system to evaluate scientific productivity (Appendix 45), which examines the number of published articles, conferences, project proposals, involvement of doctoral students, reviews, and participation in international projects. (Appendix 45, p. 1). In the MEQRA, they describe their research evaluation process.</p> <p>DTMU have a thorough process for evaluating the quality of a proposed research project before the researcher or graduate student starts on a new research project, which could be beneficial to undergraduate students, graduate students, and more junior academic faculty members.</p> <p>They report that in the planning phase of a research project, they have at least one external expert review the project and after that it goes to the academic council. (MEQRA, p. 2). The reviews are also meant to stop academic staff and graduate students from inadvertently participating in predatory journals and conferences. (MEQRA, p. 2). They outline how and what is reviewed; however, there is no mention of publishing reports on the results of the reviews. Although individual research projects are reviewed for quality, it is not clear if SR units and academic and scientific are evaluated.</p> <p>However the process for evaluating research studies for academic staff is a relatively long process, which could result in faculty members missing opportunities to apply for grants. It is suggested that the institution develop a system for evaluating the quality of research that takes into account the level of experience of the researcher. Researchers with more experience may be able to avoid going through the research evaluation system and instead use the universal evaluation of scholarly work through review in impact factor journals and international conference review committees for their review of the quality of their research. This new system could also be developed to increase the mentoring of more junior researchers by more senior researchers and aspiring researchers, in order to encourage and support more research within the university academic faculty. This in turn could facilitate more high quality research by graduate students as well and more qualified supervisors for doctoral students.</p> <p><b>Evidences/indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SER</li> <li>Interviews</li> <li>Appendix 44 MEQRA</li> </ul>

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

## 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.

<b>7.1 Material Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 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.</li> <li>○ HEI offers environment necessary for implementing educational activities: sanitary units, natural light possibilities, and central heating system.</li> <li>○ Health and safety of students and staff is protected within the institution.</li> <li>○ HEI has adapted environment for people with special needs</li> </ul>
<b>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements</b>  DTMU has made significant efforts to ensure compliance with Standard 7.1, focusing on material resources to support educational and research activities however there are some challenging issues facing them mostly in regard to the recognized need to move to new premises.  As of August 2018, DTMU was authorized to carry out educational processes in two spaces (one owned, one with the right to use) and an additional non-educational space (a student dormitory) equipped for 369 students. The Rustavi campus has since been improved for educational purposes, with properties registered in the State of Ukraine's Public Registry database and assigned cadastral codes. Measurement drawings clearly separate study and support areas.  The university has renovated and equipped educational auditoriums and lobbies with updated equipment and furniture, ensuring that the number of auditoriums meets the needs of the maximum student capacity. Additionally, DTMU has expanded its clinical skills training centre by 180 square meters. Currently, the university utilizes 3346.71 square meters of educational space across three locations, which provide facilities such as libraries, simulation rooms, support areas, and bathrooms. These facilities are adequately equipped with heating and air conditioning. However, overall the facilities are in poor condition and limits the amount of 'free space' students can access to study either on their own or in self-organised peer-groups.

DTMU has signed cooperation agreements with clinics in Georgia to support the clinical component of their educational programs. These agreements ensure that the student-to-patient ratios in various clinical settings meet mandatory requirements, providing practical experience in therapeutic, surgical, obstetrics-gynaecology, paediatrics, and resuscitation/intensive care departments. They have also established international partners who offer exchange visits which any of the students can apply to.

DTMU has expanded its clinical skills training center, adding 180 sq.m. of space, resulting in a total of 3346.71 sq.m. dedicated to educational purposes. The Clinical Skills Center, located at a separate site, is well-equipped with resources such as an Abdominal Examination Trainer, SAM auscultation manikin, and electronic simulation tools like Body Interact and Practicum Script. The spacious rooms can accommodate up to 12 students per session, and are outfitted with appropriate dummies, mannequins, and simulators for developing and assessing clinical skills, as well as conducting OSCE examinations. However the Center is located off the main campus, making it challenging for students to fit in extra practice activities around their current teaching schedules due to the extra travel required. Additionally, DTMU has a small campus based educational research laboratory and an affiliation with JSC "Megalab," offering students access to modern laboratory technology.

Despite these efforts, challenges remain. The plan to build a new campus and hospital has been postponed for as yet an unknown length of time due to unforeseen circumstances. Current educational and research activities are distributed across two main campuses, leading to space limitations and a need for two-shift educational activities. Laboratories on campus are limited in both space and equipment, restricting student learning in laboratory practice. Given the requirement that "teaching/scientific-research laboratories should observe safety regulations," it is difficult determine how the smaller labs on DTMU campus are accessible in the event of an accident.

