**NATIONAL CENTER FOR
EDUCATIONAL QUALITY
ENHANCEMENT**

Accreditation Final Report on Higher Education Programme

Name of Educational Programme, Level of Education:
"Public Administration and State Governance" BA program

Name of Higher Education Institution
International Black Sea University LLC

Evaluation Date(s): 24 September 2024

Report Submission Date: 20 December 2024

Tbilisi

Information about a Higher Education Institution [1]

Name of Institution Indicating its Organizational Legal Form	International Black Sea University LLC (Limited Liability Company)
Identification Code of Institution	229275405
Type of the Institution	University

Expert Panel Members

Chair (Name, Surname, HEI/Organisation, Country)	Zsuzsanna Szeles University of Sopron/Hungary
Member (Name, Surname, HEI/Organisation, Country)	Ekaterina Zakaradze Grigol Robakidze University/Georgia
Member (Name, Surname, HEI/Organisation, Country)	Zhana Sirbiladze, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University/NGO sector/Georgia
Member (Name, Surname, HEI/Organisation, Country)	Sandro Tabatadze, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University/Georgia
Member (Name, Surname, HEI/Organisation, Country)	Dimitri Tsanava, Caucasus International University/Georgia

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[1] In the case of joint education programme: Please indicate the HEIs that carry out the programme. The indication of an identification code and type of institution is not obligatory if a HEI is recognised in accordance with the legislation of a foreign country.

I. Information on the education programme

Name of Higher Education Programme (in Georgian)	საჯარო ადმინისტრირება და სახელმწიფო მმართველობა
Name of Higher Education Programme (in English)	"Public Administration and State Governance"
Level of Higher Education	BA, 6th Level
Qualification to be Awarded[2]	Bachelor of Public Administration
Name and Code of the Detailed Field	0413 Management and Administration
Indication of the right to provide the teaching of subject/subjects/group of subjects of the relevant cycle of the general education[3]	-
Language of Instruction	Georgian
Number of ECTS credits	180
Programme Status (Accredited/ Non-accredited/ Conditionally accredited/new/International accreditation) Indicating Relevant Decision (number, date)	New
Additional requirements for the programme admission (in the case of an art-creative and/or sports educational programme, passing a creative tour/internal competition, or in the case of another programme, specific requirements for admission to the programme/implementation of the programme)	-

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[2] In case of implementing a joint higher education programme with a higher education institution recognized in accordance with the legislation of a foreign country, if the title of the qualification to be awarded differs, it shall be indicated separately for each institution.

[3] 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 Education Pogramme[4]**

International Black Sea University has been engaged in educational and scientific activities since 1995. The university is the first English-language educational institution in Georgia, which offers programs in both English and Georgian languages at all three levels. At International Black Sea University (IBSU), the four-year undergraduate program of public administration and state governance gained accreditation for the first time in 2012. This program is based on the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), the duration of the program is 3 academic years or 6 semesters and includes 180 credits.

- **Overview of the Accreditation Site Visit**

The on-site visit took place on September 24, 2024, with the participation of the visiting committee of five experts. The visiting committee, made up of experts, conducted the investigation in accordance with the specified standards and met with representatives of the academic and non-academic areas of the university. With the help of targeted questions, group requested and received answers for a better, more transparent understanding of the individual standards and for a clear view of the university's educational, research and administrative processes. The teaching and research colleagues, the administrative staff and the students who participated in the panel discussions gave satisfactory answers to the experts' questions. The additional materials requested during the investigation were fully made available to the committee.

Brief Overview of Education Programme Compliance with the Standards

The program complies with their respective qualification levels as outlined in the National Qualifications Framework. The program adheres to the sector-specific benchmarks and qualifications detailed in the Higher Education standards. This alignment guarantees that the programs are not only consistent with the expected levels of academic achievement but also with the broader educational framework. Moreover, the learning outcomes are crafted to match the sectoral benchmarks, ensuring that they meet both national and international standards for higher education and professional preparation. In developing these learning outcomes, significant stakeholder engagement has been a cornerstone. Academic and research staff, students, alumni, and employers were actively involved in the process, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of labor market demands and educational needs.

The program basically meets the requirements, this can be established during the self-evaluation report (SER) and the on-site visit. All educational programs must be in line with labor market expectations, and efforts are made to achieve this.

The learning outcomes for the educational program are meticulously aligned with the program goals and the specific characteristics of each field of study. The Public Administration and State Governance,

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[4] When providing general information related to the programme, it is appropriate to also present the quantitative data analysis of the educational programme.

Bachelor program is designed to ensure that students acquire a well-rounded set of knowledge, skills, and a sense of responsibility and autonomy upon completion.

The evaluation system for the learning outcomes of the Public Administration and State Governance education program is comprehensive.

The bachelor's program is built on the basis of the ECTS system, is student-centered, and is based on the student's academic load, which is necessary to achieve the goals of the educational program.

The content of the courses is adequate and available in the courses' syllabi, which follow the institutional regulations concerning the structure and complete information about teaching and teaching methods, contents, objectives, credits, student load, admission requirements, learning outcomes, evaluation procedures, basic and additional literature and any other information that proves to be helpful for the purpose.

The admission preconditions are clear and aligned with corresponding regulations. The prerequisites for admission to the programme are defined in the programme's educational plan. The prerequisites take into account the specific nature of the programme and ensure that only persons with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competence are admitted.

It is confirmed by the presented documentation and the on-site interview that the Bachelor's program in Public Administration and State Governance has various mechanisms for the development of students' practical skills. The curriculum includes practical assignments and/or group and pair work.

In order to effectively implement student-centered teaching and learning, it is necessary for students to have more practical experience; to have a portion of their educational practice organized by the university; to strengthen the syllabus in project management; and to ensure that students undergo various training sessions or informational meetings related to international databases.

The International Black Sea University implements a transparent and fair assessment system in accordance with legislation, which enables students to improve their level of academic achievement.

The program self-assessment report and accompanying documentation reviews, along with information obtained during the accreditation visit, reveals that according to the procedures defined by internal legal acts associated with the program, students are afforded the opportunity to receive consultation and support regarding educational process planning, academic achievement improvement and career planning.

The qualification of the academic staff is confirmed by their works (publication activities, significant practical experience in the field). All invited personnel have experience in teaching.

IBSU is committed to fostering the professional development of its academic, scientific, and invited staff. This commitment is demonstrated through a variety of activities, including training and workshops. It should be noted that IBSU has research centers and implements international peer-reviewed journals that are opportunities for academic and invited staff to publish their work.

The university's infrastructure is quite modern, with recent upgrades to the computers, as confirmed by the students.

The program's budget is adequate for its operation.

The IBSU internal quality assurance concept is integral to its strategic management and aims to achieve its mission and objectives. This concept relies on systematic and needs-based research and evaluation practices.

