



NATIONAL CENTER FOR  
EDUCATIONAL QUALITY  
ENHANCEMENT

**Accreditation Expert Group Report on Cluster of Higher Education Programmes**

**Name of Educational Programme, Level of Education**

**Business Administration - MA**

**Business Administration – PhD**

**Name of Higher Education Institution**

**LEPL - Sokhumi State University**

Tbilisi  
2024

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### Information on the Higher educational Institution

Name of Institution Indicating its Organizational Legal Form	Sokhumi State University, Legal entity under Public Law
Identification Code of Institution	205224700
Type of the Institution	University

### Expert Panel Members

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## I. Information on the Cluster of Educational Programmes

	Programme 1	Programme 2
Name of the educational programme	Business Administration	Business Administration
Level of higher education	Master	PhD
Qualification to be awarded	Master of Business Administration	Ph.D in Business Administration
Name and code of the detailed field	0413 Management and Administration	0413 Management and Administration
Indication of the right to provide teaching of subject/subjects/group of subjects of the relevant level of general education <sup>1</sup>	-	-
Language of instruction	Georgian	Georgian
Number of ECTS credits	120 ECTS	50 credits
Programme Status (Accredited/Non-accredited/Conditionally Accredited/New/International Accreditation) Indicating Relevant Decision (number, date)	Decision No. 95 of December 8, 2018 of the Educational Authorization Council	2019 of the Board of Educational Authorization No. 24 of January 22 decision

<sup>1</sup> In case of Integrated Bachelor's–Master's Teacher Training Educational Programme and Teacher Training Educational Programme

## II. Accreditation Report Executive Summary

- **General Information on the Cluster of Education Programmes<sup>2</sup>**

Two educational programs are grouped in this cluster - Business Administration Master's program and Business Administration Doctoral Program. They operate at Sokhumi State University, Faculty of Business and Social Sciences. Business Administration Master's degree program received its first accreditation on June 22, 2015 by decision N71 for a period of 5 years and was implemented in an accredited mode until June 22, 2020. Until June 22, 2020. It has been carried out in an authorized mode since.

The Business Administration Ph.D program was accredited by decision N39 of February 12, 2013. According to decision N44 of March 30, 2018, accreditation was refused. According to decision No. 24 of January 22, 2019, accreditation was granted again. In accordance with the order No. 396587 of April 23, 2021, the monitoring of the fulfillment of the conditions of accreditation of the doctoral program "Business Administration" was carried out; on August 22, 2022, decision N930581 terminated the administrative proceedings regarding the monitoring of the Business Administration Doctoral Program.

- **Overview of the Accreditation Site Visit**

The accreditation site visit for Sokhumi State University's Business Administration cluster programs took place from September 9-10, 2024, in Tbilisi, Georgia. The evaluation focused on two programs: Master in Business Administration and Ph.D in Business Administration. An expert panel organized by the National Center for Education Quality Enhancement (NCEQE), conducted the assessment. The panel consisted of five members, including an international expert as the chair, three field specialists, a higher education quality assurance expert, and a student representative. Two NCEQE representatives also joined the two-day site visit to provide support.

The evaluation process was comprehensive, involving document review, a preparatory meeting, and a structured on-site visit following an agreed agenda with SSU. The panel conducted interviews with various stakeholders, including university administration, academic staff, students, alumni, and employers. They also toured the institution's facilities and resources.

Key aspects of the visit included:

- **Master's Program Overview:** The Master in Business Administration program at SSU comprises 120 ECTS credits over four semesters. It includes 110 credits of compulsory courses (including a 25-credit master's thesis and 5-credit professional practice) and 10 credits of elective courses.
- **Doctoral Program:** The PhD in Business Administration program spans three years (six semesters) and includes a 50-credit educational component and a scientific-research

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<sup>2</sup> When providing general information related to the programme, it is appropriate to also present the quantitative data analysis of the educational programme.

component. Graduates are awarded the academic degree of Doctor of Business Administration upon accumulating 180 credits.

- Program Changes: Both programs have undergone recent changes to align with the sectoral characteristics of higher education in business administration, as developed by the National Center for Education Quality Development in 2023.

The visit was characterized by a cooperative atmosphere and efficient management by SSU. At the conclusion of the site visit, the panel chair shared their initial findings with the university, providing preliminary feedback on the programs under review.

### ● **Brief Overview of Education Programme Compliance with the Standards**

Sokhumi State University offers Master's and PhD programs in Business Administration that generally comply with established educational standards set by NCEQE as per the national qualification framework. The Master's program provides education for building key competencies in business management and administration, while the PhD program focuses on developing research skills and contributing to the scientific field. While these programs substantially meet the required standards, there are some recommendations and suggestions for further improvement to enhance their quality and alignment with international best practices. Standard one is substantially met with some suggestions .

#### **Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)**

##### **Standard 1 Substantially complies with requirements**

- Standard 1.1 Substantially complies with requirements
- Standard 1.2 Complies with requirements
- Standard 1.3 Substantially complies with requirements
- Standard 1.4 Substantially complies with requirements
- Standard 1.5 Substantially complies with requirements

#### **Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)**

##### **Standard 1 Substantially complies with requirements**

- Standard 1.1 Substantially complies with requirements
- Standard 1.2 Complies with requirements
- Standard 1.3 Substantially complies with requirements
- Standard 1.4 Substantially complies with requirements
- Standard 1.5 Substantially complies with requirements

#### **Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)**

##### **Standard 2 Complies with requirements**

- Standard 2.1 Complies with requirements

- **Standard 2.2 Complies with requirements**
- **Standard 2.3 Complies with requirements**
- **Standard 2.4 Complies with requirements**

**Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)**

**Standard 2 Complies with requirements**

- **Standard 2.1 Complies with requirements**
- **Standard 2.2 Complies with requirements**
- **Standard 2.3 Complies with requirements**
- **Standard 2.4 Complies with requirements**

**Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)**

**Standard 3 Substantially complies with requirements**

- **Standard 3.1 Substantially complies with requirements**
- **Standard 3.2 Complies with requirements**

**Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)**

**Standard 3 Substantially complies with requirements**

- **Standard 3.1 Substantially complies with requirements**
- **Standard 3.2 Complies with requirements**

**Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)**

**Standard 4 Substantially complies with requirements**

- **Standard 4.1 Substantially complies with requirements**
- **Standard 4.2 Substantially complies with requirements**
- **Standard 4.3 Complies with requirements**
- **Standard 4.4 Complies with requirements**
- **Standard 4.5 Complies with requirements**

**Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)**

**Standard 4 Substantially complies with requirements**

- **Standard 4.1 Substantially complies with requirements**
- **Standard 4.2 Substantially complies with requirements**
- **Standard 4.3 Complies with requirements**
- **Standard 4.4 Complies with requirements**
- **Standard 4.5 Complies with requirements**

**Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)**

#### **Standard 5 Substantially complies with requirements**

- Standard 5.1 Substantially complies with requirements
- Standard 5.2 Complies with requirements
- Standard 5.3 Substantially complies with requirements.

#### **Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)**

#### **Standard 5 Substantially complies with requirements**

- Standard 5.1 Substantially complies with requirements
- Standard 5.2 Complies with requirements
- Standard 5.3 Substantially complies with requirements

- **Recommendations**

#### **General Cluster Recommendations**

Standard 1.3.1 It is recommended to implement a more structured peer evaluation system, involving external experts to regularly review and provide feedback on the program's learning outcomes and assessment methods.

Standard 1.3.2 It is recommended to develop a more comprehensive system for tracking and analyzing graduate employment dynamics, including detailed information on positions and career progression within their specialties, to better align program outcomes with industry needs. The current data and information provided lacked the necessary rigor in this regard.

Standard 1.5.1 The panel recommends to increase collaboration with foreign educational institutions to facilitate guest lectures by international faculty and provide opportunities for academic staff to participate in international exchanges, thereby enriching the curriculum with global perspectives.

Standard 1.5.2 The panel strongly recommends that HEI must invest in digital technologies to ensure access to up-to-date materials of study courses, especially digital access remotely for faculty and students outside university campus.

Standard 1.5.3 It is recommended to strengthen the practice of benchmarking learning outcomes against international standards to ensure global competitiveness. Panel failed to find any convincing response on the benchmarking process, outcome and implementation for the programs put for accreditations.



Standard 3.1 It is recommended the university ensure that students have access to the latest English-language literature.

Standard 4.1 It is recommended that the university must ensure that the academic and visiting staff ability to achieve the learning outcomes with appropriate teaching methods and activities, so it is important for the university to train the academic and visiting staff in achieving the learning outcomes with the proper teaching-learning methods.

Standard 4.2. HEI should give some training in the direction of the coaching of scientific research/thesis writing, for ensuring supervisors of theses have the latest knowledge.

Standard 5.1 It is recommended that within the framework of self-evaluation of the educational programs when evaluating the content of the programs and study courses, the University should detect and prevent shortcomings: in the process of development of programs learning outcomes to better align program outcomes with industry needs and to ensure global competitiveness; in selecting compulsory literature to reflect the latest developments in the field, in allocation of credits and contact hours ensuring they align with course content and complexity effectively; in selecting teaching/learning methods as well as in assessment methods, assessment rubrics; in the process of doctoral and master theses development.

Standard 5.3.1 It is recommended that master and doctoral students evaluate the implementation of the scientific-research component and scientific supervision.

Standard 5.3.2 The panel recommends that at the end of each semester students evaluate the main (mandatory) study courses.

### **Recommendations for Individual Programmes**

#### **Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)**

Standard 1.1 Considering the 1st and 3rd purpose of the Master programme, the programme intends to achieve these goals without dedicated modules on innovative topics such as Artificial Intelligence, Data Analytics, or Cybersecurity. These areas are becoming increasingly crucial in modern business operations and decision-making processes. Furthermore, the programme must ensure that graduates are truly prepared for the rapidly evolving business world.

Standard 1.4 There is no explicit mention of incorporating key issues of internationalization. Considering the global nature of business, it would be beneficial to integrate more international perspectives and case studies into the curriculum. Increased staff and student mobility can facilitate this process further.

Standard 1.5 To enhance the program's quality, it is recommended that the university conduct a thorough review of credit allocation and contact hours, ensuring they align with course content and complexity effectively.

### **Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)**

Standard 1.1 The doctoral program objectives should be rephrased as some of the stated objectives are not phrased as program objectives These objectives require rephrasing in line with the suggestions and recommendations provided by the panel above.

Standard 1.4 There is no specific mention of how new research findings and modern scientific achievements are incorporated into the curriculum. Regularly updating course content to reflect the latest developments in the field would further strengthen the programmes' relevance and quality.

Standard 5.3 Comparison with similar programmes of foreign universities/benchmarking document for Doctoral Programme in Business Administration should be developed in order to apply best international practices.

Standard 5.3 Within the program monitoring framework program learning outcomes evaluation report should be developed by Quality Assurance service with cooperation of program personnel using existing methodology.

### **● Suggestions for the Programme Development**

#### **General Cluster Suggestions**

Standard 1.2 While the programme demonstrates strong compliance overall, there are areas for potential improvement. One suggestion would be to enhance the consistency of learning outcomes across different levels of programmes within the same cluster, ensuring a clear progression in content complexity and difficulty i.e. from Master programme to a PhD.

Standard 3.1 It is suggested that the university should increase the number of students participating in exchange programs every year.

Standard 4.2 During reviewing the MBA and PhD theses there were some problems with academic writing styles, it would be good if the university introduces one of the academic writing styles (APA, Chicago or other) and more carefully follow it.

Standard 4.3 It would be good if all academic personnel have profiles on platforms such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, ORCID, Scopus, or Clarivate. The university should intensify its efforts in this area, as visibility on these platforms is crucial for enhancing the scientific productivity of the staff.

Standard 4.4 However, it would be good if a stationary computer and a projector were available in every auditorium, because the teacher from the professor's office has to bring a laptop and projector to the classroom during the lecture.

Standard 4.5 It would be nice if the faculty should review the budget planning methodology and some portion of income should be considered from BBA programs, for the PhD and MBA budget, because the programs serve BBA scientific sustainability as well.