Health and safety measures are in place in most places with first aid and security staff ensuring the safety of students and staff. The signage around Fire Exits was not always clear however additional information confirmed that they had certification of compliance from the Emergency Management Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, No.0254572) with a process for training staff and students in safety procedures. Auditoriums, student workspaces, the library, examination centre, and administrative units are in poor condition and require renovation. Not all areas are adapted for students or academic staff with special needs.

However, as stated previously, the university lacks a comprehensive campus renovation plan, which is essential for addressing these ongoing issues and improving the overall learning environment.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

- SER
- Strategic development plan 2024-2030
- Interviews
- Appendix 47. Documentation confirming the ownership of real estate, extracted from the public register;
- Appendix 49. Movable property inventory materials;
- Appendix 48. Agreement concluded with practice/research-scientific facilities;
- Appendix 50. Mechanisms for fire safety, medical assistance detection and order protection.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Due to disruption to DTMU's plan for a new campus building there is an urgent need for a new strategy including a contingency plan should there be further delays to meet the requirements of ongoing programs and the needs of the student body. Addressing the campus issues will improve many infrastructural difficulties.
- Given that the criteria indicate that "teaching/scientific-research laboratories should observe safety regulations," all laboratory areas must be reviewed to ensure accessibility for persons with special needs. This will help safeguard the well-being of all students and staff.
- Laboratory areas with limited access, such as narrow corridors or rooms accessed through other rooms, should be carefully reviewed, as they may pose hazards during accidents or

<p>emergencies. Ensuring clear and safe access in these areas is crucial to not endanger students or staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>• The laboratories in the university campus building require renovation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Suggestions:</b></p> <p>Non-binding suggestions for further development</p>
<p><b>Best Practices (if applicable):</b></p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions</p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements  <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements  <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements         </p>
<p><b>7.2. Library Resources</b></p>
<p>Library environment, resources and service support effective implementation of educational and research activities, and HEI constantly works for its improvement.</p>
<p><b>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements</b></p> <p>The Daphne Hare Medical Library at DTMU is equipped with appropriate inventory, and its collection is adequate for all levels of medical education, including pre-diploma, post-diploma, and continuous professional development. It contains a range of resources in basic medical sciences, clinical sciences, socio-social, and behavioural sciences, all of which are needed for the current programmes.</p> <p>DTMU periodically updates the library collection with new editions of textbooks and other literature, and the resources are easily accessible to students and academic staff both on-site and remotely via the internet, with secured entry. The library has multiple memberships in societies and other international or national library resource providers, ensuring a comprehensive range of auxiliary resources for printing, copying, and digitizing materials. This includes membership of the Georgian Library Association, the Georgian Library Consortium, and participates in the "Electronic Information for Libraries - eIFL" project, which provides access to electronic resources and databases for both academic staff and students.</p> <p>The university uses Moodle for online learning, with an auto-update plug-in included. The digitization of the library collection has begun, and a student initiative has successfully established an e-reading room, which received positive recognition during the last accreditation visit. The library module on the 'lms.aieti.ge' portal allows for detailed uploading and categorization of digital and physical materials, enhancing resource accessibility.</p> <p>There have been some improvements recently with the addition of a new reading room in Rustavi and enhancements in technical and other resources and student surveys show this has been helpful. In addition as part of the move to IT technological support for learning and research there have been upgrades made to the IT infrastructure with additional IT security measures included.</p> <p>Whilst it is accepted that the future development strategy of the library emphasizes a stronger focus on the e-library to further support academic activities the library on the main campus requires significant improvements. It lacks essential spaces for staff, a reading hall, meeting rooms, and group working areas. While the library's book resources are good and suitably aligned with syllabi, and are available in</p>

both hard copy and electronic formats, the physical infrastructure needs to be upgraded to fully support effective learning.

The library staff are skilled and provide specialist assistance with international library databases, offering information about library resources and services, and guiding students and staff in finding appropriate literature and resources. They also conduct orientation sessions, counseling, workshops, and training to support effective use of the library's contribution to teaching and research activities.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

- SER
- Interview results
- Facility
- Appendix 51. Library information resources inventory materials
- Appendix 51.1 Documentation confirming involvement in the international electronic library network
- Appendix 52. Statistics of use of electronic library databases
- Appendix 53. Mechanisms for development and renewal of library resources and services.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Library space is limited, highlighting the need for a new building. Expanding these facilities is a priority to support the academic and research needs of students and staff.

#### **Suggestions:**

Non-binding suggestions for further development

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

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

#### **Evaluation**

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

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

#### **7.3 Information Resources**

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

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

DTMU has committed time and resources to developing good information resources to enhance its educational and research activities (accelerated during the Covid-19 pandemic.) The university's focus is to strengthen its educational and research positions, improve access to materials, and increase communication efficiency.