As per the IBSU quality assurance policy, external review is crucial to the PDCA cycle. Upon conducting site visits and document analysis, it was apparent that two external evaluations were carried out for the BA program in Public Administration.

IBSU utilizes the quality assurance concept to monitor and periodically evaluate educational programs in a specified manner. The results of these evaluations are used to make improvements to the programs. The process is inclusive and operational, involving academic, visiting, and administrative staff, students, alumnis, employers, as well as international and local professors who participate in the peer review process. The data collection and analysis process are systematic, relying on a mixture of social science research methodology and data aggregation practices. This approach ultimately allows for the formulation of conclusions and recommendations.

- **Recommendations**

- 1.5.1 It is recommended that the title of the course "Introduction to Political Ideologies" be changed to fully encompass the course content, including political thought.
- 1.5.2 -
- 1.5.3 It is recommended to include detailed topics on the Europeanization of public policy to ensure that sectoral benchmarks are met. Additionally, it would be beneficial to add some sentences in the text section.
- 1.5.4 It is recommended that the literature in the syllabi be updated in order to provide students with the latest information and to keep them informed about the most authentic and recent materials related to the subject matter.

  Detail for recommendation 1.5.4.: After a detailed review of the syllabi in the presented documentation, the following directions were identified:

  a/ The course syllabus 'Computer Skills' contains only 1 required and 1 supplementary literature. There is quite a lot of contemporary literature on these topics, the use of which would be appropriate as both required and supplementary reading;

  b/ As for the academic discipline 'Introduction to Political Science,' the required literature includes only 1 textbook dated 2019. Although there is quite a bit of new literature on the topics discussed in this discipline, and its inclusion would not be a bad idea. For example: Minougi, K.; M. Weber (translated by G. Baramidze), and others.

  In general, the most recent source is the primary one in the syllabi. Our main goal is to strengthen each other and increase the advice and recommendations, which will make the learning process more flexible and dynamic. Therefore, if the head of each academic discipline uses not just one, but as many recent and relevant sources as possible, it will be even better.
- 2.2.1 -

- **Suggestions for Programme Development**

  - 1.3.1 It is suggested that the document on the evaluation mechanism of learning outcomes for each education program should include clear and effective ways to ensure external stakeholders' engagement.
  - 1.3.2 It is suggested that the QA office should foster its efforts to support academic and invited staff regarding the evaluation of learning outcomes and ensure that the rubrics of the assessment instrument, as outlined in the syllabus, accurately and reliably measure the intended learning outcomes.
  - 1.5.1. It I suggested that the "Public Policy" syllabus be revised to ensure its content aligns fully with the teaching course name.
  - 2.1.1 It is suggested that the program should include preconditions and detailed information regarding the mobility of students who are citizens of foreign countries (in case of language barrier), as the program is in the Georgian language .
  - 2.2,1 It is suggested that the university enhance internship opportunities for students based on new memoranda, so that students do not have to seek out internship placements themselves.
  - 2.3.1 It is suggested to create opportunities for internships so that as many students as possible can take advantage of this opportunity, which adds significant value to both the students and the program.
  - 2.3.2 It is suggested to develop a network of employers who can support the offering of internship positions related to the program's outputs, considering employers from various industries.
  - 2.3.3 If the program is focused on international students, it is suggested to include some international employers for internship partnerships.
  - 2.3.4 To provide students with more practical experience, it is suggested that a portion of their educational practice be organized by the university. Additionally, the syllabus should be strengthened in project management, and students should participate in various training sessions or informational meetings related to international databases.
  - 3.1.1 Encourage Collaborative Research Projects: Facilitate partnerships between students and faculty on research projects, enhancing engagement and output while providing valuable hands-on experience for students.
  - 4.1.1.Organize Additional In-House Conferences: Schedule more in-house conferences throughout the academic year in addition to the annual event, encouraging collaboration and sharing of research among faculty and students .
  - 4.1.2. Promote the Academic Journal: Implement targeted promotional strategies to raise awareness of the university's academic journal, inviting more contributions from both students and faculty.
  - 4.3.1 It is suggested that IBSU ensures its all-academic staff have their scientific profiles on various platforms such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, ORCID, Scopus, and Clarivate.

- 4.3.2 It is suggested that the evalution system should be more exact. For example: the academic activity report IBSU provides fixed scores rather than fluctuating scores for the component of the academic articles published in Web of Science (Clarivate) and Scopus (Elsevier).
- 4.4.1. Upgrade Furnishings: Invest in modern, ergonomic furniture for classrooms and study areas to create a more conducive learning environment. This could include contemporary tables and chairs that better reflect a higher education setting.
- 4.4.2. Expand Library Facilities: Consider expanding the library space to accommodate the growing student population, ensuring that it can support collaborative work and individual study.
- 4.4.3. Diversify Literature Collection: Broaden the library's collection to include more resources in various fields, especially in international relations. This could involve acquiring additional books and journals that go beyond mandatory readings.
- 4.4.4. Enhance Database Usage: Increase awareness of the available online databases through targeted campaigns, such as informational sessions or digital resources highlighting their benefits. Offer additional workshops or training sessions on research methodologies and database navigation to reinforce the skills needed for effective research.
- 4.4.5. Regular Review of Resources: Establish a periodic review of the library's collections and database subscriptions to ensure they remain relevant and meet the evolving needs of students and faculty.
- 4.4.6. Increase Investment in Literature: Allocate additional funds to expand the library's collection, enabling academic staff to regularly update their materials and stay current in their fields.
- 5.1.1 It is suggested that students, graduates, and employers be directly represented as members of the self-evaluation group.
- 5.2.1 To ensure transparent, effective, and comprehensive external quality assurance, it is suggested that IBSU's quality assurance service actively participate in the process, including preparing the document based on the results of external evaluation.

- **Brief Overview of the Best Practices (if applicable)[5]**

-The management of the university supports its students to the maximum in all areas, they pay a lot of attention to student feedback and handling possible complaints. The infrastructural conditions of the institution (new restaurant, technical equipment of classrooms, creation of a studio for the development of communication content) have improved a lot in recent years, greatly increasing the number of literature available in the library.

- A new scientific progress system helps the work of colleagues.

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

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[5] A practice that is exceptionally effective and that can serve as a benchmark or example for other educational programme/programmes.

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

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 HEI. 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.

1.1 Programme Objectives

Programme objectives consider the specificity of the field of study, level and 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.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The program basically meets the requirements, this can be established during the self-evaluation report (SER) and the on-site visit. All educational programs must be in line with labor market expectations, and efforts are made to achieve this. A labor market survey has taken place, but as in all other fields, the labor market is constantly changing. In accordance with market expectations, the theoretical parts of the subjects must be renewed and the practical examples updated.

The use of a common language is one of the pillars of building research and teaching relationships, the knowledge and use of a foreign language is also the driving force behind the mobility of teachers, researchers and students.