### **Suggestions for Individual Programmes**

#### **Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)**

Standard 1.2 Additionally, the master programme management could focus on strengthening the mechanisms for communicating learning outcomes to key stakeholders, particularly emphasizing how these outcomes translate into practical skills and competencies valued in the job market.

Standard 2.2 It would be good if the university would create some type of innovation laboratory at the faculty.

Standard 4.2 It would be good if Master theses supervisor's role is declared in some regulation document more clearly.

#### **Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)**

Standard 1.1 Regarding the Doctoral programme, the first point could be rephrased for clarity, as it combines multiple ideas in a somewhat confusing manner. The fourth point about communication could be more specific about the types of audiences (academic, professional, etc.) and contexts for presenting research.

Standard 1.2 In order to improve the program, more explicitly link the learning outcomes to current and future employment opportunities for graduates, perhaps by conducting a formal labor market analysis and incorporating feedback from recent alumni. This would help ensure the outcomes remain relevant and prepare students for academic and industry careers.

Standard 1.4 There is no specific mention of how new research findings and modern scientific achievements are incorporated into the curriculum. Regularly updating course content to reflect the latest developments in the field would further strengthen the programmes' relevance and quality.

Standard 2.2 It would be good if the credits of the study component in the program at the doctoral level would increase (for example, if it becomes 46 or 52), which would allow doctoral students to choose courses that would improve their transferable skills.

Standard 4.2 It would be good if the supervisors pay more attention to adequately reflect the research methodology in the doctoral theses.

- **Brief Overview of the Best Practices (if applicable)<sup>3</sup>**

N/A

- **Information on Sharing or Not Sharing the Argumentative Position of the HEI**

Based on the HEI review, no inaccuracies or factual errors were identified in the expert panel report. The HEI has acknowledged all recommendations and suggestions provided by the panel, and consequently, no modifications to the report are required or have been implemented.

- **In case of re-accreditation, it is important to provide a brief overview of the achievements and/or the progress (if applicable)**

Business Administration Master's program received its first accreditation on June 22, 2015 by the Accreditation Council's decision N71 for a period of 5 years and was implemented in an accredited mode until June 22, 2020. Since June 22, 2020 It has been carried out in an authorized mode. The program was brought into compliance with the sectoral document developed by the Georgian National Center for Education Quality Enhancement - sectoral benchmarks of higher education of business administration, 2023.

The Business Administration PhD program first was accredited by decision of the Accreditation Council N39 on February 12, 2013. According to the decision of the Accreditation Council N44 of March 30, 2018, accreditation was refused. According to the decision of the Accreditation Council No. 24 of January 22, 2019, accreditation was granted again. In accordance with the order No. 396587 of April 23, 2021, the monitoring of the fulfillment of the conditions of accreditation of the doctoral program "Business Administration" was carried out by the expert group of Georgian National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement. On August 22, 2022, decision of the Accreditation Council # 930581 terminated the administrative proceedings regarding the monitoring of the Business Administration Doctoral Program. The program lasts for 3 years (6 semesters) and includes a study component of the program of 50 credits (ECTS) and a scientific-research component. The educational component was increased to 50 credits.

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<sup>3</sup> A practice that is exceptionally effective and that can serve as a benchmark or example for other educational programme/programmes.

#### Evaluation approaches for the accreditation experts:

The components of the accreditation standards are evaluated using the following two approaches:

1. Cluster and individual evaluation<sup>4</sup>
2. Cluster evaluation<sup>5</sup>

Standard/Component	Assessment approaches:
<b>1. Educational Programme Objectives, Learning Outcomes and their Compliance with the Programme</b>	
1.1. Programme Objectives	Cluster and individual
1.2 Programme Learning Outcomes	Cluster and individual
1.3. Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes	Cluster

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<sup>4</sup> **Evaluation Approaches:** Describe, analyse, and evaluate the compliance of each educational programme grouped in the cluster with the requirements of the corresponding component of the standard. Also, you can specify information about an educational programme that is different from the common and basic characteristics of educational programmes grouped in the cluster.

<sup>5</sup> **Assessment approaches:** In case of necessity, describe, analyse and evaluate compliance of each education programme in the cluster with the requirements of this component of the standard. Also, you can indicate the information on the education programme, distinguished from the general and major characteristics of the education programmes in a cluster.

1.4 Structure and Content of Educational Programme	Cluster and individual
1.5 Academic Course/Subject	Cluster and individual
<b>2. Methodology and Organisation of Teaching, Adequacy of Evaluation of Programme Mastering</b>	
2.1. Programme Admission Preconditions	Cluster and individual
2.2. The Development of Practical, Scientific/Research/Creative/Performing and Transferable Skills	Cluster
2.3. Teaching and Learning Methods	Cluster
2.4. Student Evaluation	Cluster
<b>3. Student Achievements, Individual Work with them</b>	
3.1. Student Consulting and Support Services	Cluster
3.2. Master's and Doctoral Student Supervision	Cluster
<b>4. Providing Teaching Resources</b>	
4.1. Human Resources	Cluster and individual
4.2. Qualification of Supervisors of Master's and Doctoral Students	Cluster and individual
4.3. Professional Development of Academic, Scientific and Invited Staff	Cluster
4.4. Material Resources	Cluster and individual
4.5. Programme/Faculty/School Budget and Programme Financial Sustainability	Cluster and individual
<b>5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities</b>	
5.1. Internal Quality Evaluation	Cluster
5.2. External Quality Evaluation	Cluster
5.3. Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review	Cluster



### III. Compliance of the Programme with Accreditation Standards

#### 1. Educational Programme Objectives, Learning Outcomes and their Compliance with the Programme

A programme has clearly established objectives and learning outcomes, which are logically connected to each other. Programme objectives are consistent with the mission, objectives and strategic plan of the institution. Programme learning outcomes are assessed on a regular basis to improve the programme. The content and consistent structure of the programme ensure the achievement of the set goals and expected learning outcomes.

Educational programmes grouped in a cluster are logically interrelated to each other in line with the study fields and evolve according to the respective levels of higher education.

##### 1.1 Programme Objectives

Programme objectives consider the specificity of the field of study, level and an educational programme, and define the set of knowledge, skills and competences a programme aims to develop in graduate students. They also illustrate the contribution of the programme to the development of the field and society.

#### Cluster and individual evaluation

##### Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component

The Master's and Doctoral programmes in Business Administration at Sokhumi State University demonstrate good compliance with Standard 1.1. Both programs have clearly established, realistic, and achievable objectives that align with the university's mission and strategy. The programs aim to prepare highly qualified specialists with deep, systematic knowledge and competencies required in the labor market, reflecting the specificity of business administration and the respective educational levels for Master and PhD programme.

In general, the objectives consider local and international market trends, as well as industry requirements, ensuring graduates are equipped for the evolving business landscape. Both programs contribute to field and societal development by fostering innovative thinking, and research skills especially for the PhD programme. The Master's program focuses on practical application and adaptability, while the Doctoral program emphasizes advanced / independent research skills and knowledge creation.

The objectives are publicly accessible and shared by all stakeholders, including academic staff, students, and employers. The programs' learning outcomes logically relate to these objectives and describe the knowledge, skills, and autonomy students will acquire, ensuring measurability and achievability. Overall, the programs demonstrate a comprehensive



approach to meeting the requirements of Standard 1.1 and the national qualifications framework, preparing graduates for professional success and academic advancement.

### **Description and Analysis - Business Administration, Master**

Certain key aspects in the field of business administration appears to be less visible in the master program's objectives. For example, the 1st and 3rd purpose of the Master programme, the programme intends to achieve these goals without dedicated modules on innovative and modern technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Data Analytics, or Cybersecurity. These areas are becoming increasingly crucial in modern business operations and decision-making processes. Furthermore, the programme must ensure that graduates are truly prepared for the rapidly evolving business world and it is difficult without exposure to these emerging technologies and methodologies that are reshaping industries globally.

The SSU's MBA program appears to have good alignment with international standards as per the sectoral benchmarking. The program objectives state an aim to prepare graduates with "deep and systematic knowledge" in business administration, which is in line with expectations for master's level education. The program objectives outlines developing practical skills and the ability to adapt to changing business environments, which aligns with the applied focus of many international MBA programs. The program promises to consider local labor market demands and international trends, which is important for relevance and employability of graduates.

### **Description and Analysis - Business Administration, Ph.D**

As per the information provided in the SER and during panel's site-visit it was discussed that doctoral programs objective should be rephrased because they are written as objectives of students and not as objectives of programs for example the purpose of the program is mentioned "...to obtain knowledge...to be able to and etc." these appears to be student objectives. There is need to rephrase it as the aim of the program objective/purpose is to prepare the highly qualified graduates who will be able to.....

The Ph.D program objectives highlight scientific research with a limited emphasize on original contribution to knowledge and theory development. This is a crucial aspect of doctoral-level education internationally and should be effectively implemented in this program. The program appears to place a good emphasis on developing cutting-edge research skills and methodologies but limited teaching pedagogies that is also essential for doctoral programs. The program objectives do not explicitly address internationalization aspects other than joining international research conferences and events. Top international Ph.D programs often emphasize global business perspectives, cross-cultural research, and opportunities for international collaborations or exchanges.

While, publication and conference participation is mentioned, the program could place greater emphasis on preparing students to publish in top-tier international journals and present at leading academic conferences, which is a key expectation in many international doctoral programs. Additionally, the program could strengthen its interdisciplinary focus, incorporating insights from related fields such as economics, psychology, or data science, which is increasingly common in leading international business Ph.D programs. Ethical leadership and social responsibility aspects are mentioned but could be more prominently featured in the program objectives, aligning with growing international emphasis on responsible management education.

### **Evidences/Indicators**

- Master of Business Administration Program and Syllabus;
- PhD in Business Administration Program and Syllabus;
- Mission of the university;
- University Charter;
- Syllabus of programs;
- Curriculum map;
- University website [sou.edu.ge](http://sou.edu.ge)
- Panel visit

**General recommendations of the cluster:** None

**General suggestions of the cluster:** None

**Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:** None

#### **Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)**

##### **Recommendation(s):**

Considering the 1st and 3rd purpose of the Master programme, the programme intends to achieve these goals without dedicated modules on innovative topics such as Artificial Intelligence, Data Analytics, or Cybersecurity. These areas are becoming increasingly crucial in modern business operations and decision-making processes. Furthermore, the programme must ensure that graduates are truly prepared for the rapidly evolving business world.

## **Programme 2 (Business Administration, PhD)**

### **Recommendation(s):**

The doctoral program objectives should be rephrased as some of the stated objectives are not phrased as program objectives. These objectives requires rephrasing in line with the suggestions and recommendations provided by the panel above.

### **Suggestion(s):**

Regarding the Doctoral programme, the first point could be rephrased for clarity, as it combines multiple ideas in a somewhat confusing manner. The fourth point about communication could be more specific about the types of audiences (academic, professional, etc.) and contexts for presenting research.

## **Evaluation <sup>6</sup>**

<b>Component 1.1 - Programme Objectives</b>	<b>Complies with requirements</b>	<b>Substantially complies the requirements</b>	<b>Partially complies with requirements</b>	<b>Does not comply with requirements</b>
<b>Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **1.2 Programme Learning Outcomes**

- The learning outcomes of the programme are logically related to the programme objectives and the specificity of the field of study.
- Programme learning outcomes describe knowledge, skills, and/or sense of responsibility and autonomy which students gain upon completion of the programme.

## **Cluster and individual evaluation**

### **Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component**

Based on the information provided in the SER, programme documentation and discussion during the HEI visit, the education programmes' learning outcomes are logically connected to their objectives and align with the specifics of the study field for both the Master and Doctoral

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<sup>6</sup> Evaluation is performed for each programme separately.

programme. The outcomes effectively describe the knowledge, skills, and competencies students acquire upon completion. The programme's learning outcomes correspond well to its aims and cover the main areas of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities envisaged by the programme content. They are measurable, achievable, and realistic, aligning with the appropriate qualification level as per the national qualification framework.

Based on the information provided in the SER, programme documentation and discussion with the visit, the education programme demonstrates substantial compliance with the requirements of Standard 1.2 for Master and doctoral programme. Additionally, both the programmes align with the national qualifications framework.

