NATIONAL CENTER FOR
EDUCATIONAL QUALITY
ENHANCEMENT

Accreditation Expert Group Report on Higher Education Programme

Business Administration

N(N)LE Agricultural University of Georgia

07/02/2025

Tbilisi

Information on the Higher educational Institution

Name of Institution Indicating its Organizational Legal Form	N(N)LE Agricultural University of Georgia
Identification Code of Institution	211325653
Type of the Institution	University

Expert Panel Members

Chair (Name, Surname, HEI/Organization, Country)	Asnate Upmace, University of Latvia/ Academic Information Centre, Latvia
Member (Name, Surname, HEI/Organization, Country)	Natia Surmanidze, The University of Georgia, Georgia
Member (Name, Surname, HEI/Organization, Country)	Ekaterine Natsvlishvili, European University, Georgia
Member (Name, Surname, HEI/Organization, Country)	Giga Khositashvili, Ilia State University, Georgia
Member (Name, Surname, HEI/Organization, Country)	Giorgi Merabishvili, International Black Sea University

I. Information on the education programme

Name of Higher Education Programme (in Georgian)	„ბიზნესის ადმინისტრირება"
Name of Higher Education Programme (in English)	Business Administration
Level of Higher Education	VI
Qualification to be Awarded[1]	Bachelor of Business Administration
Name and Code of the Detailed Field	413 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[2]	–
Language of Instruction	Georgian
Number of ECTS credits	240 ECTS
Programme Status (Accredited/ Non-accredited/ Conditionally accredited/new/International accreditation) Indicating Relevant Decision (number, date)	Accredited (August 31, 2018, Decision N113)
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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[1] 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.

[2] 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 Education Programmes[3]**

The Business Administration Programme at the N(N)LE Agricultural University was first accredited in 2011. Currently, there are 346 active students. The university has deliberately and gradually decreased the annual admission quota with, for example, 95 students in 2019 and 45 in 2023.

The competition towards entering the study programme has been high with 24 applicants per one place in 2023 (7 applicants, if only the top three study choices are considered).

In total, 57 staff members have been involved in the delivery of this programme – 7 academic staff members (3 scientific staff members and 4 affiliated academic staff members) and 47 invited staff.

● **Overview of the Accreditation Site Visit**

The site visit took place on 16th September 2024. During the site visit, the review panel met with various stakeholders related to the study programme – university/ faculty administration, self-evaluation team, heads of the programme, quality assurance service representatives, academic staff, invited staff, employers, students, alumni and had a brief tour of the material and technical base used for programme implementation, in particular, the library.

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

The review panel considers that the programme complies with the standards overall, namely the compliance with the standards is as follows:

1. Educational Programme Objectives, Learning Outcomes and their Compliance with the Programme - **Substantially complies with the requirements**

2. Methodology and Organisation of Teaching, Adequacy Evaluation of Programme Mastering - **complies with the requirements**

3. Student Achievements, Individual Work with them - **Complies with the requirements**

4. Providing Teaching Resources - **Substantially complies with the requirements**

5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities - **Complies with the requirements**

However, certain areas for improvement have been further addressed in the report and the relevant recommendations and suggestions have also been highlighted in the sections below. In total, the review panel has formulated 9 recommendations and 10 suggestions for programme development.

● **Recommendations**

1. To reconsider the part of the programme's objective that mentions the preparation of "analysts" either by strengthening the programme content in this regard or by revising the objective. The current learning outcomes will be consistent if the word "analyst" remains in the program's objective. Therefore, the programme should ensure the analyst is trained with the relevant technological skills; otherwise, it is recommended that the word "analyst" is removed from the objective (Standard 1.2.).

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

2. It is essential to offer courses that focus on developing the competencies required by the market research. This emphasis will make the market research results visible, directly contributing to developing the necessary competencies. This applies in particular to the tourism and data processing competencies where the status of "hospitality business" component within the curriculum and the form for providing data processing knowledge and skills should both be clarified (Standard 1.2).
3. To introduce analytical assessment rubrics to provide a more objective and structured assessment framework instead of the currently broad assessment ranges only. These rubrics would offer clear performance criteria and reduce potential ambiguity in the grading process (Standard 1.3).
4. To consider reducing the number of University General Education courses to create more flexibility within the programme. To address this, the programme could increase the allocation of ECTS credits toward elective or free courses, allowing students greater freedom to tailor their education to their specific goals and career aspirations (Standard 1.4).
5. To update the textbooks and study materials for several key subjects to ensure they reflect the most current trends and developments in business. The particular subjects in need of attention are mentioned in the "Description and analysis" section above (Standard 1.5).
6. To strengthen the focus on technological skills within the programme, particularly given the program's goal of training managers and analysts (Standard 1.5).
7. Ensure that the disclaimer on "midterm exam/assessment cannot be rescheduled" is applied consistently through the syllabus and the elements that cannot be rescheduled are carefully reconsidered to allow for maximum flexibility for the students (Standard 2.3).
8. To ensure the high quality and sustainable implementation of the BBA program, it is recommended to increase the number of affiliated academic staff holding PhD degrees in the sectoral direction (Standard 4.1).
9. It is recommended to pay attention to the staff's (academic, administrative, invite,) workload in the BBA program, taking into account the positions they simultaneously hold at other universities (or organizations) and total workload (Standard 4.1).