The program under review has clearly defined goals and learning outcomes that are logically linked to each other. The goals of the program are in line with the institution's mission, objectives and strategic plan. The learning results of the program are evaluated periodically in order to improve the program, and colleagues actively participate in the evaluation. The efficiency of the organizational unit responsible for quality assurance conducting the evaluation could be improved, with greater support from colleagues, this activity could be carried out more effectively.

What was formulated in the part of the self-evaluation report concerning the objectives was supported during the on-site inspection, such as:

1. To gain broad theoretical knowledge of the institutional, territorial-administrative and organizational arrangement of public administration, conceptual foundations of public administration.

2. Develop the ability to identify complex and unforeseen problems related to the field of public administration.

3. To develop the ability to search for the necessary information in the field of public administration, data processing, academic honesty, and ethical principles, in accordance with predetermined guidelines. The project approach and the teaching of up-to-date, practical knowledge were also raised during the personal visit in connection with several questions. This is used during the teaching of the program.

4. To develop the ability to analyze the processes related to the field of public administration, to formulate reasoned conclusions related to the field of public administration, and to present them to interested parties.

5. To develop the ability to conduct activities focused on professional development, as well as to determine one's further learning needs and to exercise independence with a high degree of independence.

Evidences/Indicators

- o   Component Program learning outcomes assessment mechanism;

- o   Educational program;

- o   Self-evaluation report;

- o   Interviews with the management staff and the Quality assurance units.

- o   Expert Panel's meetings.

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions for the Programme Development

N/A

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
1.1 Programme Objectives	x	☐	☐	☐

1.2 Programme Learning Outcomes

➢The learning outcomes of the programme are logically related to the programme objectives and the specifics of the study field.

➢ Programme learning outcomes describe knowledge, skills, and/or the responsibility and autonomy that students gain upon completion of the programme.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The learning outcomes for the educational program are meticulously aligned with the program goals and the specific characteristics of each field of study. The Public Administration and State Governance, Bachelor program is designed to ensure that students acquire a well-rounded set of knowledge, skills, and a sense of responsibility and autonomy upon completion. The outcomes are structured to be measurable, achievable, and realistic, with clear mappings provided for the program's objectives and expected outcomes. This approach ensures that the learning outcomes directly reflect the aims of the program, meeting the needs of students and the requirements of the educational and professional sectors.

The program complies with their respective qualification levels as outlined in the National Qualifications Framework. Each program adheres to the sector-specific benchmarks and qualifications detailed in the Higher Education standards. This alignment guarantees that the programs are not only consistent with the expected levels of academic achievement but also with the broader educational framework. Moreover, the learning outcomes are crafted to match the sectoral benchmarks, ensuring that they meet both national and international standards for higher education and professional preparation. In developing these learning outcomes, significant stakeholder engagement has been a cornerstone. Academic and research staff, students, alumni, and employers were actively involved in the process, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of labor market demands and educational needs. This collaborative approach has resulted in learning outcomes that are relevant to both local and international job markets, facilitating the graduates' progression to further education and professional advancement.

Updating learning outcomes to include these skills ensures that graduates remain competitive and relevant in the job market, addressing both current and future industry demands. It is important to strengthen the focus on soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and leadership in the learning outcomes. Research shows that soft skills are increasingly valued by employers and are crucial for career success.

According to Self-Evaluation Report on Accreditation after completing the undergraduate educational program of public administration and state governance, the student:

Knowledge and understanding:

1. Describes the main theories, principles, stages of development of the field, trends, institutional, legal, political and economic bases of public administration, basic principles of public administration, forms of organizational arrangement and activity of administrative bodies, innovative and effective tools of the administrative process, results the mechanisms necessary for the implementation of focused decisions.

2. Explains the specifics of public administration processes, the need to observe the general rules of ethics and behavior in public institutions.

Skills:

3. Identifies complex problems related to the field of public administration and, using

quantitative and qualitative research methods.

4. Finds and interprets the necessary information, processes data and, following the principles of academic

integrity and ethics.

5. Analyzes processes related to the field of public administration, applied data, and situations.

6. Discusses own ideas, and problems in the field of public administration and their solutions.

Autonomy and responsibility:

7. Conducts activities focused on the continuous professional development of oneself and others.

8. In the realm of public administration, problem-solving approaches are grounded in the principles of good governance (GG) and adhere to the principles of collaboration.

Evidences/Indicators

- o Self-Evaluation Report
- o Program Description
- o Appendices of the programs
- o Interview with stakeholders

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions for Programme Development

N/A

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
1.2 Programme Learning Outcomes	X	☐	☐	☐

1.3 Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes

➢ Evaluation mechanisms of the programme learning outcomes are defined; the programme learning outcomes evaluation cycle 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.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The evaluation system for the learning outcomes of the Public Administration and State Governance education program is comprehensive. The documentation explains how teaching courses and

evaluation methods measure each program's learning outcomes. Additionally, each situation includes a defined evaluation period and sets specific target goals. In particular, the evaluation components for mandatory introductory teaching courses are outlined to effectively gauge the results of comprehensive knowledge acquisition in the field.

In the BPA (BA in Public Administration) program, more than 60% of the students achieved scores that exceeded 70% of the maximum evaluation for a specific component. Since the learning outcomes of these programs have not been evaluated yet, it is not easy to demonstrate the significance of these expected quantitative measures. However, a 15% deviation is a significant possibility and should be considered.

To elaborate on the mechanism mentioned above, let's consider an example of one of the learning outcomes of the BA program in Public Administration: "Explains the specifics of PA processes, the need to observe the general rules of ethics and behavior in public institutions, and to promote the participation of citizens in the formation of a democratic society." Based on the provided documents, this learning outcome will be evaluated through four different activities from various courses, including a presentation in the course "Introduction to Political Science" and the final exam in "Strategic Management." Additionally, it has been decided that the assessment will occur in the third and fourth semesters. However, the syllabus does not specify the presentation topics. The rubrics mainly focus on "the thematic and visual outline," which may not be sufficient to assess the achievement of the mentioned learning outcome. Therefore, it is crucial for those responsible for evaluating learning outcomes to regularly ensure that the rubrics align with the assessment mechanism for learning outcomes, as this alignment is not just necessary but vital for practical evaluation.

From the documents and interviews, it is clear that the faculty played a pivotal role in devising the mechanism to evaluate the learning outcomes of the educational program. Their active participation underscores their integral role in the process. However, more support from the IBSU quality assurance office would be beneficial, as some academic and invited staff are not fully acquainted with the learning outcomes assessment mechanism.

Lastly, the evaluation process should involve all program implementers. While analyzing learning outcomes is a mechanism for improving educational programs, the document needs to clearly show how external stakeholders (students, alumni, and employers) are involved in assessing learning outcomes. Their involvement is crucial to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive evaluation process.