### **Description and Analysis - Business Administration, Master**

The master programme's learning outcomes are consistent with employment demands for graduates and enable further education at higher levels. Notably, the development of learning outcomes involves collaboration among various stakeholders, including academic staff, students, graduates, and employers. This inclusive approach ensures that the outcomes remain relevant to both the field of study and labour market demands.

The MBA program at SSU demonstrates several strengths in its learning outcomes. The outcomes are logically aligned with the program objectives and field of business administration. They cover key areas like strategic management, leadership, decision-making, and research skills expected at the master's level. The outcomes describe specific knowledge, skills, and competencies students will gain, such as analyzing business trends, formulating strategies, and conducting research. There is an emphasis on higher-order cognitive skills like critical analysis, strategic thinking, and independent decision-making appropriate for a master's program. The outcomes appear measurable and achievable through the program structure of coursework, practice, and thesis components. They align with the National Qualifications Framework for the master's level and cover the scope of sectoral benchmarks for business administration. The outcomes appear to enable graduates to pursue further education at the doctoral level or enter professional careers. Stakeholders including faculty, students, alumni and employers were involved in developing the outcomes.

There are some areas that require careful considerations, such as the outcomes could more explicitly address skills in emerging areas like digital business, sustainability, and global management to better align with current market demands. More specificity on quantitative and analytical skills development could strengthen the outcomes. The outcomes could more clearly articulate how they build on undergraduate-level competencies. There is limited information on how the outcomes are communicated to stakeholders beyond their involvement in development.

Overall, the MBA program learning outcomes appear to largely comply with Standard 1.2, but some enhancements could further strengthen their relevance and measurability that is clearly mentioned under suggestions and recommendations.

### **Description and Analysis - Business Administration, Ph.D**

The learning outcomes of the Ph.D program appear to be logically related to the program objectives and cover key knowledge, skills, and competencies expected at the doctoral level. In general, the outcomes are aligned with the National Qualifications Framework and seem measurable and achievable with some exceptions. For example, there is limited information on how the outcomes specifically correspond to labor market demands that understandably academic positions predominantly. Additionally, while it is mentioned that academic staff and employers were involved in developing the outcomes, there is no detail provided on the collaborative process or input from students and graduates.

The Ph.D in Business Administration program demonstrates to have build clear program learning outcomes. The outcomes appropriately reflect doctoral-level expectations of advanced knowledge, independent research skills, and contribution to the relevant scientific field. There is a clear focus on developing research capabilities and analytical skills using cutting-edge methods. The outcomes emphasize critical thinking, complex problem-solving, and generation of new ideas/approaches. Academic integrity and research ethics are clearly addressed. Teaching and educational skills are included, preparing graduates for academic careers in general but limited information were provided on how it is actually implemented. The outcomes align with the National Qualifications Framework descriptors for the doctoral level.

However, there are some areas for improvement such as some of the outcomes are quite broad and could benefit from more specificity in terms of the business administration knowledge and skills to be developed. For example, there is limited mention of how the outcomes prepare graduates for non-academic leadership roles in business. The outcomes do not clearly articulate how they build upon and exceed master's level competencies. There is no explicit mention of interdisciplinary perspectives or emerging business trends. While the Ph.D program learning outcomes generally comply with Standard 1.2, providing more specificity, enhancing their measurability, and more clearly differentiating them from master's level outcomes would strengthen their alignment with the standard.

### **Evidences/Indicators**

- Educational programs and syllabi;
- Mapping of program objectives and learning outcomes;
- Documentation (protocols) confirming the participation of interested persons involved in the preparation of learning outcomes of the program;

- Analysis of the labor market and employers' requirements;
- SSU website [www.sou.edu.ge](http://www.sou.edu.ge);
- Panel interviews.

**General recommendations of the cluster:** None

**General suggestions of the cluster:**

While the programme demonstrates strong compliance overall, there are areas for potential improvement. One suggestion would be to enhance the consistency of learning outcomes across different levels of programmes within the same cluster, ensuring a clear progression in content complexity and difficulty i.e. from Master programme to a PhD.

**Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes:**

**Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)**

**Suggestion(s):** Additionally, the master programme management could focus on strengthening the mechanisms for communicating learning outcomes to key stakeholders, particularly emphasizing how these outcomes translate into practical skills and competencies valued in the job market.

**Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)**

**Suggestion(s):** In order to improve the program, more explicitly link the learning outcomes to current and future employment opportunities for graduates, perhaps by conducting a formal labor market analysis and incorporating feedback from recent alumni. This would help ensure the outcomes remain relevant and prepare students for academic and industry careers.

**Evaluation**

Component 1.2 Programme Learning Outcomes	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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### 1.3 Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes

- Evaluation mechanisms of the programme learning outcomes are defined. The programme learning outcomes assessment process consists of defining, collecting and analyzing data necessary to measure learning outcomes.
- Programme learning outcomes assessment results are utilized for the improvement of the programme.

#### Cluster and individual evaluation

#### Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component

The Master's and Doctoral Programs in Business Administration demonstrate a good compliance with Standard 1.3 regarding evaluation mechanisms for program learning outcomes. The programs have established a comprehensive assessment plan that incorporates both direct and indirect evaluation methods, ensuring consistent and transparent evaluation of learning outcomes. The assessment cycle includes defining, collecting, and analyzing data at regular intervals, taking into account the specific characteristics of business education at the master's and doctoral levels. The programs have set clear benchmarks for each learning outcome and involve external stakeholders, such as employers and graduates, in the evaluation process through surveys. Academic and invited staff are familiar with the assessment methods and receive training to develop skills in elaborating, measuring, and analyzing learning outcomes. The evaluation results are actively used to improve the programs, with mechanisms in place to modify content, learning outcomes, assessment systems, and teaching resources as needed.

There is need to reconsider the peer evaluation system, HEI should implement a more structured evaluation system involving external experts to regularly review and provide feedback on the program's learning outcomes and assessment methods. Panel was not convinced with input provided by alumni and employer representatives of the specific and brief contributions for developing both master and doctoral programme.

Additionally, there is a need for a more comprehensive system for tracking and analyzing graduate employment dynamics, including detailed information on positions and career progression within their specialties, to better align program outcomes with industry needs. The current data and information provided lacked the necessary rigor in this regard.

#### Evidences/Indicators

- Panel interviews,
- Mechanism for evaluating the results of university studies;
- Clustered educational programs and their learning outcomes assessment plans;
- Curriculum maps;
- Graduate and employer survey results;
- Syllabi of training courses;
- Labor market analysis.

**General recommendations of the cluster:** To further enhance the programs, two recommendations can be made:

- It is recommended to implement a more structured peer evaluation system, involving external experts to regularly review and provide feedback on the program's learning outcomes and assessment methods.
- It is recommended to develop a more comprehensive system for tracking and analyzing graduate employment dynamics, including detailed information on positions and career progression within their specialties, to better align program outcomes with industry needs. The current data and information provided lacked the necessary rigor in this regard.

**General suggestions of the cluster:** None

**Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:** None

## Evaluation

Component 1.3 Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



#### 1.4. Structure and Content of Educational Programme

- The programme is designed according to HEI's methodology for planning, designing and developing of educational programmes.
  - The programme structure is consistent and logical. The content and structure ensure the achievement of the programme learning outcomes. The qualification to be awarded is corresponding to the programme content and learning outcomes.
- 

#### Cluster and individual evaluation

#### **Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component**

The Master's and PhD programmes in Business Administration demonstrate substantial compliance with the requirements outlined in Standard 1.4. Both programmes have been developed according to the university's established methodology for planning, designing, and developing educational programmes. The structure of the programmes is consistent and logical, with content and structure designed to ensure the achievement of programme learning outcomes. The qualifications to be granted are consistent with the content and learning outcomes of the programmes, aligning with the national qualifications framework. The programmes' content and structure take into account various factors, including labour market requirements and stakeholder feedback, indicating a collaborative development process. The credit allocation for both programmes adheres to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), with appropriate distribution and workload for students across semesters. For both programs, while the SER indicates stakeholder involvement in program development, more specific evidence of how different stakeholders (especially employers and alumni) contribute to ongoing program refinement would strengthen the case for program relevance and quality.

#### **Description and Analysis - Business Administration, Master**

The Master's program, in particular, emphasizes deep theoretical knowledge and practical activities in business administration. However, to further improve and develop the programs, one specific recommendation is given in this regard. While the programmes appear comprehensive, there is no explicit mention of incorporating key issues of internationalization. Considering the global nature of business, it would be beneficial to integrate more international perspectives and case studies into the curriculum. Increased staff and student mobility can facilitate this process further if managed effectively.

The Master's program in Business Administration at SSU demonstrates several strengths in its structure and content. It follows the university's approved methodology for program planning and development. The 120-credit, 4-semester structure aligns with standard expectations for

a master's degree. There is a logical progression with 110 credits of core courses and 10 credits of electives. The inclusion of a 5-credit professional practice component and a 25-credit master's thesis supports practical skill development and research capabilities.

However, there are some areas of concern and opportunities for improvement, for example, limited elective options: With only 10 credits (8.3% of the program) dedicated to electives, students may have restricted opportunities to specialize or pursue individual interests within business administration. Unclear alignment with sectoral benchmarks, the panel was not convinced during the site visit on how the program aligns with national qualification frameworks or sectoral benchmarks for business administration set by NCEQE. Although, some information on internationalization is provided but there is no concrete information on how the program incorporates international business perspectives or prepares students for global careers. To strengthen the program, SSU could consider expanding on elective options to allow for greater specialization and alignment with emerging business trends.

#### **Description and Analysis - Business Administration, Ph.D**

The Ph.D program emphasizes deep theoretical knowledge that includes both educational and scientific research components. However, to further improve and develop the programs, one specific recommendation is given in this regard. Although the programs involve qualified academic staff, there is no specific mention of how new research findings and modern scientific achievements are incorporated into the curriculum. Regularly updating course content to reflect the latest developments in the field would further strengthen the programmes' relevance and quality. Panel was not convinced of the impact created by the research scholarship especially through the doctoral programme research.

Additionally, at the doctoral level teaching as per the new benchmark document, university is expected to prepare HEI teachers/professors. Considering this, they should include advanced teaching methods in mandatory courses for the doctoral program.

There are several key highlights of the Ph.D program in Business Administration offered at SSU. For example, it follows the university's approved instructions for doctoral program development. The 180-credit, 6-semester structure is appropriate for a doctoral level program. There is a balance between coursework (50 credits) and research components. Naturally, the research components get more emphasis to cover key cognitive and scientific academic skills including some didactical/pedagogical skills for a potential academic career. The program includes both compulsory (32 credits) and optional (18 credits) subjects, allowing for some customization.

Considering a critical analysis on the specific components of the Ph.D program, the scientific research component lacks specific details on structure, milestones, or credit allocation. The information provided in SER and during site visit appear to be limited on the dissertation preparation, supervision, and defense processes. It is important to consider a written policy document including specific details on the key processes. The SER does not provide detailed information on the specific learning outcomes expected at the doctoral level or how they align with NCEQE standards for business administration.

#### **Evidences/Indicators**

- Educational programs and syllabi;
- The methodology of planning, development and development of the master's program -
- approved by the Academic Council (Resolution No. 05/01-362, 12.10.2017);
- SSU website: [www.sou.edu.ge](http://www.sou.edu.ge);
- Panel interviews.

**General recommendations of the cluster:** None

**General suggestion of the cluster:** None

#### **Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes:**

##### **Programme 1 (Business Administration, Masters)**

##### **Recommendation(s):**

- There is no explicit mention of incorporating key issues of internationalization. Considering the global nature of business, it would be beneficial to integrate more international perspectives and case studies into the curriculum. Increased staff and student mobility can facilitate this process further.

##### **Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)**

##### **Recommendation(s):**

- The PhD programs should prepare HEI teachers/professors as well so it means they should include Modern teaching methods, in mandatory courses for doctoral students.

##### **Suggestion(s):**

- There is no specific mention of how new research findings and modern scientific achievements are incorporated into the curriculum. Regularly updating course content to reflect the latest developments in the field would further strengthen the programmes' relevance and quality.