- **Suggestions for the Programme Development**

1. Monitor that the volume of assessment activities and the complexity of assessment is proportionate to the credits allocated to a particular course (Standard 2.3).
2. It is desirable to promote exchange opportunities among the students and encourage their participation (Standard 3.1).
3. It is suggested to tailor the timetable to the students' requirements, considering the junior year students' schedule with evening classes (Standard 3.1).
4. To ensure the high quality of the BBA program implementation and farther development, it is suggested to support and increase academic and invited staff's actively participation in research and publishing activities (Standard 4.1).
5. It is suggested to foster collaboration with partner universities through the organization of joint forums and conferences, as well as targeted training sessions related to the BBA program (Standard 4.3).
6. It is suggested to apply a comprehensive 360-degree evaluation system that will be linked to transparent staff remuneration and an incentive scheme (Standard 4.3).
7. It is suggested that the university carefully considers copyright regulations when digitising entire textbooks that are available for purchase, to ensure that these practices comply with international practice and principles of copyright laws to avoid potential legal issues (Standard 4.4);

8. To further enrich the teaching resources, it is suggested the university subscribe to journals or case repositories specific to the field of business (Standard 4.4);

9. It is suggested that 4.4 substandard description in the SER directly addresses library services to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of library resources as per standard requirements (Standard 4.4);

10. It is suggested to highlight the information about the BBA program budget and describe it separately and clearly (Standard 4.5).

- **Brief Overview of the Best Practices (if applicable)[4]**

The review panel would like to highlight the allocation of additional 15 credits that do not count towards the credits in the curriculum as an exceptional element of this study programme. These additional credits the students can use for developing skills that they find the most relevant for their future career and this is in addition to 9 credits for elective courses that are already foreseen in the study progarmme.

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

The review panel does not share the argumentative position of the N(N)LE Agricultural University of Georgia as the claims by the university are not related to the essence of expert recommendations and/or have not been substantiated by any evidence that contradicts the expert findings.

The review panel would like to encourage N(N)LE Agricultural University of Georgia to consider these recommendations as external advice for improvement that would improve the competitiveness and positioning of the programme in Georgia, rather than producing argumentation on why the recommendations should not be considered.

Please see the detailed response to the institution's argument in the appendix to the Report.

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

In the SAR, the university mentions the three main areas of improvement:

- Optimization of the curriculum and semester plan;

- Strengthening content or methodological connections between subjects;

- Optimization of subject groupings.

In the academic year 2022/2023, the previously existing concentrations were eliminated and instead, the business core curriculum was increased. In 2023 the programme learning outcomes were also revised to comply with the Higher Education Sector Benchmarks in Business Administration.

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

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

content and consistent structure of the programme ensure the achievement of the set goals and expected learning outcomes.

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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

According to the self-evaluation report, the programme's objective is to prepare aspiring, versatile managers and analysts with thorough knowledge of business and business project management and evaluation tools, which is in line with the institution's mission. The program's purpose is clearly formulated and is in accordance with the detailed class of the field of study. Alignment with level six of the National Qualifications Framework is also ensured.

The meeting with the institution's representatives confirmed the program's strategic importance for the university. The purpose of the program is shared with the stakeholders, which was mentioned in the panel meetings and also shared with any interested person on the university website: https://agruni.edu.ge/en/programs/bachelor/business-administration/?program=program.

The program's purpose is focused on the development of practical skills, a key factor in ensuring its relevance to the job market. This focus is confirmed by the variety of practical components included in the program, which have been designed based on the demand of the employment market and the results of the research of the involved parties.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation report

- Curriculum

- Interviews with university representatives

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

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
1.1 Programme Objectives	✓	☐	☐	☐

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.

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

The programme's learning outcomes are meticulously aligned with the Higher Education Sector Benchmarks in Business Administration, as approved by the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement Director on October 25, 2023 (MES 9 23 0001440631). These outcomes correspond to the sixth level of the National Qualifications Framework, which describes the detailed field of Management and Administration and the qualification to be awarded. This alignment ensures the programme's relevance and currency in the rapidly evolving business landscape.