To support educational and research activities, DTMU has developed several e-resources which are integrated into the curriculum and used during clinical rotations and other training courses.

These are;

- Virtual Patient Platform (PBL VP-based cases at OpenLabyrinth3)
- Human Anatomy Assembled with 3D Technology (ANATOMY.TV)
- Anti-Plagiarism Program (Turnitin)
- Clinical Simulation with Body Interact Virtual Patients
- Practicum Script
- LabSter

DTMU has also invested in improving access to information resources by upgrading its infrastructure with new computers and IT technologies including online courses and exams. However, It was noted that computers are available in various areas of the medical school, with only a small percentage of older computers that are scheduled for replacement.

For internal and external communication, DTMU has implemented a new electronic management system "lms.dtmu.ge," which offers enhanced capabilities for process administration. This platform includes a comprehensive information base for students and lecturers, supports educational process planning, attendance, and evaluation management, and includes finance management and chancellery modules. The chancellery module allows for managing internal and external correspondence, template management.

The university's website, <https://dtmu.ge>, is bilingual, informative, and regularly updated. It supports external communication, disseminates university results and activities to a broader audience both domestically and internationally.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

- SER
- Interview resources
- Appendix 54

#### **Evaluation**

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

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

#### **Recommendations:**

None

- 

#### **Suggestions:**

Non-binding suggestions for further development

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

- The university should be commended for not only purchasing the "Body Interact" and "Practicum Script" e-resources but also for their effective integration of them into the curriculum. These resources are effectively utilized in both the basic science and practical stages of education, enhancing the learning experience.



#### 7.4 Financial Resources

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

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

DTMU has established an economically sustainable viable budget with input from its various structural units. The main sources of funding include tuition fees, grants from national and international funds, other permitted income from economic activities, and dividends from equity participation in other enterprises. The income from tuition fees, which is the primary funding source, has remained stable from 2019 to 2024. Additionally, income from other sources such as property leases, various commissions, administrative income, and dividends has been increasing annually, allowing the university to reinvest in the quality of its educational programs and other initiatives.

Despite the challenge posed by the budget year not aligning with the academic year, the planning process for income from student tuition fees effectively supports the university's programs. The diversified sources of funding have provided a stable financial base for the university over the past five years, demonstrating effective risk management and fund allocation.

The financial stability of DTMU is evident from the consistent increase in budget revenue and the strategic reinvestment in educational and infrastructural projects. The university's budget planning process is aligned with expenditure planning to ensure payment of all necessary expenses, including state taxes, salary obligations, scholarships, and payments to suppliers. The planning process allows for efficient and rational use of funds, with expenditure limits set for university subdivisions to control spending and the protection of a continuous reserve of 2.5 Million Lari.

The share of administrative expenses in the total budget has been between 6-15%, showing a downward trend over the years. The university's financial resources are sufficient to support its teaching, research, and other activities, ensuring sustainable development. There is an allocation of 6.5% of budget for research and scientific activities with a plan to increase to 8.9% over the next 7 years. The priorities for the 2024 budget include developing educational and informational resources, increasing cooperation with leading European universities, supporting scientific research activities, implementing infrastructural projects, improving the learning environment, raising employee qualifications, and supporting various initiatives such as scholarships and student projects.

The planned budget increases for 2024-2030 aim to support significant infrastructural investments, including the construction of a university clinic and a new campus.

DTMU's financial management system effectively controls the implementation of the budget, ensuring compliance with state legislation and university regulations. The Department of Strategic Management and Development oversees budget implementation, systematically managing income from students and other receivables and ensuring timely repayment. The university's financial situation is stable and growing, providing a solid foundation for its main activities both now and in the future.

The university maintains a transparent and open approach to its financial management, fostering accountability and confidence in its budgeting practices. This comprehensive approach suggests the likely presence of mechanisms such as external reviews and audits, supporting effective oversight and governance.

Overall, DTMU's budget is sufficient for the sustainability and development of its programs, with a clear plan for future growth and improvement. However, the lack of evidence for the planned university clinic and campus remains a significant concern.

#### **Evidences/indicators**

- SER
- Interview resources
- Strategic development plan 2024-2030
- HEI budget
- Appendix 55. HIE budget: 2024 (with attachments)
- Appendix 56. Dynamics of funding over the last 5 years
- Appendix 56.1 Financial reports of the pre-reporting period
- Appendix 57. Financial management and control system in DTMU

#### **Recommendations:**

None

#### **Suggestions:**

- It is suggested that for institutional sustainability DTMU continues to actively seek additional income resources apart from tuition fees from programs.

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

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

#### **Evaluation**

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

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