Evidences/Indicators

- Component Program learning outcomes assessment mechanism;

- Curriculum map;

- Educational program/s;

- Self-evaluation report;

- Expert Panel's meetings.

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions for the Programme Development

o   1.3.1 It is suggested that the document on the evaluation mechanism of learning outcomes for each education program should include clear and effective ways to ensure external stakeholders' engagement.

o   1.3.2 It is suggested that the QA office should foster its efforts to support academic and invited staff regarding the evaluation of learning outcomes and ensure that the rubrics of the assessment instrument, as outlined in the syllabus, accurately and reliably measure the intended learning outcomes.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
1.3 Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes	X	☐	☐	☐

1.4. Structure and Content of Education Programme

➢   The Programme is designed according to HEI's methodology for planning, designing and developing of education programmes.

➢   The Programme structure is consistent and logical. The content and structure of the programme ensure the achievement of programme learning outcomes. The qualification to be granted is consistent with the content and learning outcomes of the programme.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The bachelor's program is built on the basis of the ECTS system, is student-centered, and is based on the student's academic load, which is necessary to achieve the goals of the educational program.

The duration of the program is 3 academic years (6 semesters). The volume of the program is 180 credits. 1 credit includes 25 hours. During the semester, the student must complete 30 credits (30 credits = 750 hours), and 60 credits per year, however, depending on the specifics of the program and the student's individual workload, the number of credits per year may be less or more than 60, but not more than 75 .

The volume of credits of the Public Administration and State Governance bachelor's program is distributed as

follows:

 Compulsory study courses of the specialty 135 credits;

 Academic writing - 5 credits;

 Computer skills - 5 credits;

 Foreign languages - 10 credits

 Specialty elective courses - 15 credits;

 Free component - 10 credits:

The first two semesters mostly serve to introduce the theoretical foundations of the field. The study of the main issues, actors, current processes and challenges of the field starts from the third semester. In the final semester, preparation of a bachelor's thesis is provided, which includes 10 credits.

The program envisages the study of foreign language(s) in the amount of 10 credits. Unfortunately, the knowledge and use of the foreign language during the meetings during the visit was not typical.

Within the framework of the public administration and state governance bachelor program, the curriculum of the program defines the prerequisites for admission to the study components of the program, the sequence of study components, the semester distribution of study courses, the student's semester load.

Evidences/Indicators

- o Program Description

- o Self-Evaluation Report

- o Appendices of the Programs

- o Interview with stakeholders

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions for the programme development

N/A

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
1.4 Structure and Content of Educational Programme	X	☐	☐	☐

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.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The content of the courses is adequate and available in the courses' syllabi, which follow the institutional regulations concerning the structure and complete information about teaching and teaching methods, contents, objectives, credits, student load, admission requirements, learning outcomes, evaluation procedures, basic and additional literature and any other information that proves to be helpful for the purpose.

Adequate attention is paid to the articulation between courses within each programme and between the different programmes, which ensures a general balance oriented to attain the expected goals.

The collaborative actions involved in these tasks, well-described by diverse stakeholders during the interviews, reveal a mature unfolding.

The learning outcomes of each study course of the presented bachelor's programme correspond to the learning outcomes of the programme and the corresponding level of higher education. To ensure alignment of course learning outcomes with programme one and the appropriate level, there is a map detailing programme learning outcome(s) correlated with individual course meets. All the courses in the program are evaluated by ECTS credits. When determining the contact and independent hours, the content of the course, the scope and activities planned within the course and tasks are taken into account. The study of the presented documentation and programme syllabi showed that, depending on the content and learning outcomes of the training courses, appropriate teaching and learning methods are defined in the courses. The syllabus for each course describes the methods, criteria and rubrics for evaluating the learning outcomes.

However, it should be noted that there are a number of challenges in the direction of internationalization, which need to be addressed promptly in light of the program's objectives. It is essential for the university to ensure the improvement of internship opportunities through various memorandums so that students do not encounter problems related to this issue and do not have to seek out internship placements on their own.

The provided documentation and the interviews conducted on-site confirm that improving the practical component is a crucial part of the program's sustainability. It is essential for the university to take this issue into account and diversify the curricula with more practical components, which will allow students to easily grasp this educational aspect, make it more attractive to students, and develop the practical skills that will assist them in their professional growth.

In individual teaching courses, the group of experts holds certain positions. For instance, in the "Introduction to Political Ideologies" course, the first part covers political doctrines, while the second part offers a brief overview of several main ideologies. The relevant professor has agreed with the expert group that the course's name and content are not in line; hence, the name should accurately reflect the content. A similar issue arises with the public policy course. Specifically, the course's content focuses more on public policy sectors than public policy itself. It is because the course should cover topics such as decision-making models, alternative models of public policy-making, public-private partnership (PPP) approaches, and types and levels of public policy. These topics are essential for the public policy course to align with its name.

Evidences/Indicators

· Self-Evaluation Report

· Educational programmes, study plans and syllabi

· Curriculum map

· Documents related to institutional procedures for planning, elaboration, assessment and development of educational programmes

· Self-assessment report

· Interviews with the management staff, the Quality assurance units, the teaching staff, the students, and the graduates

Recommendations:

1.5.1 It is recommended that the title of the course "Introduction to Political Ideologies" be changed to fully encompass the course content, including political thought.

1.5.2 It is recommended to add the course about the "Europeanization of public policy"

1.5.3 It is recommended that the literature in the syllabi be updated in order to provide students with the latest information and to keep them informed about the most authentic and recent materials related to the subject matter.

Detail for recommendation 1.5.3.: After a detailed review of the syllabi in the presented documentation, the following directions were identified:

a/ The course syllabus 'Computer Skills' contains only 1 required and 1 supplementary literature. There is quite a lot of contemporary literature on these topics, the use of which would be appropriate as both required and supplementary reading;

b/ As for the academic discipline 'Introduction to Political Science,' the required literature includes only 1 textbook dated 2019. Although there is quite a bit of new literature on the topics discussed in this discipline, and its inclusion would not be a bad idea. For example: Minougi, K.; M. Weber (translated by G. Baramidze), and others.

In general, the most recent source is the primary one in the syllabi. Our main goal is to strengthen each other and increase the advice and recommendations, which will make the learning process more flexible and dynamic. Therefore, if the head of each academic discipline uses not just one, but as many recent and relevant sources as possible, it will be even better.

Suggestions for the programme development

1.5.1. It is suggested that the "Public Policy" syllabus be revised to ensure its content aligns fully with the teaching course name.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
1.5. Academic Course/Subject	☐	X	☐	☐

Compliance of the Programme with the Standard

1. Educational programme objectives, learning outcomes and their compliance with the programme	Complies with requirements	X
	Substantially complies with requirements	☐
	Partially complies with requirements	☐
	Does not comply with requirements	☐

2. Methodology and Organisation of Teaching, Adecuacy 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 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.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The admission preconditions are clear and aligned with corresponding regulations. The information concerning admission preconditions is public and accessible through suitable channels, including the website, other information and communication technologies, social media and open door days. They are entirely in line with the requirements of the different levels.