The learning outcomes are comprehensive, covering a wide range of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities. They are combined without dividing the levels, although the outcomes focusing on developing knowledge, skills, and responsibility/autonomy are distinguished. This comprehensive coverage instills confidence in the programme's ability to prepare students for the multifaceted challenges of the business world.

The learning outcomes of the programme are:

1. Understands what nature, society, man and art is; can think quantitatively; possesses versatile basic knowledge and skills required for professional development, which is offered by the university general education module; makes ethical decisions based on moral values and is aware of the diversity of the
2. world and society.
3. Understands the nature of business, its domains of activity, opportunities, limitations and challenges;
4. discusses the principle concepts of business management.
5. Describes the business environment, the functional areas of business and its impacting factors;

6. Understands the nature of business transactions and their associated processes.
7. Researches and analyses business activities, identifying problems and devising solutions.
8. Determines company valuation and growth opportunities.
9. Identifies business risks and formulates strategies for their mitigation.
10. Develops, implements and presents research/practical projects related to business functional areas.
11. Understands the significance of leadership and collaboration within team environments and operates in
12. accordance with relevant principles.
13. Knows and effectively utilizes modern information and communication technologies.
14. Understands the principles and values of business and corporate ethics.
15. Identifies personal learning requirements and devises plans for professional advancement.

The learning outcomes consider the sectoral benchmarking document and are compatible.

The programme's learning outcomes partially ensure the achievement of its objective, which is stated as "to prepare aspiring, versatile managers and analysts," where we see outlined "analysts." It is a separate profession, and if a programme aims to prepare analysts, this includes technical proficiency. Business analysts often use data and tools like Excel, SQL, and visualization platforms (e.g., Power BI, Tableau). They must understand system processes and technical jargon to interact with development teams. In this way, the programme should be oriented on this part or otherwise, the objective should be revised, and the word "analyst" removed.

The interview with the employers showed that it is essential in the field of business for the staff to have a good understanding of the processes to have the ability to make decisions and take related risks on their own. Negotiation skills and a sense of corporate ethics in general are also necessary. In addition, it is essential to have basic theoretical knowledge and technical skills in finance, Excel, data processing, marketing, and others. In the learning outcomes and Curriculum Map, it needs to be clarified in what form the data processing is provided, which employers have named as a significant component for staff in the field of business.

The labour market analysis presented states: "As part of the Bachelor of Business Administration program, students will study the hospitality business, which further facilitates employment in this field. Thus, data on the tourism sector's share in the GDP was obtained." According to the Curriculum Map, tourism is not offered in the study courses.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation report
- Syllabi
- Curriculum map
- Labour market analysis
- Interviews with university representatives

Recommendation(s):

1. To reconsider the part of the programme's objective that mentions the preparation of "analysts" either by strengthening the programme content in this regard or by revising the objective. The current learning outcomes will be consistent if the word "analyst" remains in the program's objective. Therefore, the programme should ensure the analyst is trained with the relevant technological skills; otherwise, it is recommended that the word "analyst" is removed from the objective.
2. It is essential to offer courses that focus on developing the competencies required by the market research. This emphasis will make the market research results visible, directly contributing to developing the necessary competencies. This applies in particular to the tourism and data processing competencies where the status of "hospitality business" component within the curriculum and the form for providing data processing knowledge and skills should both be clarified.

Suggestion(s): -

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	☐	✓	☐	☐

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 analysing 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 mechanisms for assessing learning outcomes at the Agricultural University of Georgia employ a comprehensive and structured approach designed to ensure accurate evaluation of student achievements while fostering continuous improvement in teaching quality.

At the core of this process is aligning course content with programme learning outcomes. Each course's syllabus specifies clear learning outcomes, with appropriate assessment methods tailored to evaluate these outcomes effectively. This alignment is vital for meeting the objectives established by the educational programme.

Learning outcomes are developed collaboratively at the Agricultural University of Georgia. Lecturers, program heads, and the Vice-Rector in Program Development work together to define these outcomes. They are then measured through transparent criteria embedded in each course syllabus, ensuring consistency across the entire programme. The assessment system, based on the 3rd Order of the Minister of Education and Science, outlines a multi-component structure, with midterm and final evaluations. The minimum competence threshold for final grading is set at 60%, as outlined in each syllabus.

However, one issue identified in the current syllabi is the use of broad assessment ranges, such as 0-7, 7-13, and 14-20, for midterm and final exams. This approach may introduce subjectivity in grading by the teaching staff. To mitigate this, it is recommended that analytical rubrics be introduced to provide a more objective and structured assessment framework. These rubrics offer clear performance criteria and reduce potential ambiguity in the grading process. Including this enhancement would ensure greater fairness in evaluation and align more effectively with learning outcomes.