## Evaluation

Component 1.4 Structure and Content of Educational Programme	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 1.5. Academic Course/Subject

- The content of the academic course / subject and the number of credits ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes defined by this course / subject.
- The content and the learning outcomes of the academic course/subject of the main field of study ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes of the programme.
- The study materials indicated in the syllabus ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes of the programme.

## Cluster and individual evaluation

### Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component

The Master's and Doctoral programs in Business Administration at Sokhumi demonstrate good alignment with the requirements of Standard 1.5. In general, the content and credit allocation of courses ensure the achievement of defined learning outcomes, with a well-structured curriculum that progresses from introductory to advanced topics. The programs offer a comprehensive range of subjects such as corporate social responsibility, reflecting current industry trends, but limited innovative courses like advanced digital technologies i.e. artificial intelligence and data analytics. The learning materials specified in the curriculum are up-to-date for most of the course with some exceptions. It is important to build a mechanism

to systematically update learning materials for supporting the attainment of program objectives. The university's library resources, including electronic databases and textbooks, provide students with access to essential literature in both Georgian and English.

Benchmarking the learning outcomes against international standards is vital for any study program, for global competitiveness. Panel failed to find any convincing response on the benchmarking process, outcome and implementation for the programs put for accreditations.

### **Description and Analysis - Business Administration, Master**

The Master in Business Administration program demonstrates partial compliance with Standard 1.5, but several areas require improvement. The program structure appears to align with the learning outcomes, and the content of courses generally corresponds to their respective objectives. However, the allocation of credits and the balance between contact and independent hours are not clearly justified, raising concerns about the adequacy of time spent by students to each subject/course.

The program has a good balance of core business courses covering key areas like finance, accounting, marketing, operations, strategy, etc. The inclusion of courses on modern topics like digital technologies, innovation, and corporate social responsibility is positive however it appears to be limited. The 5 ECTS credit allocation per course seems appropriate and standardized that is clearly justified for the contact and study hour per credit. The program includes both theoretical and practical components through coursework, professional practice, and a thesis. This shows a good balance in the program. Considering a critical analysis, while the SER mentions the library resources, it does not provide specifics on how course materials and literature align with learning outcomes.

Additionally, the curriculum lack detailed information on assessment and examination methods for each learning outcome, potentially compromising the program's ability to ensure all objectives are met effectively. To enhance the program's quality, it is recommended that the HEI conduct a thorough review of credit allocation and contact hours, ensuring they align with course content and complexity.

It would have been beneficial to see more specific examples of how course content, materials and assessments ensure achievement of program learning outcomes. Details on how the programs incorporate the latest research and developments trends in business administration should be expanded. The panel received some limited information on this during the site visit.

### **Description and Analysis - Business Administration, Ph.D**

The Ph.D in Business Administration program shows some gaps in meeting the requirements of Standard 1.5. The program structure and content are often unclear and require some

reconsiderations. The relationship between course content and program learning outcomes is not well-established, raising some doubts about the program's ability to achieve its stated objectives. Additionally, the curriculum lack up-to-date literature and resources, potentially hindering researchers' exposure to the latest research in the field.

Considering the key highlights of the Ph.D program at SSU in connection to the national qualification framework and the sectoral benchmarks, the program includes important research-focused courses like statistical analysis, research methods, and empirical data analysis. This especially vital for the quantitative research conducted by Ph.D students. The inclusion of courses on teaching methods and dissertation writing is valuable for doctoral students. The professor's assistantship components provide practical teaching experience to doctoral students.

The panel failed to find clear justifications for the credit allocations for courses that vary widely from 4-8 credits without clear justification. It would have been ideal to get some more specific details and rationale on how course content and materials align with doctoral-level learning outcomes. SSU could consider expanding the core curriculum to include more advanced business content courses relevant to doctoral-level study. It is crucial to develop more explicit links between course materials, teaching methods, and doctoral-level learning outcomes in each syllabus.

A critical recommendation for improvement is to revise the curriculum comprehensively, ensuring a clear alignment between course content, learning outcomes, and the overall program objectives, while also updating the reading materials to reflect current advancements in business administration and related field research.

### **Evidences/Indicators**

- business administration master's and doctoral programs syllabi;
- program structures;
- curriculum maps;
- work protocols of the self-assessment group;
- labor market analysis document;
- <https://elibrary.sou.edu.ge/ge/e-library/scientific-bases>;
- SSU website: [www.sou.edu.ge](http://www.sou.edu.ge);
- panel interviews.

**General recommendations of the cluster:**

- The panel recommends to increase collaboration with foreign educational institutions to facilitate guest lectures by international faculty and provide opportunities for academic staff to participate in international exchanges, thereby enriching the curriculum with global perspectives.
- The panel strongly recommends HEI must invest in digital technologies to ensure access to up-to-date materials of study courses, especially digital access remotely for faculty and students outside university campus.
- It is recommended to strengthen the practice of benchmarking learning outcomes against international standards to ensure global competitiveness. Panel failed to find any convincing response on the benchmarking process, outcome and implementation for the programs put for accreditations.

General suggestions of the cluster: None

### Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes:

#### Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)

**Recommendation(s):** To enhance the program's quality, it is recommended that the university conduct a thorough review of credit allocation and contact hours, ensuring they align with course content and complexity effectively.

### Evaluation

Component 1.5 Academic Course/Subject	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, PhD)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Compliance of the programmes with the standards

1. Educational Programme Objectives, Learning Outcomes and their Compliance with the Programme	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Masters)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 2. Methodology and Organisation of Teaching, Adequacy of Evaluation of Programme Mastering

Prerequisites for admission to the programme, teaching-learning methods and student assessment consider the specificity of the study field, level requirements, student needs, and ensure the engagement achievement of the objectives and expected learning outcomes of the programme.

### 2.1 Programme Admission Preconditions

The HEI has relevant, transparent, fair, public and accessible programme admission preconditions and procedures that ensure the engagement of individuals with relevant knowledge and skills in the programme to achieve learning outcomes.

#### Cluster and individual evaluation

#### Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component

According to SER, the Sokhumi state university has the student body planning mechanism and methodology operating in the University. The methodology describes how the total number of students eligible for a specific program is stated. According to the methodology in stating the number of students are taken into consideration such factors as the level of education, student-to-academic/ staff ratios, students with active, suspended, terminated, and restored statuses, graduating students, as well quantitative indicators of internal/external mobility.

The enrolment process is based on transparent, fair, public and accessible preconditions for both study programs of the cluster. Preconditions for the Master and PhD programs can be found on the University website – <https://www.sou.edu.ge/> and on the website of the National Assessment and Examinations Center.



The prerequisite to be admitted to cluster programs are the following:

### **Description and Analysis - Business Administration, Ph.D**

Summary of Prerequisites for Acceptance for Business Administration PhD program 40 (ECTS) credits program:

To apply for the Doctoral Program in Business Administration, candidates must submit an application, a Master's degree certificate, a CV, a photograph, proof of English language proficiency at B2 level, a preliminary dissertation research proposal, and obtain consent from a prospective supervisor. Additionally, an interview with the sectoral commission is required. Within two days of document submission, candidates will be informed of acceptance or rejection based on the prospective supervisor's evaluation. Candidates with supervisor consent proceed by taking an English exam (exemptions available for those with valid certifications or English-taught degrees). Selection is based on a combined score from the written and oral evaluations of the dissertation proposal, assessed by the sectoral commission. Criteria for evaluation include:

- Relevance, purpose, research questions/hypotheses, and expected outcomes of the research.
- Communication skills are also assessed during the interview.

The preliminary proposal should be between 1,000 and 1,500 words. Final decision of acceptance PhD student based on the competition and accumulated marks.

### **Summary of Prerequisites for Acceptance for Master of Business Administration 120 (ECTS) credits program:**

To be accepted into the program, candidates must have:

- A Bachelor's degree.
- Results from the common master's examination.
- B2 level proficiency in English, verified through an internal university exam (exemptions apply for those with a language proficiency certificate, a foreign-language undergraduate degree, or a qualification as an English philologist).
- An internal university exam in the specific field of study.
- Eligibility for mobility, allowing Master's students from Sokhumi State University or other authorized institutions to transfer in accordance with Georgian law.

If there will be other conditions may apply as stipulated by Georgian legislation. Mentioned admission preconditions are in accordance with the applicable Georgian legislation and logically related to the programs' content, learning outcomes, level of education and

qualification awarded, as well as consider the program specificity, and ensure the inclusion of persons with the knowledge, skills and competence required to overcome the program.

Students mentioned that they found out about study programs from their relatives or during information meetings organized within their schools. Also by the Faculty members.

#### Evidences/Indicators

- Business administration master's and doctoral programs;
- SER;
- SSU website: [www.sou.edu.ge](http://www.sou.edu.ge);
- Panel interviews.

**General recommendations of the cluster:** None

**General suggestions of the cluster:** None

**Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes:** None

#### Evaluation

Component 2.1 Programme admission preconditions	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 2.2. The Development of Practical, Scientific/Research/Creative/Performing and Transferable Skills

Programme ensures the development of students' practical, scientific/research/creative/performing and transferable skills and/or their involvement in research projects, in accordance with the programme learning outcomes.

## Cluster and individual evaluation

### Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component

HEI ensures development of students' practical, scientific and research skills in accordance with learning outcomes and educational level. For that university has different resources. The relevant components offered within the programs are aimed at generating/developing these skills and for their development, the centers and research institutes on the basis of Sokhumi State University, as well as partner organizations,

Within the programs, students develop the competencies necessary for the learning outcomes and educational level. The Master's and Doctoral Programs in Business Administration are structured to enhance students' practical, research, and transferable skills, fostering their active involvement in research projects aligned with program learning outcomes. Key elements include:

1. **Practical Training:** The programs feature courses with both theoretical lectures and practical contact hours. Master's students undertake professional practice and a thesis, while doctoral candidates engage in scientific research components. These elements allow students to apply academic knowledge in real-world settings, develop professional skills, and enhance their employment and internship prospects.
2. **Career Services:** The university has established a Student Practice and Career Management Service, offering students information about job vacancies, assisting with document preparation, and facilitating connections between graduates and employers. The university has also signed agreements with various organizations to support internships, professional seminars, and other career-related events.
3. **Research Development:** The Master's thesis and Doctoral dissertation are critical components of their respective programs, providing opportunities for students to address complex issues and develop advanced skills in their fields. The faculty council and dissertation council oversee topic approvals and ensure alignment with academic standards.
4. **Additional Academic Work:** Mid-term assessments often include academic tasks like abstracts and project presentations, which support research skill development.
5. **Student Conferences:** Annually, the Faculty of Business and Social Sciences organizes scientific conferences where students can present their work. The student government also promotes cultural, recreational, and sports activities, enriching student life.
6. **International Opportunities:** The university's International Relations and Intercultural Communications Service provides information about international exchange programs and mobility opportunities.

It would be nice if HEI will create some laboratory or innovative hubs where students will have possibility to develop transferable skills.

### **Description and Analysis - Business Administration, Master**

The Master's Program integrates theoretical and practical learning, with practical classes designed to deepen students' understanding through applied tasks. Courses include empirical research components conducted within the university and at partner organizations. The program's curriculum aligns with industry standards, utilizing up-to-date literature and research tools. Students also benefit from access to international academic resources.

### **Description and Analysis - Business Administration, Ph.D**

The Doctoral Program emphasizes the development of practical and research skills through courses in statistical analysis, research methods, and empirical data analysis. But for development of Practical, Scientific/Research/Creative/Performing and Transferable Skills, in PhD Programs there is a lack of transferable skills because the program is offering some 6 ECTS courses, such is Modern teaching methods; Qualitative research method; Writing a dissertation and Statistical analysis and forecasting, but from that 24 Student can select only one course.

The dissertation process encourages students to produce innovative research, evaluate complex ideas, and effectively communicate findings. Ethical research practices are emphasized, ensuring students uphold confidentiality and integrity. University services support doctoral students with academic advising, access to timely evaluations, and the option for individualized study schedules.

According of that programs grouped in cluster Programme ensures the development of students' practical, scientific/research/creative/performing and transferable skills and/or their involvement in research projects, in accordance with the programme learning outcomes.

### **Evidences/Indicators**

- business administration master's and doctoral programs;
- observation of the On-site resources;
- Self-assessment Report;
- SSU website: [www.sou.edu.ge](http://www.sou.edu.ge);
- panel interviews.