The prerequisites for admission to the programme are defined in the programme's educational plan. The prerequisites take into account the specific nature of the programme and ensure that only persons with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competence are admitted.

Eligibility to enroll in the Bachelor's program in Public Administration and State Governance is granted to individuals holding a complete general education or an equivalent document who have successfully passed the Unified National Examinations.

Applicants must take the following mandatory subjects:
- Georgian Language and Literature;
- English/German/French/Russian Language;

Additionally, the applicant must take one of the following subjects in the Unified National Examinations: Mathematics/History/Geography/Civic Education.

Individuals may gain the right to enroll in the program without passing the Unified National Examinations based on the Order No. 224/n of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia, dated December 29, 2011, regarding the approval of the procedure for the submission and consideration of documents by applicants who have the right to study without passing the Unified National Examinations. The conditions for admission to the program for foreign citizens are available on the university's website at https://iro.ibsu.edu.ge/en/home.

The program will also accept students enrolled through mobility in accordance with the Order No. 10/n of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia, dated February 4, 2010, regarding the approval of the procedure and fees for transferring from one higher educational institution to another.

Therefore, the admission conditions for the program are in accordance with the legislation in force in Georgia and ensure that individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills for achieving the learning outcomes of the program are allowed to enroll.

However, in the case of a foreign citizen or a student who does not know the Georgian language transferring through mobility, the university's position regarding the requirements for confirming knowledge of the Georgian language is somewhat unclear. Additionally, the program is conducted entirely in the Georgian language, and the record regarding the admission of foreign citizens to the program is irrelevant.

Evidences/Indicators

- Bachelor's program in Public Administration and State Governance and syllabi;

- Website of the International Black Sea University
- Self-evaluation document
- Interviews with academic, and administrative personnel
- Methodology to effectively plan the number of students admitted to the program

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions for the programme development

2.1.1 It is suggested that the program should include preconditions and detailed information regarding the mobility of students who are citizens of foreign countries (in case of language barrier), as the program is in the Georgian language .

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
2.1 Programme Admission Preconditions	x	☐	☐	☐

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.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

It is confirmed by the presented documentation and the on-site interview that the Bachelor's program in Public Administration and State Governance has various mechanisms for the development of students' practical skills. The curriculum includes practical assignments and/or group and pair work. The program also offers students the opportunity to complete an internship as a mandatory educational component. However, students note that in most cases they have to find their own internship placements, which poses a significant challenge for them.

It is also noteworthy that there is a new syllabus titled 'Innovative Management' as a core course. This course practically equips students with management skills in the form of projects, and during the course, students prepare and present projects that are also practically implemented throughout the semester. However, this is not sufficient to fill the gaps in practical skills identified by both students and faculty. It is essential for the university to focus on enhancing the practical components of the program's educational elements.

To develop research skills, the program includes a Bachelor's thesis as a core component, which is worth 10 credits. However, to promote students' practical, analytical, problem-solving, communication, and especially research skills, the program's mandatory components also include courses such as Academic Writing, Research Methods in Public Administration, and the Bachelor's thesis, which ensures the development of research skills.

To foster the development of practical and research skills, the university encourages and supports student participation in local and international projects, student conferences, and provides relevant information and mentoring. Various educational events are organized and conducted as part of this effort.

The university holds annual student conferences aimed at developing students' scientific and research skills. However, this is not enough; the university should provide students with more opportunities to participate in international and local conferences to enhance their transferable skills.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-Assessment Report
- Bachelor's program in Public Administration and State Governance and syllabi;
- Memorandums of cooperation;
- Quantitative data on student participation in projects and conferences

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions for the programme development

2.2.1 It is suggested that more opportunities be created for student participation in local and international conferences.

2.2.2. It is suggested that the university enhance internship opportunities for students based on new memoranda, so that students do not have to seek out internship placements themselves.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
2.2.The Development of practical, scientific/research/creative/performing and transferable skills	X	☐	☐	☐

2.3. Teaching and Learning Methods

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The provided documentation and the on-site interviews indicate that the implementation of the educational components outlined by the program is carried out using the following teaching/learning methods:

Lecture – Discussion of the main theoretical material, concepts, etc., with active involvement of students.

Group Work – Collaborative group work develops the knowledge and skills needed for planning and executing specific tasks in a cooperative environment. During group work, case studies, quizzes, exercises, and examples are discussed, allowing students to acquire skills for solving problems collectively, which in turn fosters the development of teamwork abilities, among other things.

Practical/Laboratory Work – Practical/laboratory sessions focus on in-depth understanding of issues through the examination of relevant examples, case analyses, or video materials, along with proposing exercises and searching for solutions, which reinforces students' ability to apply their acquired knowledge in practice and enhances their creative and analytical thinking.

Seminar – The purpose of the seminar is to provide students with the opportunity to detail, better understand, and analyze the topics and issues covered in the lecture.

Independent Study – Through independent study, students can consolidate and deepen the knowledge gained in lectures. Independent study involves using textbooks and other informational resources to find, read, comprehend, and study material, as well as completing assignments given during lectures.

To meet the individual needs of students within the program, additional consultation time and location with the lecturer are allocated for each course, totaling 2 hours per week for each course. Information about the consultation meetings is included in the syllabi of the respective courses. To ensure this, a schedule of consultation meetings is compiled each semester. This schedule is publicly accessible during the course of the academic process.

In order to effectively implement student-centered teaching and learning, it is necessary for students to have more practical experience; to have a portion of their educational practice organized by the university; to strengthen the syllabus in project management; and to ensure that students undergo various training sessions or informational meetings related to international databases. This is crucial because it was found during interviews that most students do not even utilize international databases and prefer to search for information using Google. Additionally, exam questions should be clearly formulated so that students can answer them without the lecturer

present (since final exams are held in classrooms where the supervisor is not the teacher of the specific subject being tested, students struggle to answer questions when they arise).

Evidences/Indicators

- Regulation of the Academic Process at the International Black Sea University
- Interviews with Student and Employers
- Programme and syllabi
- Self-assessment report
- Map of the curriculum
- Report on the activities of the startup-factory of the University of Georgia
- Interviews with Academic Staff

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions for the programme development

2.3.1 It is suggested to create opportunities for internships so that as many students as possible can take advantage of this opportunity, which adds significant value to both the students and the program.

2.3.2 It is suggested to develop a network of employers who can support the offering of internship positions related to the program's outputs, considering employers from various industries.

2.3.3 If the program is focused on international students, it is suggested to include some international employers for internship partnerships.