A Curriculum map demonstrates that programme learning outcomes are consistently met. This map links each course's learning outcomes to the broader program goals, identifying benchmarks and enabling a thorough analysis of how effectively the courses contribute to achieving these outcomes.

At the Agricultural University of Georgia, two principal methods are employed for evaluating learning outcomes: direct and indirect. The direct method focuses on statistical analysis of student performance against target benchmarks. It involves evaluating individual course outcomes using pre-defined performance indicators from the syllabus. The indirect method, on the other hand, gathers qualitative and quantitative feedback from students, alumni, and employers to identify areas for improvement in programme content and relevance to the labour market.

The comprehensive evaluation process includes regular student surveys conducted anonymously via Survey Monkey and qualitative research, such as focus group interviews with students and employers. This feedback loop ensures that academic programmes are continuously refined to better meet industry expectations and improve the overall student experience.

For the Business Administration programme, 72 performance indicators measure 15 key learning outcomes over a defined timeframe from 2024 to 2027. By the end of the 2026-2027 academic year, these indicators will provide valuable insights into the updated programme's effectiveness in producing graduates equipped with relevant skills.

The mechanisms in place at the Agricultural University of Georgia ensure a rigorous evaluation process for programme learning outcomes. The data collected and analysed throughout this process is instrumental in improving educational quality and ensuring alignment with academic standards and labour market demands.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation report
- Syllabi
- Curriculum map
- Performance indicators
- Interviews with the university representatives

Recommendations

1. To introduce analytical assessment rubrics to provide a more objective and structured assessment framework instead of the currently broad assessment ranges only. These rubrics would offer clear performance criteria and reduce potential ambiguity in the grading process.

Suggestion(s): -

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	☐	✓	☐	☐

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.

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

Based on the Self-Evaluation Report, enclosed documents, and site visit, the Bachelor's Programme in Business Administration at the Agricultural University of Georgia demonstrates general compliance with the educational programme standard component requirements. The programme has a clear structure that aligns with the university's Methodology of Elaboration, Planning, Assessment, and Development of Educational Programs. The programme comprehensively includes the qualifications to be awarded, learning outcomes, ECTS credits, and curriculum development.

The programme includes various components: University General Education courses, Foundational Education, Core Education, Practical Education, and Elective Courses. These elements ensure that students receive a well-rounded education that combines general and specialized knowledge and aligns with the programme's learning outcomes. The collaborative process involving stakeholders from the academic and labour market sectors has further contributed to the ongoing development and refinement of the program.

Compliance with the Higher Education Sector Benchmark, particularly the version approved in 2023, shows that the programme has effectively integrated the necessary benchmarks and standards. The programme's focus on skills development, essential business education, and practical applications aligns with the standards outlined in the self-evaluation report.

However, during the site visit and meeting sessions with students, a recurring issue was highlighted regarding the number of University General Education courses. Of the total 240 ECTS credits, 53 credits are allocated to University General Education courses. Students noted that the abundance of these courses, particularly in the early semesters, may limit their ability to pursue more specialized or elective courses directly related to their business studies or areas of personal interest.

While the general education subjects are essential in providing a broad foundation and are typically concentrated in the first two semesters, the students raised concerns about the potential for more flexibility within the programme. The current allocation of University General Education courses limits the number of free elective credits (9 ECTS), which students have indicated could be increased to provide more educational freedom and choice.

The programme complies with the overall requirements of the standard component, but a re-evaluation of the balance between University General Education courses and elective credits could be beneficial. Increasing the number of free elective credits could allow students more autonomy in shaping their educational journey while maintaining the high academic standards set by the institution. By doing so, the institution would also enhance the program's flexibility, ensuring students have more opportunities to deepen their knowledge in areas that align with their interests and future career paths. This adjustment would not only improve the student satisfaction but also help align the program better with modern educational trends, where personalization and flexibility in course selection are key to providing a well-rounded, student-centered learning experience.

The programme's design, content, and structure are logically and substantially aligned with the intended learning outcomes, and the qualifications awarded comply with national standards and labour market demands.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation report
- Methodology of Elaboration, Planning, Assessment, and Development of Educational Programs
- Higher Education Sector Benchmark
- Interviews with the programme representatives

Recommendation(s):

1. To consider reducing the number of University General Education courses to create more flexibility within the programme. To address this, the programme could increase the allocation of ECTS credits toward elective or free courses, allowing students greater freedom to tailor their education to their specific goals and career aspirations.

Suggestion(s):

Evaluation

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	☐	✓	☐	☐

➢ 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

Based on the Self-Evaluation Report, the enclosed documents, and the site visit, the Bachelor's Programme in Business Administration at the Agricultural University of Georgia demonstrates compliance with the requirements of the educational programme standard component in several areas. The course syllabi provide a detailed structure that ensures alignment between course objectives, learning outcomes, and the overall programme learning outcomes. However, there are notable areas for

improvement, particularly regarding the up-to-date nature of the study materials and the integration of technological skills into the curriculum.