**General recommendations of the cluster:** None

**General suggestions of the cluster:** None

**Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes:**

**Programme 1. Business administration, Master**

**Suggestion(s):**

- It would be good if the university would create some type of innovation laboratory at the faculty.

**Programme 2 . Business administration, Ph.D**

**Suggestion(s):**

- It would be good if the credits of the educational component in the program at the doctoral level would increase (for example, if it becomes 46 or 52), which would allow doctoral students to choose courses that would improve their transferable skills.

**Evaluation**

Component 2.2. The Development of practical, scientific/research/creative/performing and transferable Skills	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**2.3. Teaching and Learning Methods**

The programme is implemented by using student-centered teaching and learning methods. Teaching and learning methods correspond to the level of education, course/subject content, learning outcomes and ensure their achievement.

## **Cluster and individual evaluation**

### **Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component**

The Master's and PhD programs in Business Administration at Sokhumi State University employ student-centered teaching and learning methods that align with the level of education, course content, and desired learning outcomes. These methods are designed to support students' engagement, facilitate interaction between students and faculty, and promote autonomy, responsibility, and skills development, including critical and analytical thinking.

The teaching methods for each academic course are tailored to the educational level, course content, and learning outcomes, ensuring alignment with sectoral benchmarks, if applicable. The flexible methods accommodate individual student needs, with personalized programs created as necessary based on student interests and academic readiness. When international students participate, academic and invited staff consider cultural or other specific needs in adapting teaching, learning, and assessment methods. Additionally, the university provides electronic or distance learning when needed, employing methods suited to the study field without altering program objectives or learning outcomes.

The objectives and learning outcomes of the clustered Master's and Doctoral programs are achieved through a blend of lectures, group work, practical sessions, counseling, independent work following specific guidelines, and the preparation of Master's and Doctoral theses. Teaching methods are chosen based on course content and program goals, ensuring that learning activities are tailored to achieve specific outcomes. All methods are student-centered and adapted to program level, course content, and learning outcomes.

#### **Description and Analysis - Business Administration, Master**

The Master's program uses modern, student-oriented methods to foster interaction and ensure alignment with academic standards. Specific methods include lectures, group work, independent study, practical training, counseling, cooperative learning, brainstorming, case analysis, and project development. Students engage in discussion, debate, information gathering, and project-based learning. These methods are detailed in course syllabi based on content and requirements.

#### **Description and Analysis - Business Administration, Ph.D**

The doctoral program outlines teaching methods specific to each course component, chosen based on educational goals and course content. Professors may apply various methods tailored to the course, including lectures, seminars, demonstrations, presentations, group work,

practical sessions, discussions, case studies, e-learning, lab work, essays, and more. These methods are designed to achieve program learning outcomes and are specified in each course syllabus.

During site visit some academic teaching staff could not clearly explained using purpose of concrete teaching method in the teaching and learning process. for achieving programs results, for that HEI should ensure that teachers are using teaching and learning methods effectively and HEI should conduct some correspondent activities.

### Evidences/Indicators

- Doctoral and Master's programs;
- Syllabi of training courses;
- Memorandums/agreements signed with practice facilities;
- Information about student participation in scientific conferences and seminars;
- publications of doctoral students;
- Library catalog.

**General recommendations of the cluster:** None

**General suggestions of the cluster:** None

**Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes:** None

### Evaluation

Component 2.3. Teaching and learning methods	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
<b>Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)</b>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)</b>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 2.4. Student Evaluation

Student evaluation is conducted in accordance with the established procedures. It is transparent, reliable and complies with existing legislation.

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### Cluster and individual evaluation

#### **Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component**

Evaluation of students in the university is carried out according to established procedures and is in line with both external and internal university legislation for Master and also for Doctoral students. The students' knowledge is evaluated using a 100-point system, which includes both current and midterm and final evaluations. In each training course, the student must score at least 51 points from the maximum evaluation in order to be considered as having passed the training course, and all of the above is written in detail in the syllabus of each training course. It is worth noting that the students are familiar with the evaluation scheme and components, which is confirmed by interviewing the students, while visiting and academic staff ensure that they are familiar with the evaluation criteria. It is also important to note that students are familiar with the mechanism of how they can appeal the result, which is confirmed by interviews with students.

The assessment of students within the courses included in the programs is conducted with methods and components, which are in accordance with the specifics of the course and ensure the assessment of the achievement of course-defined learning outcomes using the measurable criteria and rubrics defined in them. It is important to note that during the study period, students will receive information and feedback about learning outcomes, in accordance with the syllabus also information about strengths and areas for improvement.

#### **Evidences/Indicators**

- Site Visit;
- Interviews;
- The regulation of the educational process;
- Programs grouped in a cluster;
- Evaluation methods and criteria reflected in the syllabi;
- SSU student assessment electronic database - Studlabi /<https://students.sou.edu.ge/>
- Regulation of the unified examination center (appeal procedure of assessment results);
- Plagiarism prevention, detection and response mechanism;
- Academic performance analysis document.



General recommendations of the cluster: None

General suggestions of the cluster: None

Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes: None

### Evaluation

Component 2.4 - Student evaluation	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Compliance of the programmes with the standards

2. Methodology and Organisation of Teaching, Adequacy Evaluation of Programme Mastering	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 3. Student Achievements, Individual Work with Them

The programme ensures the creation of a student-centered environment by providing students with relevant services; promotes maximum student awareness, implements a variety of activities and facilitates student engagement in local and / or international projects; proper quality of scientific guidance and supervision is provided for master's and doctoral students.

### 3.1 Student Consulting and Support Services

Students receive consultation and support regarding planning of the learning process, improvement of academic achievement, and career development from the people involved in the programme and/or structural units of the HEI. A student has an opportunity to have a diverse learning process and receive relevant information and recommendations from those involved in the programme.

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#### Cluster and individual evaluation

##### **Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component**

At Sokhumi State University, there are various support mechanisms for students, as well as active student life support mechanisms.

Within the framework of the program, on the basis of pre-developed criteria, a commission consisting of students provides a discount on students' tuition fees, which is presented and approved by the representative council. Sokhumi State University has an international relations and intercultural relations service, which systematically holds meetings about the exchange programs in the university, provides consultations and helps in the preparation of relevant documentation, aimed at increasing the further activity of students in the mentioned projects. However, in this part it should be noted that the university needs more efforts to strengthen international relations with partner universities and, based on this, to increase the number of students who participate in exchange programs every year, which is one of the main foundations of quality education.

At Sokhumi State University, there is a Student Practice and Career Management Service, the direct function of which is to support and inform students regarding employment and career development. At the same time, the service systematically conducts surveys on the employment of graduates, and a database of graduates has been created. The service also supervises the practice process of students, ensures connection with practice facilities, participates in employment forums, thematic conferences, provides information about announced internships and vacancies.

It should be noted that the university has library resources, both physical and electronic, although the student does not have effective access to English-language literature when he is not directly present at the university. The university cited the issue of copyright as the reason for this, however, the university should make efforts to establish relations with publishing houses and offer students effective access to them for intra-university use.

#### **Evidences/Indicators**

- Site visit;
- Interviews;

- University Charter;
- Decisions of the representative council;
- Student Self-Government Regulation;
- Regulation of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs Service;
- Regulation of Student Career Practice and Career Management Service;
- Regulation of the Service of International Relations and Intercultural Relations;
- Implemented and ongoing projects.

#### General recommendations of the cluster:

- It is recommended the university ensure that students have access to the latest English-language literature.

#### General suggestions of the cluster:

- It is suggested that the university should increase the number of students participating in exchange programs every year.

Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes: None

### Evaluation

Component 3.1 Student consulting and support services	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 3.2. Master's and Doctoral Student Supervision

- A scientific supervisor provides proper support to master's and doctorate students to perform the scientific-research component successfully.
- Within master's and doctoral programmes, ratio of students and supervisors enables to perform scientific supervision properly.

### Cluster and individual evaluation

### **Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component**

SSU has a procedure for signing and completing master's and doctoral theses. Students use the above-mentioned document when completing theses, and master's/doctoral theses are completed in accordance with the regulatory document. However, it is important to note that the papers do not include many sources in English and it is desirable to increase the number of sources in foreign languages.

The student has the opportunity to receive information about current processes and news at the Sokhumi State University (administrative issues, social assistance, recreation services, various local and international projects and events, etc.). Informing students, communication - SSU provides student information by posting public information on SSU's official website (public information), by providing information orally and by SSU's official e-mail to the student's corporate e-mail by sending a personal message (personal notification). Along with this, all regulatory documents of SSU have been uploaded on the website

The supervisor of the doctoral thesis is selected according to the relevant scientific-research experience of the research topic. The topic and supervisor of the thesis are approved at the Dissertation Council of the Faculty of Business and Social Sciences.

The university has appropriately qualified academic staff who guide master's and doctoral students in the process of theses preparation. They regularly consult students and help them in the implementation of the research component.

#### **Data related to the supervision of master's/doctoral students**

##### **Programme 1 (Master in Business Administration, Master)<sup>7</sup>**

Number of master's/doctoral theses supervisors	20
//Number of doctoral thesis supervisors	-
Number of master's students	12
//Number of doctoral students	-

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<sup>7</sup> In case of necessity please add the appropriate number of tables for the educational programmes grouped in a cluster.

Ratio - supervisors of master's theses/master's students	1.7
Ratio - supervisors of doctoral theses/doctorsal students	-

**Data related to the supervision of master's/doctorsal students**

**Programme 2 (PhD in Business Administration, PhD)<sup>8</sup>**

Number of master's/doctorsal theses supervisors	20
//Number of doctorsal thesis supervisors	9
Number of master's students	-
//Number of doctorsal students	20
Ratio - supervisors of master's theses/master's students	-
Ratio - supervisors of doctorsal theses/doctorsal students	0,45

**Evidences/Indicators**

- Site visit;
- Interviews;
- Methodology of planning, development, approval and development of master's programs;
- Minimum standard for doctorsal studies;
- Statute of the Dissertation Board of Business Administration
- Academic and invited staff workload rules and individual workload scheme;
- CVs and publications of academic staff involved in the doctorsal program.

**General recommendations of the cluster:** None

<sup>8</sup> In case of necessity please add the appropriate number of tables for the educational programmes grouped in a cluster.

General suggestions of the cluster: None

Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes: None

### Evaluation

Component 3.2. Master's and Doctoral Student Supervision	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Compliance of the programmes with the standards

3. Student Achievements, Individual Work with them	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 4. Providing Teaching Resources

Human, material, information and financial resources of educational programme/educational programmes grouped in a cluster ensure the sustainable, stable, efficient and effective functioning of the programme and the achievement of the defined objectives.

### 4.1 Human Resources

- Programme staff consists of qualified persons who have necessary competences in order to help students to achieve the programme learning outcomes.
- The number and workload of programme academic/scientific and invited staff ensures the

sustainable running of the educational process and also, proper execution of their research/creative/performance activities and other assigned duties. Quantitative indicators related to academic/scientific/invited staff ensure programme sustainability.

➤ The Head of the Programme possesses necessary knowledge and experience required for programme elaboration, and also the appropriate competences in the field of study of the programme. He/she is personally involved in programme implementation.

➤ Programme students are provided with an adequate number of administrative and support staff with relevant competence.

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#### Cluster and individual evaluation

#### **Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component**

In the cluster of the Sokhumi State university is two programs Master of Business Administration and Doctor of Business Administration. The academic and visiting staff of the cluster's both programs are highly qualified and possess the necessary competencies to fulfill their roles and help students achieve the program's learning outcomes. Their inclusion in the programs complies with the rules and legislation of Sokhumi state University. They have made considerable contributions to scientific work, including publications, participation in academic events, and involvement in research projects. Their experience and qualifications are confirmed by personal files and CVs. Personnels have the necessary academic knowledge, competencies and many years of experience to produce the learning outcomes provided for by the programs. Academic personal has scientific works, publications, and various types of activities carried out in the last 5 years, scientific – through research and practical activities. Scientific/research rate of persons involved in the program (during the last 5 years) is 452 for MBA program and 157 for PhD program.