2.3.4 To provide students with more practical experience, it is suggested that a portion of their educational practice be organized by the university. Additionally, the syllabus should be strengthened in project management, and students should participate in various training sessions or informational meetings related to international databases.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
2.3. Teaching and learning methods	x	☐	☐	☐

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The International Black Sea University implements a transparent and fair assessment system in accordance with legislation, which enables students to improve their level of academic achievement. This system is reflected in the institution's regulatory rules for the educational process and in the current legislation of Georgia. The program incorporates a student assessment system, with specific assessment components and methods tailored to the specifics of each course. Students have the opportunity to acquire credits as stipulated by the program only when they achieve the learning outcomes outlined in the syllabus. Students are informed in advance about the forms, components, and methods of assessment.

The program provides for both oral and written assessment of students. The maximum assessment threshold for each course is 100 points, representing the sum of midterm and final assessments.

The assessment system consists of:

a) Five types of positive assessments:

1. (A) Excellent – 91-100 points;

2. (B) Very Good – 81-90 points;

3. (C) Good – 71-80 points;

4. (D) Satisfactory – 61-70 points;

5. (E) Sufficient – 51-60 points.

b) Two types of negative assessments:

1. (FX) Failed – 41-50 points, meaning the student needs to work more to pass and is given the right to take an additional exam once through independent work;

2. (F) Failed – 40 points or less, meaning the work done by the student is not sufficient and they must retake the course.

The point distribution for midterm and final assessments, their minimum competency thresholds and assessment rubrics are detailed in the syllabus of the respective component.

Within the framework of the bachelor's program, students have the opportunity to be informed in advance about the rules, forms, components, criterias and point distribution for assessing both the bachelor's thesis and individual courses. This information is reflected in the syllabus of each component. The course lecturer introduces the syllabus to students at the beginning of the course and the syllabi is also uploaded to the university's electronic database, where students can access it at any time.

The assessment system is transparent and fair. When necessary, students have the opportunity to use an appeals mechanism. However, prior to appealing, students can approach the course lecturer to receive additional information regarding a specific assessment.

Evidences/Indicators

- Bachelor's Program in Public Administration and Governance;

- Syllabi of the Public Administration and Governance program;

- University's regulatory rules for the educational process;

- Interview results.

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions for the programme development

N/A

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
2.4. Student evaluation	x	☐	☐	☐

Compliance with the programme standards

	Complies with requirements	X
2. Methodology and Organisation of Teaching, Adequacy of Evaluation of Programme Mastering	Substantially complies with requirements	☐
	Partly complies with requirements	☐
	Does not comply with requirements	☐

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 involvement in local and/or international projects; proper quality of scientific guidance is provided for master's and doctoral students.

3.1 Student Consulting and Support Services

Students receive consultation and support regarding the planning of 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.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The program self-assessment report and accompanying documentation reviews, along with information obtained during the accreditation visit, reveals that according to the procedures defined by internal legal acts associated with the program, students are afforded the opportunity to receive consultation and support regarding educational process planning, academic achievement improvement and career planning.

Interviews conducted with students and alumni during the visit confirmed the effective utilization of consultation hours in practice, which are optimally tailored to students interests. Information regarding existing consultations, events and academic activities at the university is readily accessible to students through various channels.

Students are provided with all requisite information concerning the progression of the educational process and maintain communication with both the institution's administration and academic or invited staff. The students are also granted access to course materials, library resources, curriculum and the academic calendar.

Within the framework of scientific projects, the university publishes works of successful students, including conference theses and articles written under faculty guidance. The university offers courses with professional components designed to assist students in applying and reinforcing theoretical knowledge gained at the university in practical settings Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the education programme with the requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

Evidences/Indicators

- Syllabi;
- Report on student participation in projects/conferences and conducted webinars;
- Regulatory documents pertaining to the educational process
- Self-evaluation report;
- Interview results.

- Component evidences/indicators, including the relevant documents and interview results

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions for Programme Development

3.1.1 Encourage Collaborative Research Projects: Facilitate partnerships between students and faculty on research projects, enhancing engagement and output while providing valuable hands-on experience for students.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
3.1 Student Consulting and Support Services	X	☐	☐	☐

3.2. Master's and Doctoral Student Supervision

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the education programme with the requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

Data related to the supervision of master's/ doctoral students	
Quantity of master/PhD theses	
Number of master's/doctoral students	
Ratio	

Evidences/Indicators

- o   Component evidences/indicators, including the relevant documents and interview results

Recommendations:

- o   Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for the programme development

- o   Non-binding suggestions for the programme development

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
3.2. Master's and Doctoral Students Supervision	☐	☐	☐	☐

Compliance with the programme standards

3. Students Achievements, Individual Work with them	Complies with requirements	X
	Substantially complies with requirements	☐
	Partly complies with requirements	☐
	Does not comply with requirements	☐

4. Providing Teaching Resources

Human, material, information and financial resources of educational programme ensure 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 of appropriate competence.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The qualification of the academic staff is confirmed by their works (publication activities, significant practical experience in the field). All invited personnel have experience in teaching.

The semester load scheme of the academic and invited staff involved in the implementation of the program has been developed within the framework of the public administration and state governance bachelor program.

When determining the number of academic and invited staff and distributing the workload, International Black Sea University's methodology for determining the number of academic and invited staff is taken into account. The maximum lecture load of a professor at International Black Sea University is 9 academic hours per week, for an associate professor - 12 academic hours, for an assistant professor - 15 academic hours. Visiting lecturer workload - maximum 15 hours per week. The workload of academic and invited staff also includes consulting hours with students, namely 2 hours per week.

Programme staff consists of qualified people (academic and invited staff), who have necessary competences in order to help students to achieve the programme learning outcomes.

The Head of the Programme possesses necessary knowledge and experience required for programme elaboration.

Programme students are provided with an adequate number of administrative and support staff of appropriate competence. 38 academic and invited personnel are involved in the implementation of the bachelor program of public administration and state governance, including 20 academic and 18 invited staff. The detailed information about academic and invited staff is shown in the table below.

It is noteworthy that the university has a methodology for determining the number of personnel, which ensures the identification of the academic staff necessary for the sustainability of the program.

Number of the staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, and invited staff)	Number of Programme Staff	Including the staff with sectoral expertise[6]	Including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction[7]	Among them, the affiliated staff
Total number of academic staff	38			
- Professor	8		8	4
- Associate Professor	9		7	7
- Assistant-Professor	3		0	3
- Assistant				
Visiting Staff	18		3	_
Scientific Staff	20			_

Evidences/Indicators

- ○ Reports on academic and invited staff evaluation
- ○ Interview results;
- ○ Self-Evaluation Report

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions for Programme Development

4.1.1. Organize Additional In-House Conferences: Schedule more in-house conferences throughout the academic year in addition to the annual event, encouraging collaboration and sharing of research among faculty and students.