Each syllabus contains essential information, such as course objectives, learning outcomes, teaching methods, evaluation criteria, and the number of ECTS credits. The structure ensures that individual courses contribute to the programme's broader learning outcomes. Using credit-based learning, with 1 ECTS credit encompassing 30 hours of student engagement, ensures that students receive adequate instructional time to achieve the intended outcomes.

However, during the review, several courses were found to rely on textbooks that may only partially reflect the latest developments in their respective fields. This raises concerns about whether some of the programme content remains aligned with current trends in business education. Below is a list of courses and the years of their primary textbooks, indicating the need for updates:

Quality Management: Book from 2014
Financial Institutions and Markets: Book from 2018
Financial Accounting 1 and 2: Books from 2018
Organizational Behavior: Book from 2013
Operations Management: Book from 2013
Supply Chain Management: Book from 2012
Management: Book from 2018
Marketing Management: Book from 2017
Management Information Systems: Book from 2011
Integrated Marketing Communications: Book from 2017
Sales and Sales Management: Book from 2010
Foundations of Business: Book from 2011
Business in Action: Book from 2011
Human Resources Management: Book from 2012

While these materials provide a solid foundation, some are over a decade old. Given the rapid pace of change in fields such as management, information systems, and marketing, these resources need to be updated to ensure students learn from materials that reflect the most recent industry practices and theories. Updating these resources will provide students with more relevant and up-to-date knowledge, ensuring they are prepared for modern business challenges.

During the site visit, graduates highlighted the programme's desire for more muscular technological training. Technological proficiency is crucial because the program aims to train future managers and analysts. Current business trends demand graduates who are adept in areas such as data analytics, business intelligence, digital tools, and technology-driven decision-making processes.

The feedback from graduates suggests that while the programme effectively delivers core business skills, the technological component is insufficient to meet the growing demand for digital literacy in business. This is particularly important in fields like operations management, supply chain management, financial institutions, and marketing, where digital tools and data-driven approaches are increasingly prevalent. Enhanced training in these areas could be achieved by introducing/integrating more courses or modules that focus on:

- Data Analytics and Business Intelligence
- Digital Tools for Decision-Making
- Technology-Driven Business Strategies
- Information Systems and Digital Transformation in Business

Strengthening technological skills within the curriculum will not only enhance the programme's relevance but also improve graduates' employability and preparedness for future managerial and analytical roles.

The programme substantially complies with the educational standards required, and the course syllabi provide a comprehensive structure that aligns with the intended learning outcomes. However, some of the textbooks used in core courses need to be updated to reflect more recent developments in the business field. This is especially important for areas where industry practices have evolved significantly over the past decade. Additionally, the integration of more technological skill development is essential to align the programme with the modern needs of businesses and employers.

By addressing these issues—updating study materials and enhancing technological competencies—the programme can ensure it remains competitive and fully prepares students for the challenges and opportunities of a rapidly evolving business environment.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation report
- Syllabi
- Interviews with the programme representatives

Recommendation(s):

1. To update the textbooks and study materials for several key subjects to ensure they reflect the most current trends and developments in business. The particular subjects in need of attention are mentioned in the "Description and analysis" section above.
2. To strengthen the focus on technological skills within the programme, particularly given the program's goal of training managers and analysts.

Suggestion(s):

Evaluation

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	☐	✓	☐	☐

Compliance of the Programme with the Standard

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	☐

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.

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

The admission procedure for the bachelor's programme in Business Administration follows the standard admission procedure foreseen for undergraduate programmes in Georgia which requires the completion of full general education and passing unified national examinations. There are certain exemptions from the national examinations for citizens of other countries or Georgian citizens who have lived and/ or studied in another country.

An observation that the review panel made based on the statistics provided and interviews with different representatives was that there is a high competition for studies in this particular programme, if compared to similar study programmes offered in Georgia. This eventually means that the academic results of the enrolled applicants are high.

During the site visit the review panel did not receive any complaints regarding the admission process or application of the admission criteria.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation report
- Interviews with programme representatives

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> **Recommendation(s):** -
>
> **Suggestion(s):** -

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	✓	☐	☐	☐

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

In the self-evaluation report, the Agricultural University of Georgia claims that the development of practical skills is at the cornerstone of their study programmes and practical teaching components like case-based learning and simulations.

A specific feature of the study programme is that professionals from the private sector actively participate in the study process as guest lecturers. When describing the development of practical skills, the university also refers to simulation tasks that involve working on real projects aligned with current market business processes.