Academic staff is selected through open competition, the selection procedure is fair and transparent. A workload scheme for the academic and invited staff involved in the cluster's programs has been developed according “Academic and invited staff workload rules and individual workload of the Sokhumi State University”. the scheme allows for the monitoring of staff workloads, taking into account the contractual obligations and full workload of both academic and invited staff within the cluster's programs.

Hours allocated for student consultation are envisaged by the workload of academic/scientific/invited personnel. A balance between academic, including affiliated academic, and visiting staff ensures programs sustainability. individual workload of academic and invited staff, includes both educational, scientific-research and other activities workloads based on the functions and duties assigned to them, at the same time the workload of academic staff in all higher education institutions where they are engaged in additional activities. . The

university has rules for affiliation of academic staff with the university, which defines the written agreement (affiliation agreement) of the person on academic staff (professor, associate professor, assistant professor) that confirms his affiliation with Sokhumi State University, participates in community development and knowledge sharing on behalf of the university. in the process.

The number of academic/scientific/invited personnel at the programme is adequate with regard to the number of students; total number of students in the MBA program is 12, so ratios are:

- The number of affiliated academic staff in relation to the number of students enrolled in the program 1.75
- The number of academic/scientific/guest staff in relation to the number of students enrolled in the program is 0.5
- Ratio of supervisors and master's/doctorate students is 2.43
- Total number of students in the PhD program students number is 20 and ratios are following:
- The number of affiliated academic staff in relation to the number of students enrolled in the program 0.6
- the number of academic/scientific/guest staff in relation to the number of students enrolled in the program is 0.6
- Ratio of supervisors and master's/doctorate students is 0.45
- According to that information the number of Master's and Doctoral students corresponds to the workload of their supervisors.

The turnover of academic and visiting staff is insignificant, for the last 5 years in the MBA program employed 4 invited persons and for PhD program 1 academic person, the turnover of academic/scientific and invited staff ensures programme sustainability. The heads of the programs have good profiles and possess the necessary abilities to provide effective guidance. Their involvement in assessment, implementation, student advising, and organizing relevant academic activities was clearly outlined with references to specific measures. During the interviews, both management and academic staff demonstrated a mature understanding of their roles, clear insights into the field, and shared significant information regarding scientific achievements.

Program students are supported by an adequate number of administrative and support staff with appropriate competencies. It should be noted that the qualifications of the administrative and support staff are aligned with their respective functions. The programs are served by the faculty and university administrative staff: dean, head of the quality assurance team, deputy dean, head of the educational process management service, student register production, as



well as representatives of the university administration. Students of the faculty/program are provided with administrative and support staff with appropriate number and appropriate competence, namely:

- Dean of the Faculty - 1
- Deputy dean of the faculty - 1
- Head of Quality Assurance Service of the Faculty - 1
- The main specialist of the quality assurance service of the faculty - 1
- The main specialist in the production of the faculty's student register – 1
- The main specialist in the management of educational processes of the faculty -

Qualification of administrative and support staff is consistent with their functions, which is proved from CVs. During the interview process of academic and visiting staff, some of them did not clearly explain the relationship between the achievement of learning outcomes and teaching methods and activities, which may have been a source of confusion. However, the university must ensure that the academic and visiting staff ability to achieve the learning outcomes with appropriate teaching methods and activities, so it is important for the university to train the academic and visiting staff in achieving the learning outcomes with the proper teaching-learning methods.

The Sokhumi university provides study/analysis of quantitative indicators of educational programmes, including study/analysis of turnover rate of academic/scientific/invited staff, and uses the results to improve programme sustainability.

Program 1. Business Administration, Master, 120 ECTS				
Number of the staff involved in the Program (including academic, scientific, and invited staff)	Number of Program Staff	Including the staff with sectoral expertise	Including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction	Among them, the affiliated academic staff
Total number of academic staff	24	22	24	24
- Professor	5	5	5	5
- Associate Professor	14	12	14	14
- Assistant-Professor	1	1	1	1
- Assistant	1	1	1	1
Invited Staff	3	2	1	–
Scientific Staff	0	0	0	–

### Program 2. Business Administration, PhD, 50 ECTS

Number of the staff involved in the Program (including academic, scientific, and invited staff)	Number of Program Staff	Including the staff with sectoral expertise	Including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction	Among them, the affiliated academic staff
Total number of academic staff	12	12	12	12
- Professor	4	4	4	4
- Associate Professor	8	8	8	8
- Assistant-Professor				
- Assistant				
Invited Staff				—
Scientific Staff				—

### Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation Report Academic and invited staff workload rules and individual workload of the Sokhumi State University;
- Educational programs grouped in a cluster;
- Personal data (CVs) and qualification documents (diplomas) of the academic and guest personnel;
- involved in the implementation of the programs, including those of the program leaders;
- Individual workload schemes of academic and visiting staff;
- Affiliation rule;
- Methodology for determining the number of academic staff of the program;
- Methodology of educational program planning, development and development;
- Administrative and support staff job description document;
- Statute of the Faculty of Business and Social Sciences;
- Expert Panel's meetings;
- HEI Web-page <https://www.sou.edu.ge/>.

### General recommendations of the cluster:

- It is recommended that the university must ensure that the academic and visiting staff ability to achieve the learning outcomes with appropriate teaching methods and activities, so it is important for the university to train the academic and visiting staff in achieving the learning outcomes with the proper teaching-learning methods.

**General suggestions of the cluster:** None

**Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes:** None

## Evaluation

Component 4.1 Human resources	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 4.2 Qualification of Supervisors of Master's and Doctoral Students

Master's and Doctoral students have qualified supervisor/supervisors and, if necessary, co-supervisor/co-supervisors who have relevant scientific-research experience in the field of research.

## Cluster and individual evaluation

### Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component

The Sokhumi state university has developed transparent qualification requirements for the supervisor / co-supervisor, which are in line with the requirements of the Master / Doctoral level supervision and respond to the specifics of the programme and international best practice.

Expert panel studied the scientific work of supervisors of master's and doctoral theses, on the basis of which it was determined that Supervisors have scientific activities in the field they

participated in scientific studies and has published a scientific paper, which corresponds to the general theme and direction of the theses of MA/Doctoral students. During reviewing the MBA and PhD theses there were some problems with academic writing styles, it would be good if the university introduces one of the academic writing styles (APA, Chicago or other) and more carefully follows it.

### **Description and Analysis - Business Administration, Master**

University has developed regulation norms for Master Programs. In The syllabus of the preparation of the Master theses, in the document explained the working process of the meter these. Although what should be the responsibility and qualification of the supervisor of the master work is not clearly shown. During panel interviews with master students and alumni, they declared satisfaction with the supervisor's work and support. The alumni described the procedures on working to master these in detail. According to that, it would be good if Master theses supervisor's role is declared in some regulation document more clearly.

According to that and CVs of the supervisors, we can prove that the scientific supervisors of each Master student has actively participated in scientific studies and has published a scientific paper (in art - creative / performing project), which corresponds to the general theme and direction of the theses of MA. When reviewing the doctoral theses, it was revealed that the Master students theses there were some errors in direction of the research methodologies, so it would be good if the supervisors pay more attention to adequately reflect the research methodology in the master theses. According to that, HEI should give some training in the direction of the coaching of scientific research/thesis writing, for ensuring supervisors of theses have the latest knowledge.

### **Description and Analysis - Business Administration Ph.D**

University has developed regulation norms for PhD program, the "The minimum standard of doctoral studies of Sokhumi State University", the resolution determines the minimum standard necessary for the implementation of doctoral programs and the awarding of the academic degree of doctor at Sokhumi State University in accordance with the Law of Georgia "On Higher Education" and other normative acts. according of the resolution:

#### **Article 2. Scientific supervisor**

2.1 The scientific supervisor must be an academic staff member of the Sokhumi State University and must have research experience and publications in the scientific field related to the doctoral dissertation topic.

2.2 How many doctoral students can be supervised depends on the lecturing and research workload of the scientific supervisor.

2.3 The scientific supervisor controls the fulfillment of the individual study and research plan of the doctoral candidate; has regular consultations with doctoral students, which means

periodic evaluation of the scientific progress of the doctoral student; providing general scientific advice, research design and management assistance in the process of writing a scientific-research paper/dissertation; promoting participation in local and international scientific events; Also, giving advice on publishing scientific articles in refereed/high-ranking journals.

2.4 In the event that the scientific supervisor refuses to supervise, a reasoned statement about this at any stage of study must be submitted to the Dissertation Council. The Dissertation Council ensures the appointment of a new supervisor for the doctoral student.

2.5 PhD students may have more than one scientific supervisor. The relevant Dissertation Council makes a decision on the appointment of more than one scientific supervisor.

It would be good if the university to bring this document into compliance with the order of the Minister of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia No. 141/N, in relation to the framework document for doctoral level education, doctoral students number per supervisor. See: <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/6255717?publication=0>

During the preparation of the thesis, the supervisor is in close contact with the doctoral student. In accordance with the regulatory norms, it is clear that: the doctoral student, in agreement with the head/leaders of the doctoral program, establishes an individual study plan, which depends on the specificity of the doctoral program, the faculty's academic potential and material-technical base.

During panel interviews doctoral students and alumni declared satisfaction with the supervisors of the doctoral thesis. When reviewing the doctoral theses, it was revealed that the doctoral students have significant large-scale research and also have valuable findings, although this is not well conveyed in the research methodologies, so it would be good if the supervisors pay more attention to adequately reflect the research methodology in the doctoral theses. According to that, HEI should give some training in the direction of the coaching of scientific research/thesis writing, for ensuring supervisors of theses have the latest knowledge.

**Programme 1. Business Administration, Master's Degree**

<b>Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses</b>	<b>These supervisors</b>	<b>Including the supervisors holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction<sup>9</sup></b>	<b>Among them, the affiliated academic staff</b>
<b>Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses</b>	20	20	20

<sup>9</sup> Theses supervisors having a PhD degree relevant to the qualification awarded by the educational programme.

- Professor	15	15	15
- Associate Professor	4	4	4
- Assistant-Professor	1	1	1
Invited Staff			—
Scientific Staff			—

#### **Programme 2. Business Administration Ph.D**

Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses	These supervisors	Including the supervisors holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction <sup>10</sup>	Among them, the affiliated academic staff
Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses	9	9	9
- Professor	3	3	3
- Associate Professor	6	6	6
- Assistant-Professor			
Invited Staff			—
Scientific Staff			—

#### **Evidences/Indicators**

- Educational programs grouped in a cluster;
- Self-evaluation report;
- Personal data (CVs) and qualification documents (diplomas) of the academic and guest personnel involved in the implementation of the programs, including those of the program leaders;

<sup>10</sup> Theses supervisors having a PhD degree relevant to the qualification awarded by the educational programme.

- Works of the academic staff involved in the implementation of the programs (articles, monographs, participation in local and international conferences, training certificates, etc.);
- Statute of the Faculty of Business and Social Sciences;
- Expert Panel's meetings;
- Web-page <https://www.sou.edu.ge/>

#### General recommendations of the cluster:

- HEI should give some training in the direction of the coaching of scientific research/thesis writing, for ensuring supervisors of theses have the latest knowledge.

#### General suggestions of the cluster:

- During reviewing the MBA and PhD theses there were some problems with academic writing styles, it would be good if the university introduces one of the academic writing styles (APA, Chicago or other) and more carefully follows it.

#### Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes:

##### Programme 1. Business Administration, Master

**Suggestion(s):** It would be good if Master theses supervisor's role is declared in some regulation document more clearly.

##### Programme 2. Business Administration Ph.D

**Suggestion(s):** It would be good if the supervisors pay more attention to adequately reflect the research methodology in the doctoral theses.

#### Evaluation

Component 4.2 Qualification of supervisors of master's and doctoral students	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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#### 4.3 Professional Development of Academic, Scientific and Invited Staff

- The HEI conducts the evaluation of programme staff and analyses evaluation results on a regular basis.
- The HEI fosters professional development of the academic, scientific and invited staff. Moreover, it fosters their scientific and research work.