4.1.2. Promote the Academic Journal: Implement targeted promotional strategies to raise awareness of the university's academic journal, inviting more contributions from both students and faculty.

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[6] Staff implementing the relevant components of the main field of study
[7] Staff with relevant doctoral degrees implementing the components of the main field of study

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
4.1 Human Resources	X	☐	☐	☐

4.2 Qualification of Supervisors of Master's and Doctoral Students

The 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.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the education programme with the requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses	Thesis supervisors	Including the supervisors holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction	Among them, the affiliated staff
Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral thesis			
- Professor			
- Associate Professor			
- Assistant-Professor			
Visiting personnel			–
Scientific Staff			–

Evidences/Indicators

- o   Component evidences/indicators, including the relevant documents and interview results

Recommendations:

- o   Proposal (s), which should be considered by the HEI, the programme to meet the requirements of the standard

Suggestions for the programme development

4. Non-binding suggestions for programme development

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
4.2 Qualification of Supervisors of Master's and Doctoral Students	☐	☐	☐	☐

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.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

IBSU has an evaluation mechanism for both academic and invited staff. This mechanism includes an Evaluation Policy for academic staff and a separate one for invited staff. The assessment for academic staff focuses on their research and teaching contributions, while for invited staff, it primarily evaluates their participation in the teaching process. As mentioned by the self-evaluation group during the interview, this evaluation system considers various components. Teaching and research each have their evaluation criteria, and the method for evaluating academic staff is based on a system of accumulated points. Activities are ranked, and points are awarded accordingly, with the results presented to the Head of the program and the faculty administration. However, the expert group identified an issue in the IBSU academic performance report form that needs to be corrected. The points awarded to academic staff in one component vary and are unclear. Therefore, the expert group believes it's essential to establish a fixed score for articles published in the academic activity report. It should include a clearly defined score for the relevant impact factor (for Clarivate) and CiteScore (Elsevier) rather than having fluctuating scores.

IBSU is committed to fostering the professional development of its academic, scientific, and invited staff. This commitment is demonstrated through a variety of activities, including training and workshops. It should be noted that IBSU has research centers and implements international peer-reviewed journals that are opportunities for academic and invited staff to publish their work. The new top management of IBSU has already launched internal research grant projects, further demonstrating our dedication to professional growth.

During and after the pandemic, the university took steps to improve remote learning effectiveness. The university organized webinars, developed guidelines, and conducted training to

engage academics and invited staff in online learning. The university also supports personnel publishing scientific works in international and local scientific journals, preparing monographs, participating in international conferences, receiving scientific awards, and engaging in international collaborations.

However, the expert panel found that some academic staff have no profile on platforms such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, ORCID, Scopus, and Clarivate. Therefore, IBSU needs to intensify its efforts in this direction, as it is a critical factor in enhancing the scientific research productivity of the staff. The expert panel has observed an uneven distribution and a need for more scientific articles in high-rated journals.

Evidences/Indicators

- IBSU Academic evaluation of the staff
- Reports on academic and invited staff evaluation
- Interview results;
- SER
- Policy on Funding for Participation in International Scientific Conferences
- Policy for Evaluating Scientific Research Activities and University Financing;
- Personal files of academic and invited staff;

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions for the programme development

4.3.1 It is suggested that IBSU ensures its all-academic staff have their scientific profiles on various platforms such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, ORCID, Scopus, and Clarivate.

4.3.2 It is suggested that the evalution system should be more exact. For example: the academic activity report IBSU provides fixed scores rather than fluctuating scores for the component of the academic articles published in Web of Science (Clarivate) and Scopus (Elsevier).

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
4.3 Professional development of academic, scientific and invited staff	X	☐	☐	☐

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The university's infrastructure is quite modern, with recent upgrades to the computers, as confirmed by the students. However, students have noted that the tables and chairs resemble those found in schools, suggesting that the university environment would benefit from more appropriate furnishings. The library, while comfortable, is relatively small given the number of students enrolled. Although all mandatory texts are available, the literature collection is limited for those seeking to expand their knowledge beyond required readings, particularly in fields like international relations, where most resources focus on law.

The university does provide access to reputable online databases to facilitate proper research, but students have expressed difficulty in utilizing these resources effectively. Library staff have indicated that they conduct workshops on how to use these databases, yet additional initiatives are needed to encourage greater engagement with these valuable resources.

Evidences/Indicators

- o   Interviews with students and academic personnel, along with visits to auditoriums, the library, conference rooms, and other essential facilities, provided valuable insights into the university's operations and resources.

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions for the programme development

4.4.1. Upgrade Furnishings: Invest in modern, ergonomic furniture for classrooms and study areas to create a more conducive learning environment. This could include contemporary tables and chairs that better reflect a higher education setting.

4.4.2. Expand Library Facilities: Consider expanding the library space to accommodate the growing student population, ensuring that it can support collaborative work and individual study.

4.4.3. Diversify Literature Collection: Broaden the library's collection to include more resources in various fields, especially in international relations. This could involve acquiring additional books and journals that go beyond mandatory readings.

4.4.4. Enhance Database Usage: Increase awareness of the available online databases through targeted campaigns, such as informational sessions or digital resources highlighting their benefits. Offer additional workshops or training sessions on research methodologies and database navigation to reinforce the skills needed for effective research.

4.4.5. Regular Review of Resources: Establish a periodic review of the library's collections and database subscriptions to ensure they remain relevant and meet the evolving needs of students and faculty.

4.4.6. Increase Investment in Literature: Allocate additional funds to expand the library's collection, enabling academic staff to regularly update their materials and stay current in their fields.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
4.4 Material Resources	X	☐	☐	☐

4.5 Programme/Faculty/School Budget and Programme Financial Sustainability

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

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The program's budget is adequate for its operation. It is noteworthy that administrative expenses exceed teaching expenses, which may indicate that faculty salaries are not sufficiently competitive, potentially leading to decreased motivation. However, the university administration has reported a high retention rate among staff members, suggesting that the benefits and compensation offered are competitive within the market.

The administration has also indicated that a new contract has been suggested to the affiliated personnel since this September 2024, providing various benefits designed to enhance research efforts. Both academic personnel and administrative representatives have emphasized the university's strong support for research, though they acknowledge there remains room for improvement. One challenge identified by the academic staff is a lack of time, as many also engage in practical work beyond their teaching responsibilities.

Questions were raised regarding the program's sustainability in the event of a decline in university admissions. As indicated by the budget and confirmed by university administration, admission fees are the sole source of income for the program. However, it was noted that both the university and the faculty possess sufficient resources to address such circumstances should they arise. Nonetheless, the administration does not foresee this situation occurring, as the university is the oldest private institution in Georgia and has effectively utilized marketing strategies to attract students. Consequently, they have consistently maintained an enrollment of 25 to 30 students per year.