The study programme includes a mandatory "Internship in an Organization" to facilitate professional development within an actual workplace setting.

As this is a bachelor programme and strongly business-oriented, the research component is not that prominent in the curriculum and the review panel does not expect a strong emphasis on it. However, research elements are integrated in several courses where students are required to conduct and apply research within the context of business studies. Business studies by definition foresee the development of certain transferable skills, for example, leadership skills, conflict resolution, communication and presentation that are included either as separate courses or as an element foreseen in the syllabi. 9 credits within the curriculum are devoted to elective subjects that students can select depending on their preferences.

An outstanding element of this study programme is the allocation of additional 15 credits that do not count towards the credits in the curriculum that students can use for developing skills that they find the most relevant for their future career.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation report
- Syllabus
- Interviews with the representatives of study programme

Recommendation(s): -

Suggestion(s): -

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	✓	☐	☐	☐

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.

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

In the self-assessment report, the Agriculture University of Georgia has listed the methods used for delivery. The exact teaching and learning methods are included in the course syllabus which is agreed by all staff members responsible for the delivery of a certain subject – both the affiliate and invited ones. The assessment for all courses consists of a midterm component and final component. Whereas in some cases the midterm component is carried out as one activity, in other courses the midterm component actually consists of several sub-components to be collected over a period of time.

In several cases, the syllabi include a disclaimer "The midterm cannot be rescheduled". Sometimes it refers to a specific component of the midterm assessment, like a quiz, but in most cases, it seems to apply to the whole midterm assessment while the assessment consists of several parts, for example, "student activity at the seminar (group and individual assignments", "individual written quiz", "presentation".

Although the review panel did not question this practice during the interviews, it would still like to raise attention to it and highlight that the practice of defining elements that cannot be rescheduled has to be consistent and has to apply to those elements that definitely cannot be rescheduled. Flexibility in assessment, to the extent that is physically possible, is a definitive element of the student-centred approach. While the disclaimer on rescheduling certainly signals that the flexibility could be improved, the current information also does not clarify/ pre-define the approach in very severe cases, for example, serious health conditions or family situations.

Overall, the review panel considers that the assessment methods foreseen for the courses are diverse and reflect well the different nature of the subjects. However, care should be taken to ensure that the assessment is proportionate to the number of credits for a particular course and that the volume of assessment foreseen for courses amounting to 2, 3 and 4 credits is lower than for courses amounting to 5 and 6 credits.

During the interviews, the students confirmed that they were informed about the course schedule and planned assessment activities at the beginning of the course. The students were genuinely happy with the study process and the diversity of the methods applied, especially highlighting all practical activities and the possibility of building their own curriculum. The students also expressed their satisfaction with the possibility to discuss their marks with the teaching staff and it became clear to the review panel that any dissatisfaction or concerns related to a mark would be solved through a conversation between the student and staff, rather than taken to a formal appeals procedure.

Evidences/Indicators

- Programme curriculum
- Syllabus
- Self-evaluation report
- Interviews with the university representatives

recommendations

1. Ensure that the disclaimer on "midterm exam/assessment cannot be rescheduled" is applied consistently through the syllabus and the elements that cannot be rescheduled are carefully reconsidered to allow for maximum flexibility for the students.

suggestions

1. Monitor that the volume of assessment activities and the complexity of assessment is proportionate to the credits allocated to a particular course.

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	☐	✓	☐	☐

2.4. Student Evaluation

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

Based on the information presented in the self-assessment report and the interviews performed during the accreditation visit, it was concluded that the student evaluation process follows the prescribed protocols. The Business Administration programme includes a detailed description of the evaluation system. Additionally, every syllabus includes criteria and procedures for evaluation that enable the assessment of how well students have accomplished the learning objectives.

The Agriculture University of Georgia employs an adequate, transparent and fair evaluation system of learning results, which is in accordance with the Georgian higher education legislation and contributes to the improvement of the academic achievements of students.

Students are evaluated on a 100-point system. The evaluation is composed of multiple components and is formulated in accordance with the 3rd Order of the Minister of Education and Science dated January 5, 2007 "On Approval of the Rule of Calculation of Higher Education Programs with Credits". During student assessment academic and invited staff involved in the implementation of the program are obliged to use the above-mentioned rule.

The following scheme is used for assessment:

Five types of positive evaluations:

(A) Excellent – 91-100 points
(B) Very Good – 81-90 points
(C) Good – 71-80 points
(D) Satisfactory – 61-70 points
(E) Sufficient – 51-60 points

Two types of negative evaluations:

(FX) Marginal Fail – 41-50 points, which means that the student needs more work to pass and is allowed to retake the final exam.
(F) Fail – 40 or less points, which means that the work done by the student is not sufficient and the course must be retaken.