#### Cluster and individual evaluation

Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component

In the Sokhumi state university, The Faculty of Business and Social Sciences, has an evaluation mechanism in place for both academic and invited staff, which includes distinct evaluation policies for each group. Academic staff are assessed based on their research and teaching contributions, while invited staff are evaluated primarily on their involvement in the teaching process. The quality assurance service of Sokhumi State University and Faculty regularly evaluates the academic staff involved in the program. Surveys, staff satisfaction surveys, staff academic activities and learning process evaluations are conducted. Academic staff are also evaluated by students at the end of each semester, and the results are communicated confidentially to academic staff, they are responded to, the results are summarized, the learning process is evaluated, the results are analyzed, processed and used to improve the learning process.

As for the evaluation of the scientific and research activities of the staff, at the end of each year the academic staff fills out a report form approved by the Academic Council, which is sent to the Department of Scientific Research and Development, and the department sends processed and reconciled reports to the National Academy of Sciences of Georgia, where experts in the relevant field of the Academy According to the scientific directions, the research results are evaluated with special questionnaires, and the evaluation results are sent to the university department and communicated to the academic staff, and appropriate meetings are held to introduce the results and improve the process.

The university promotes the professional development of its academic, scientific, and invited staff through a range of initiatives. the university conducted various training sessions for academic, invited, and administrative personnel, as confirmed by university documentation and interview results. The university takes care of the professional development of the academic staff.



Academic personnel participating in the programs systematically raise their professional level - participate in national and international conferences and symposia, undergo relevant trainings. The university takes care of the professional development of the academic staff, which is confirmed by the financial funds allocated in the budget of the program/faculty/university for the professional development of the staff (trainings, workshops, events both inside and outside the country, participation in international conferences, scientific congresses and forums, etc.).

During the pandemic, the university enhanced the effectiveness of remote learning by organizing webinars, developing guidelines, and conducting training sessions for academic and invited staff.

However, the expert panel noted that some academic staff members do not have profiles on platforms such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, ORCID, Scopus, or Clarivate. The university should intensify its efforts in this area, as visibility on these platforms is crucial for enhancing the scientific productivity of the staff.

#### **Evidences/Indicators**

- Educational programs grouped in a cluster;
- Self-evaluation report;
- Personal data (CVs) and qualification documents (diplomas) of the academic and guest personnel involved in the implementation of the programs, including those of the program leaders;
- Budget of the Faculty of Business and Social Sciences;
- Statute of the Faculty of Business and Social Sciences;
- Expert Panel's meetings
- Web-page <https://www.sou.edu.ge/>.

**General recommendations of the cluster:** None

#### **General suggestions of the cluster:**

- It would be good if all academic personnel have profiles on platforms such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, ORCID, Scopus, or Clarivate. The university should intensify its efforts in this area, as visibility on these platforms is crucial for enhancing the scientific productivity of the staff.

**Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes (if any):** None

## Evaluation

Component 4.3 Professional development of academic, scientific and invited staff	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 4.4. Material Resources

Programme is provided with necessary infrastructure, information resources relevant to the field of study and technical equipment required for achieving programme learning outcomes.

## Cluster and individual evaluation

### Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component

Sokhumi State University owns 2 educational buildings (Tbilisi, Politkovskaya 61, Politkovskaya 26) in order to carry out the educational process, with the legal form of ownership, Business Administration, Master's Degree and Business Administration, Ph.D programs are implementing in Tbilisi, Politkovskaya 61, and experts visited the building equipped with the necessary infrastructure. The programs are supported by well-lit, well-equipped auditoriums with modern technical equipment and new furniture, along with modern computer labs, professors' offices, student self-government spaces, individual offices for academic staff, a conference hall, an examination center. The academic staff is provided with dedicated workspace for conducting individual and group consultations with students.

Experts visited one of the university libraries, which is managed by qualified specialists. The staff regularly conducts training sessions on the use of the university's electronic systems and resources. The library houses the mandatory literature and other educational materials specified in course syllabi, the latest scientific periodicals, digital resources, and international electronic databases. It should be noted that access to these databases is available not only

from within the university but also remotely. According to the library staff, the library is systematically updated. In both educational buildings (Politkovskaya 26; Politkovskaya 61) on the first floor new reading rooms of modern standards have been created, as well as free computer space. There is a separate space for academic and visiting staff who are connected to the Internet. During the visit, experts verified that the books listed in the syllabi were available

Sokhumi State University offers comprehensive facilities and resources to support its students and staff. Wireless internet access, as well as printing, photocopying, and scanning services, are available. The library operates according to regulations approved by the representative council, and is accessible to students and staff six days a week, totaling 60 hours. Library hours are Monday to Friday from 9:00 AM to 8:00 PM, and Saturday from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

The IT Department provides support for various services, including information on class schedules, exam timetables, syllabi, and communication with academic staff. The university library boasts a collection of around 50,000 printed books and an electronic library with an online catalog, containing approximately 1,200 textbooks and other materials like lecture notes and readers. Both print and digital resources are maintained and updated to support the learning outcomes and research objectives of the educational programs.

The university has a contract with "Planeta Forte" LLC to supply magazines and newspapers, ensuring the availability of periodicals. Additionally, an agreement with "Innovative System Management" LLC enables the library to be part of the national network of university and research institute libraries in Georgia. Library resources are cataloged according to standard rules, with reading rooms equipped with reader cards and both alphabetical and systematic catalogs.

Continuous improvement of resources and services is a priority, as indicated by budget allocations and the strategic plan's focus on infrastructure development. The university extensively utilizes information and communication technology, with around 500 modern computers available for students and staff, including 84 computers across seven computer labs. Facilities are equipped with computers, projectors, printers, copiers, and internet access. Through projects like Tempus and Erasmus+, classrooms have been outfitted with video conferencing devices and smart boards.

The university uses the intra-university Learning Process Management System, "Elgon," which serves students, administration, and academic staff. "Elgon" includes modules for managing the learning process, academic and administrative registration, student finance, and document circulation. Additionally, the electronic system "Studlab" facilitates the electronic management of university resources, providing a unified database of students, faculty,

programs, courses, evaluations, and more. The system has an interface that allows users to easily enter and retrieve information.

The Information Technology Department ensures the management and availability of IT infrastructure, guided by the "Information Technology Management and Development Policy" approved by the Academic Council. Cybersecurity is a priority, with a "Business Process Continuity Plan" also in place to mitigate risks. The university's website, [www.sou.edu.ge](http://www.sou.edu.ge), launched in 2018, is updated regularly and includes essential information in both Georgian and English, such as program catalogs, admissions criteria, faculty details, research activities, services, and employment opportunities.

The practical component of programs is carried out both at the university and in collaboration with partner organizations, according to signed memorandums of understanding. Overall, the infrastructure at Sokhumi State University, combined with its robust resources, technology, and support services, effectively supports educational goals and enhances the student learning experience.

The experts were left with a very positive impression after reviewing the university's infrastructure. They confirmed that the programs are supported by the necessary infrastructure, technical equipment, and information resources needed to achieve the desired learning outcomes.

However, it would be good if a stationary computer and a projector were available in every auditorium, because the teacher from the professor's office has to bring a laptop and projector to the classroom during the lecture.

#### **Program 1. Business Administration, Master, 120 ECTS**

There are no outstanding resources for the Master of Business Administration program that are not described above.

#### **Program 2. Business Administration, PhD, 50 ECTS**

There are no outstanding resources for the Doctor of Business Administration program that are not described above.

#### **Evidences/Indicators**

- Educational programs grouped in a cluster;
- Self-evaluation report;
- Extracts from the public register (S/K 01.14.05.005.003; S/K 01.14.05.005.134);

- Measuring drawings of buildings;
- Inventory acts;
- Procurement documentation;
- Visual inspection;
- Memorandums and agreements signed with partners;
- Expert Panel's meetings;
- Web-page <https://www.sou.edu.ge/>.

**General recommendations of the cluster:** None

**General suggestions of the cluster:**

- However, it would be good if a stationary computer and a projector were available in every auditorium, because the teacher from the professor's office has to bring a laptop and computer to the classroom during the lecture.

**Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:** None

## Evaluation

Component 4.4 Material resources	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 4.5. Programme/Faculty/School Budget and Programme Financial Sustainability

The allocation of financial resources stipulated in programme/faculty/school budget is economically feasible and corresponds to the programme needs.

### Cluster and individual evaluation

**Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component**

The budget of Sokhumi State University is a carefully structured financial document, developed with significant input from the university's various departments. The financial resources outlined in the budget are both attainable and sustainable. The university's funding sources include tuition fees from its educational programs, which encompass Master's and Doctoral programs grouped within a cluster. Financial support is derived from income generated by the university, investments, and other funds permitted by Georgian legislation. These funds are allocated for the development and sustainability of academic programs, salaries and professional development for faculty and invited staff, student support, research projects, library enhancements, and improvements to the material and technical infrastructure.

Additional funding comes from educational and scientific grants from national and international organizations, as well as revenue from other permitted economic activities. These income sources have shown consistent growth, and the university remains focused on exploring diversified funding opportunities within Georgia and abroad. By maximizing its human and material resources, Sokhumi State University aims to continue expanding its budget to support the goals outlined in its strategic development plan.

The university's financial outlook is stable and growing, ensuring the successful execution of initiatives laid out in the strategic and action plans. During the preparation of the 2024 budget, requests from structural units were carefully analyzed, and expenditures were classified in accordance with economic and functional requirements. The 2024 budget is designed to advance the university's mission, funding teaching, research, library operations, infrastructure development, and participation in various cultural and sporting events. Financial resources for research promotion and implementation are continuously available to all university stakeholders.

The faculty council approves budgets for programs within the cluster, and these are incorporated into the university's overall budget.

#### **Program 1. Business Administration, Master, 120 ECTS**

According Budget of the Master program, The Master's program income is 33 000 and expense 33 000, and it is self-sustained.

#### **Program 2. Business Administration, PhD, 50 ECTS**

The PhD program has an income of 18,000 GEL against expenses of 41,540 GEL (resulting in a deficit of 23,540 GEL). The deficit is covered from the faculty budget, faculty income of 1,615,500 GEL with expenses of 1,501,329 GEL, yielding a net profit of 114,171 GEL.

In planning program budgets, the university considers only income from specific sources—such as PhD students fee for the PhD program and MBA students fee for the MBA program. However, expert panels suggest that the faculty should review its budget planning

methodology. They recommend including a portion of income from BBA programs, to the PhD and MBA programs' focus, because the programs serve BBA scientific sustainability as well.

Overall, the budget ensures that resources for academic activities, research initiatives, and various other university functions are permanently available. The faculty council-approved budgets for these programs are incorporated into the university's comprehensive budget, supporting Sokhumi State University's goals for sustainable growth and academic excellence.

#### Evidences/Indicators

- Educational programs grouped in a cluster;
- Self-evaluation report;
- Faculty and program budgets
- Expert Panel's meetings
- Web-page <https://www.sou.edu.ge/>

**General recommendations of the cluster:** None

#### General suggestions of the cluster:

- It would be nice if the faculty should review the budget planning methodology and some portion of income should be considered from BBA programs, for the PhD and MBA budget, because the programs serve BBA scientific sustainability as well.

**Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:** None

#### Evaluation

Component 4.5 Programme/faculty/school budget and programme financial sustainability	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Compliance of the programmes with the standards

4. Providing Teaching Resources	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities

In order to enhance teaching quality, programme utilizes internal and external quality assurance services and also periodically conducts programme monitoring and programme review. Relevant data is collected, analysed and utilized for informed decision making and programme development.

### 5.1. Internal Quality Evaluation

Programme staff collaborates with internal quality assurance department(s)/staff available at the HEI when planning the process of programme quality assurance, developing assessment instruments, and implementing assessment process. Programme staff utilizes quality assurance results for programme improvement.

### Cluster and individual evaluation

#### Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component

The quality assurance system at Sokhumi State University functions as follows: the administration of the quality assurance service is involved in all stages of the implementation of the educational process, which involves the principle of planning, implementation, inspection (continuous evaluation, analysis of results) and development. Evaluation of educational processes is done regularly and involves the development of mechanisms for solving specific problems identified by the self-evaluation process.