Evidences/Indicators

- o New contracts university has suggested to the affiliated personnel.
- o Interviews with the affiliated and invited personnel, as well as with the university administration.

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions for the programme development

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
4.5. Programme/ Faculty/School Budget and Programme Financial Sustainability	X	☐	☐	☐

Compliance with the programme standard

4. Providing Teaching Resources	Complies with requirements	X
	Substantially complies with requirements	☐
	Partly complies with requirements	☐
	Does not comply with requirements	☐

5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities

In order to enhance teaching quality, programme utilises 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.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The IBSU internal quality assurance concept is integral to its strategic management and aims to achieve its mission and objectives. This concept relies on systematic and needs-based research and evaluation practices. It involves various tools such as internal program self-evaluation, analysis of students' academic performance, surveys of students and graduates, benchmarking, employer research, self-assessment, and personnel assessments conducted by academic, invited, and administrative staff. It is evident from the analyzed documents and interviews that the development and approval of the programs included in the cluster align with the procedure established by the university's internal regulations. This alignment provides security and compliance, ensuring the programs were developed and approved by the university's standards.

The documents and stakeholder interviews indicated that the program staff actively collaborated with the Internal Quality Assurance Office. This highlights the importance of evaluating the program's quality and addressing the challenges identified during the self-evaluation report process. However, the expert panel thinks that the self-evaluation team was not fully aware of the genuine process of self-evaluation and self-reflection. During interviews, it was evident that the following topics were discussed during the members' self-evaluations and meetings, and appropriate actions were taken: updating training courses, creating program competencies and curriculum maps, establishing a mechanism for evaluating the program's learning outcomes, and others.

The self-evaluation team, comprising academic and invited staff, faculty administration personnel, and university quality assurance team members, was instrumental in the evaluation process. However, the expert panel identified a need for more direct input from students, graduates, and employers. This inclusive approach to self-evaluation, which goes beyond surveys, is crucial for a comprehensive and ongoing assessment of program quality.

Furthermore, the heads of the BPA educational program and academic and invited staff mentioned that the faculty and the university's quality assurance office played a noteworthy role in offering support and guidance.

Hence, the above examples and practices indicate that program quality assurance is based on the "Plan, Do, Check, Act (PDCA) cycle principle.

Evidences/Indicators

- SER
- Internal quality assurance service assessment results
- Activities and changes made to eliminate weaknesses identified during self-evaluation report elaboration process;
- Survey results conducted by higher education institution;
- Interviews.

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions for the programme development

5.   5.1.1 It is suggested that students, graduates, and employers be directly represented as members of the self-evaluation group.

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
5.1 Internal quality evaluation	X	☐	☐	☐

5.2 External Quality Evaluation

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

As per the IBSU quality assurance policy, external review is crucial to the PDCA cycle. Upon conducting site visits and document analysis, it was apparent that two external evaluations were carried out for the BA program in Public Administration. The first assessment was conducted by a local professor from Georgian Technical University, while the second was performed by a relevant professor from Matej Bel University in Banska Bystrica, Slovakia.

Both reviews highlighted the importance of incorporating English-taught courses into the BA curriculum as electives. In addition, Prof. Nemec's feedback emphasized the significance of increasing the number of international publications and recommended not having a unified ECTS system for all courses. Despite discussing this with the heads of the programs during the site visit, it would be beneficial to have a document prepared on how the external reviews were taken into account or at least integrated into the SER, which is currently missing.

The IBSU quality assurance office has developed a specific form for external evaluation. However, it's important to note that simply creating the form does not guarantee that the evaluation process is being carried out correctly. As a result, the expert panel suggests that the IBSU quality assurance office actively engages in the external quality assurance process to guarantee its transparency and comprehensiveness.

Evidences/Indicators

● External Evaluation Results;
● Developmental peer review;

- Self-evaluation report;
- Expert Panel's meetings

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions for the programme development

5.2.1 To ensure transparent, effective, and comprehensive external quality assurance, it is suggested that IBSU's quality assurance service actively participate in the process, including preparing the document based on the results of external evaluation.

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
5.2. External Quality Evaluation	X	☐	☐	☐

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.

IBSU utilizes the quality assurance concept to monitor and periodically evaluate educational programs in a specified manner. The results of these evaluations are used to make improvements to the programs. The process is inclusive and operational, involving academic, visiting, and administrative staff, students, alumnis, employers, as well as international and local professors who participate in the peer review process. The data collection and analysis process are systematic, relying on a mixture of social science research methodology and data aggregation practices. This approach ultimately allows for the formulation of conclusions and recommendations.

IBSU internal regulations mandate a self-evaluation process for academic, visiting, and administrative personnel. This process is conducted, checked, and evaluated by the quality assurance service of the respective faculty, demonstrating the university's commitment to internal quality control. Educational programs are periodically evaluated, and the satisfaction of both students and graduates is assessed through online surveys and focus groups. Students also evaluate specific courses

at the end of each course, confirmed through interviews with students and alumni during their visits. Moreover, a BA in Public Administration is regularly compared with similar programs at foreign universities, underscoring the university's commitment to global best practices.

Thus, in data collection, analysis, interpretation, and recommendation formulation, the monitoring and effectiveness of the educational programs included in the cluster are evaluated per IBSU's quality assurance policy concept, and the program is modified and improved.

Evidences/Indicators

- Survey results conducted by the higher education institution;
- Activities and changes implemented for the purpose of evaluating the academic course / subject
- Program monitoring and periodic review results and the document certifying utilization of these results;
- Self-evaluation report;
- Expert Panel's meetings

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions for the programme development

N/A

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
5.3. Programme monitoring and periodic review	X	☐	☐	☐

Compliance with the programme standards

5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities	Complies with requirements	X
	Substantially complies with requirements	☐

	Partially complies with requirements	☐
	Does not comply with requirements	☐

Attached documentation (if applicable):

Name of the Higher Education Institution:

Name of Higher Education Programme, Level:

Compliance with the Programme Standards

Evaluation Standards	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
1. Education Programme Objectives, Learning Outcomes and their Compliance with the Programme	X	☐	☐	☐
2. Teaching Methodology and Organisation, Adequacy Evaluation of Programme Mastering	X	☐	☐	☐
3. Student Achievements, Individual Work with them	X	☐	☐	☐
4. Providing Teaching Resources	X	☐	☐	☐
5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities	X	☐	☐	☐

Signatures:

Chair of Accreditation Expert Panel

Zsuzsanna Szeles – University of Sopron
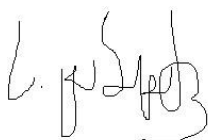
 Accreditation Expert Panel Members

Full name, signature

Ekaterina Zakaradze - Grigol Robakidze University
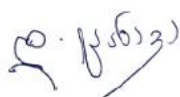
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Sandro Tabatadze - Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

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Dimitri Tsanava - Caucasus International University