The assessment components and methods of each study course take into account the specificity of the course, correspond to the learning outcomes of this course and provide an assessment of the achievement of the learning outcomes measured by evaluation criteria. Detailed information about the educational process is provided on the website of the Agricultural University of Georgia: https://agruni.edu.ge/ge/about-us/?about-us=Documents

The evaluation results are reflected in the electronic database (emis.campus.edu.ge), which ensures the students' awareness of the achieved results. Students receive feedback on learning outcomes as well as on improving their own strengths and areas for improvement;

The university does not use specific software for plagiarism detection. Plagiarism or academic fraud is detected by the administration, lecturers, or individuals involved in the examination and evaluation of students' work. If plagiarism or academic fraud is confirmed, the student will receive a grade of F in the respective subject. Each syllabus includes specific information regarding plagiarism and academic fraud.

The Agricultural University of Georgia has a mechanism for the protection of student rights, students' appeal mechanisms related to the study process, academic and administrative bodies that is highlighted in the Student Code of Ethics, Examination Rules and Academic Personnel Code of Ethics.

The university quality assurance office periodically monitors reliability and validity of student assessments. Evaluation results are analysed and the results are utilized for the improvement of the study process.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation report;
- Educational programme;
- Syllabi;
- Electronic database (emis.campus.edu.ge);
- The procedure for appealing evaluation results;
- Student Code of Ethics;
- Examination Rules;
- Academic Personnel Code of Ethics.
- Interview results

Recommendations:

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
2.4. Student evaluation	✓	☐	☐	☐

Compliance with the programme standards

2. Methodology and Organisation of Teaching, Adequacy of Evaluation of Programme Mastering	Complies with requirements	✓
	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 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.

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

Agricultural University of Georgia has established and developed student support and consulting services, regarding the planning of learning process, improvement of academic achievement, employment and professional development. Dissemination of information to the students is starting with the orientation meetings on the first day of the study process, especially for the freshmen students. Faculty and relevant program representatives meet them and provide information on all necessary issues. Also, staff involved in the programme and supporting departments provide students with relevant information regarding consultations available at the University.

Faculty is providing all required spaces and equipment for smooth functioning of the study process and ensures having student areas for extracurricular activities.

Information about international mobility as well as some international projects is available via email. The university gives several chances to students to participate in international mobility, mostly cooperating bilaterally with some universities abroad. Institution creates some opportunities for students' participation in various projects, ensures students' awareness on various domestic and international

projects and events carried out outside of the institution. During interviews students expressed their low interest and readiness to participate in exchange academic programs. Also, they underlined a few opportunities in this direction. Consequently, it is desirable to promote exchange opportunities among the students and encourage their participation.

The University has career support service under the Office of Student and Applicant Relations, which provides students with professional orientation and other information events regarding employment and career development. The Career Development Manager provides the students with information regarding current vacancies on a daily basis. Students are often provided consultation and given recommendations on this issue. The Office of Student and Applicant Relations organizes training for students to help them to draft better CVs and achieve success in interviews.

The faculty of Business Technologies uses the following means to disseminate information: the websites of the university (https://agruni.edu.ge/ge/, https://emis.campus.edu.ge/), university email, individual/interpersonal communication with students.

Besides all above mentioned services also Academic, Invited and other administrative staff are involved in advising students on the learning process as well as in various activities planned in the framework of the programme, which was confirmed during interviews with various stakeholders.

University tries to tailor the timetable to the students requirements, however some stakeholders including students and graduates mentioned that it would be better if the junior year students' schedule will be flexible, with evening classes offered. (from 18:oo hours).

Evidences/Indicators

o   Self-evaluation report;
o   List of conducting student support services;
o   Electronic database (https://agruni.edu.ge/ge/, https://emis.campus.edu.ge/)
o   Interview results.

Recommendation(s):

Suggestion(s):

1. It is desirable to promote exchange opportunities among the students and encourage their participation.
2. It is suggested to tailor the timetable to the students' requirements, considering the junior year students' schedule with evening classes.

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	✓	☐	☐	☐

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.

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

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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	✓
	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 with relevant competence.

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

Based on information provided from the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), the enclosed documents, and the site visit, it should be mentioned that Human Resources, involved in the elaboration and implementation processes of the BBA program at the Agricultural University of Georgia demonstrate substantial compliance with the requirements of the accreditation standards (component 4.1. HR).

According to the information provided, the panel noted that the reviewed BBA program is implemented by a team of academic and visiting staff with appropriate qualifications, adhering to both national legislation and internal regulations. Both the academic and invited staff are selected through a transparent and competitive process that, substantially, complies with the Law of Georgia "On Higher Education" and the university's internal guidelines.