University has adopted the regulation with regard to the quality assurance system “Mechanisms for Evaluating Teaching Quality Development Opportunities”, which describes the mechanisms for evaluating educational programs, educational process, scientific work and personnel. These mechanisms include a self-assessment component as well as surveys,



questionnaires and external assessments. At the same time, the involvement of various interested parties in the process of program development and the research of their opinions and attitudes are considered. Academic and visiting staff involved in the programs, as well as faculty administrative staff, collaborate with the internal quality assurance service at both the university and faculty level in planning the program quality assessment process, developing assessment tools and conducting the evaluation, and use the quality assessment results to improve the programs.

In the process of the elaboration of the educational program academic and invited personnel collaborated with internal quality assurance service and took into consideration quality assurance results. In the process of the development of the program together with university administrative and academic/invited personnel other stakeholders also were involved such as potential employers, graduates and students from related programs.

To develop the programs grouped in cluster, a self-evaluation group was created that regularly held meetings and discussed issues related to program development. The programs were developed following the principles of teamwork. Each member of the self-assessment group took care of eliminating the shortcomings identified during the work on the self-assessment report. Although the areas for improvement and certain challenges still remain (see details in the narrative parts of standards 1-4 ). It is recommended that within the framework of self-evaluation of the educational programs when evaluating the content of the programs and study courses, the University should detect and prevent shortcomings: in the process of development of programs learning outcomes to better align program outcomes with industry needs and to ensure global competitiveness; in selecting compulsory literature to reflect the latest developments in the field, in allocation of credits and contact hours ensuring they align with course content and complexity effectively; in selecting teaching/learning methods as well as in assessment methods, assessment rubrics; in the process of doctoral and master theses development.

The quality assurance system at the university operates based on the principles "Plan, Do, Check, Act" (PDCA) cycle. Quality assurance is a continuous process and internal quality assurance mechanisms are effectively implemented in it. University develops strategic development and action plans (<https://www.sou.edu.ge/content/2/65/0/0/0>) as well as discusses annual reports of the quality assurance office. The quality assurance service is engaged in consulting activities for all segments of the faculty, in order to implement educational activities in accordance with the standards established by the legislation.

For the monitoring and evaluation of the electronic/distance learning process, during the Corona pandemic period the university adopted the special regulations for the study process

(Academic Council resolution № 05/01-608; 24. 03. 2020) to ensure the adaptation of internal quality assurance mechanisms for the distance/hybrid study process.

### **Evidences/Indicators**

- Educational program and syllabi;
- Mechanisms for Evaluating Teaching Quality Development Opportunities (Resolution of Academic Council of Sokhumi State University #05/01 - 20, 20.04.2012);
- The Methodology of approval, planning and development of graduate programs;
- The Methodology of approval, planning and development of doctoral programs;
- Statue of the University;
- Provision of the faculty of Business and Social Sciences;
- Regulation for study process;
- Methodology for defining the number of academic, research and invited personnel;
- Minutes of the Self-Assessment Group/Working Groups meetings;
- Minutes of Faculty Council and Academic Council of the University;
- Webpage of the university <https://www.sou.edu.ge/home>;
- Strategic development and action plans of the university;
- Job market research documents for related programs;
- Document of comparison/benchmarking with the analogical local and foreign education programs (for MA program);
- Annual reports of evaluation of educational programs, quality of teaching and service (Faculty of Business and Social Sciences);
- Programs learning outcome evaluation mechanism;
- Programs learning outcome evaluation plans for related programs;
- Programs learning outcome evaluation report for MA program;
- Analysis of collegial evaluations of academic/invited personnel 2023;
- External evaluation reports by local and foreign experts;
- Internal evaluation reports;
- Regulations for distance/electronic study process (Academic Council resolution № 05/01-608; 24. 03. 2020);
- Survey forms for students and personnel, graduates and employers;
- Analysis of students, graduates and personnel surveys for related programs, 2024;
- Interviews with representatives of university administration, academic/invited personnel and employers;
- Interviews with representatives of students and alumni from related programs;
- Self-evaluation report presented.

### General recommendations of the cluster:

- It is recommended that within the framework of self-evaluation of the educational programs when evaluating the content of the programs and study courses, the University should detect and prevent shortcomings: in the process of development of programs learning outcomes to better align program outcomes with industry needs and to ensure global competitiveness; in selecting compulsory literature to reflect the latest developments in the field, in allocation of credits and contact hours ensuring they align with course content and complexity effectively; in selecting teaching/learning methods as well as in assessment methods, assessment rubrics; in the process of doctoral and master theses development.

**General suggestions of the cluster:** None

**Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes (if any):** None

### Evaluation

Component 5.1 Internal Quality Evaluation	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 5.2. External Quality Evaluation

Programme utilizes the results of external quality assurance on a regular basis.

### Cluster and individual evaluation

#### Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component

The external mechanisms for the evaluation of the quality of educational process are authorization and accreditation processes according the Georgian Legislation: the external mechanisms for evaluating the implementation of the educational program are based on the

"Regulation on the Accreditation of Educational Programs of Educational Institutions" and the "Regulation on the Authorization of Educational Institutions".

Sokhumi State University periodically submits information about each educational program to the legal entity under public law to the National Center for Education Quality Development in the form of a self-evaluation report in accordance with the established deadlines and forms. The personnel involved in the program take into account the recommendations received by experts during authorization and accreditation and make appropriate changes to the program. The changes to be implemented in the program are discussed by the head of the program and the staff involved in the program.

In accordance with the university regulation "Mechanisms for Evaluating Teaching Quality Development Opportunities", an external collegial developmental peer-review of the programs was carried out by local experts from Georgian Technical University and National University of Georgia (SEU). External evaluation was carried out also by foreign experts from Mikolas Romeris University (Lithuania) and Chernihiv Polytechnic National University (Ukraine). In addition, the results of the survey of industry professionals, partners and other interested parties such as alumni were taken into account. The results of the analysis of the employers' requirements were also taken into consideration.

#### **Evidences/Indicators**

- Educational program and syllabi;
- External evaluation reports by local and foreign experts;
- Mechanisms for Evaluating Teaching Quality Development Opportunities (Resolution of Academic Council of Sokhumi State University #05/01 - 20, 20.04.2012);
- The Methodology of approval, planning and development of master's programs;
- The Methodology of approval, planning and development of doctoral programs;
- Minutes of the Self-Assessment Group meetings;
- Interviews with representatives of university administration, academic/invited personnel and employers;
- Interviews with representatives of students and alumni from related programs;
- Self-evaluation report presented by the university.

**General recommendations of the cluster:** None

**General suggestions of the cluster:** None

**Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes (if any):** None

## Evaluation

Component 5.2 External Quality Evaluation	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, PhD)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 5.3. Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review

Programme monitoring and periodic evaluation is conducted with the involvement of academic, scientific, invited, administrative, supporting staff, students, graduates, employers and other stakeholders through systematic data collection, study and analysis. Evaluation results are applied for the programme improvement.

#### Cluster and individual evaluation

#### Summary and Analysis of the Compliance of the Educational Programmes Grouped in a Cluster with the Requirements of the Standard Component

Quality Assurance Service the university periodically monitors the quality of the development and implementation of educational programs. Based on the monitoring results the relevant recommendations, suggestions for possible changes and conclusions are developed for the further development of the educational programs. Within the framework of the mentioned process, the Quality Assurance Office regularly checks the library's book fund (including textbooks and other educational materials in their physical condition, quantity, and compliance with the syllabi).

The Quality Assurance Office conducts questionnaire surveys for students, alumni, personnel and employers to get feedback from all interested parties and ensure the quality of educational process, educational programs and study courses implementation. It also analyzes the results of peers' classroom observations. Based on the analysis of surveys, the Quality Assurance Office develops recommendations and instructions in order to enhance the quality of teaching

and to ensure further development of programs. It also analyzes the opinions and recommendations of specialists in the field and compares the existing programs with similar programs of foreign universities. Based on the analysis of such complex indicators the Quality Assurance Office assesses the efficiency of implementation of educational programs and offers recommendations and suggestions to program personnel for further development of the education programs.

Based on materials submitted by the University and site-visit interviews, a group of experts did not find the evidence that the University conducts students semester surveys at the end of mandatory study courses/study courses evaluations. Despite the fact that the university conducts student satisfaction surveys as well as the surveys to evaluate teaching of personnel, such surveys do not include questions for respondents to get feedback about the implementation of the research component of the program. University should ensure that master and doctoral students evaluate the implementation of the scientific-research component and scientific supervision. University should ensure that at the end of each semester students evaluate the main (mandatory) study courses.

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 - Business Administration, Master**

See cluster evaluation of standard 5.3.

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 2 - Business Administration, Ph.D**

See cluster evaluation of standard 5.3. In addition it should be noted that the benchmarking document for Doctoral Programme in Business Administration was not developed by the personnel involved in programme implementation as well as by the Quality Assurance Office of the University. Besides this, program learning outcomes evaluation reports should be developed using existing methodology.

#### **Evidences/Indicators**

- Educational program and syllabi;
- Mechanisms for Evaluating Teaching Quality Development Opportunities (Resolution of Academic Council of Sokhumi State University #05/01 - 20, 20.04.2012);
- The Methodology of approval, planning and development of graduate programs;
- The Methodology of approval, planning and development of doctoral programs;
- Statue of the University;
- Provision of the faculty of Business and Social Sciences;
- Regulation for study process;
- Methodology for defining the number of academic, research and invited personnel;
- Minutes of the Self-Assessment Group/Working Groups meetings;

- Minutes of Faculty Council and Academic Council of the University;
- Webpage of the university <https://www.sou.edu.ge/home>;
- Strategic development and action plans of the university;
- Job market research documents for related programs;
- Document of comparison/benchmarking with the analogous local and foreign education programs (for MA program) ;
- Annual reports of evaluation of educational programs, quality of teaching and service (Faculty of Business and Social Sciences);
- Programs learning outcome evaluation mechanism;
- Programs learning outcome evaluation plans for related programs;
- Programs learning outcome evaluation report for MA program;
- Analysis of collegial evaluations of academic/invited personnel 2023;
- External evaluation reports by local and foreign experts;
- Internal evaluation reports;
- Regulations for distance/electronic study process (Academic Council resolution № 05/01-608; 24. 03. 2020);
- Survey forms for students and personnel, graduates and employers;
- Analysis of students, graduates and personnel surveys for related programs, 2024;
- Interviews with representatives of university administration, academic/invited personnel and employers;
- Interviews with representatives of students and alumni from related programs;
- Self-evaluation report presented by the university.

#### **General recommendations of the cluster:**

- It is recommended that master and doctoral students evaluate the implementation of the scientific-research component and scientific supervision.
- The panel recommends that at the end of each semester students evaluate the main (mandatory) study courses.

**General suggestions of the cluster:** None

#### **Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes (if any):**

**Programme 2 (Business Administration , Doctoral Programme)**

**Recommendation(s):**

- Comparison with similar programmes of foreign universities/benchmarking document for Doctoral Programme in Business Administration should be developed in order to apply best international practices.
- Within the program monitoring framework program learning outcomes evaluation report should be developed by Quality Assurance service with cooperation of program personnel using existing methodology.

### Evaluation

Component 5.3. Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, PhD)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Compliance of the programmes with the standards

5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Attached documentation (if applicable):

Name of the higher education institution:

Sokhumi State University

Name of Higher Educational Programmes, Levels:

Programme 1 - Business Administration, Master



## Programme 2 - Business Administration, Ph.D

### Compliance of the programmes with the standards

Contents  Standard	1. Educational Programme Objectives, Learning Outcomes and their Compliance with the Programme	2. Methodology and Organisation of Teaching, Adequacy Evaluation of Programme Mastering	3. Student Achievements, Individual Work with them	4. Providing Teaching Resources	5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities
Programme 1 (Business Administration, Master)	Substantially complies with requirements	Complies with requirements	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements
Programme 2 (Business Administration, Ph.D)	Substantially complies with requirements	Complies with requirements	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements

### Signatures

#### Chair of Accreditation Experts Panel

Full name, signature: Muhammad Abdul Rauf

#### Of the member(s) of the Accreditation Experts Panel Full name,

signature: Ekaterine Natsvlishvili,

Full name, signature: Eka Gegeshidze

Full name, signature: Vazha Kelikhashvili

Full name, signature: Ia Natsvlishvili