The academic and invited staff involved in this program, in general, demonstrate the necessary competences to achieve the required learning outcomes stated in program / courses. The qualifications of lecturers are underpinned by their professional experience, which clearly shows that most of them are practitioners, experienced in running a business or dealing with business functions/operations and making decisions at the strategic/operational level of companies. During the interviews, both academic and invited staff, as well as management demonstrated understanding of their roles, insights into the field, and shared significant information regarding professional achievements. However, some lecturers are less experienced in scientific research activities and have not been awarded academic degrees. (The experience and qualifications of the academic and invited staff are confirmed by personal files and CVs. The information provided from this documentation clearly showed that the academic qualifications of some lecturers were not validated by scientific work or research projects). It is noteworthy that academic staff (in some cases invited as well) responsibilities extend beyond teaching and research. They also participate in program design and development, student consultation and support, and other activities outlined by the program, in line with university policies and faculty agreements (as confirmed by the site interview results).

However, to ensure the high quality of the BBA educational program implementation, the academic and invited staff should keep abreast of the latest developments in their field by actively participating in research and publishing academic papers. In addition, the qualifications of academic staff shall be validated by scientific work or practical projects completed within the last five years, demonstrating their expertise in their respective fields.

Despite the mentioned above, the notable is that the Head of the BBA Program, who is actively engaged in the program elaboration and implementation, has a good profile and possesses the necessary knowledge, abilities and experience to provide effective guidance for supporting program development. His involvement in assessment, implementation, student advising, and organizing relevant academic activities was clearly outlined with reference to specific measures. Moreover, the program head, along with quality assurance service, organizes the program's evaluation and development processes. However, it is worth noting that the head of this BBA program simultaneously holds the position of a dean at the Agricultural University of Georgia. He also leads the BBA/MBA educational programs, the Free University of Tbilisi and represents as a dean of the Business School of this University. While considering this fact, the panel noted risks/issues that can be considered in regard with the effective performance of functions and responsibilities of the dean and simultaneously the head of Program.

In addition, regarding the other personnel engaged in program implementation, it should be mentioned that administrative and support staff, also equipped with adequate competencies, provide essential

backing to the program. However, the notable fact is that in most cases the staff (academic, administrative, support or/and invited) involved in this program simultaneously holds the same position at the Free University (or another HEI). Regarding this issue the panel noted that such cases should be considered as challenges related to the effective performance of assigned duties and responsibilities.

Despite the above-mentioned, in whole, the qualifications of the staff are substantially in line with the required competencies, responsibilities and applicable legislation (particularly, the requirements of the standards for educational programs quality assurance). It means that students enrolled in the educational program, in general, receive support from enough qualified academic and invited staff, as well as administrative and program support personnel with appropriate competencies, (as confirmed by the annual student satisfaction survey results and site interviews). Thus, the qualifications of academic, administrative, support and invited staff, in general, mostly correspond to their functions.

Regarding the ratio of academic personnel to enrolled students, the following is mentioned in the presented Self-Evaluation Report: The Agricultural University of Georgia has established a Methodology of Determining the Number of Academic, Scientific and Invited Personnel Per Program. According to this methodology, the academic staff involved in the implementation of the BBA program should consist of:

· No less than 15% of professors and lecturers.

· Scientific personnel must constitute no less than 15%.

· Invited personnel must be no more than 80%

Also, the Business School has developed a workload scheme for the academic and invited staff involved in the program, which allows for the monitoring of staff workloads, taking into account the contractual obligations and full workload of both academic and invited staff within the program. This scheme adheres to university regulations governing staff performance and staffing policies.

The above-mentioned methodology and the workload scheme should help university to provide a balance between permanent academic and invited staff guarantees program sustainability; the number and workload of the personnel engaged in the BBA program, support the educational process outlined by the program, ensuring timely execution of scientific research activities and all assigned functions; and the program benefits from an appropriate ratio of academic staff to students as well.

In the SER the following is outlined: the ratio of academic personnel to enrolled students is appropriate, and the BBA program benefits from an appropriate ratio of academic staff to students. It means that the number and workload of the personnel engaged in the BBA program, support the educational process outlined by the program, ensure timely execution of scientific research activities and all assigned functions; as well as a balance between permanent academic staff and visiting faculty guarantees program sustainability.

However, the university presented the BBA program's Staff Workload (per semester), where the ratio of academic staff to invited staff was not acceptable for the assurance of program sustainability. Additionally, the turnover rate of invited staff has been observed. (Information about the Quantitative Data of the Educational Program is given below).

Programme 1 (BA Business Administration)

Number of the staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, and invited staff)	Number of Programme Staff Total - 57	Including the staff with sectoral expertise[5] Total - 23	Including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction[6] Total - 4	Among them, the affiliated academic staff
Total number of academic staff	**7**	-	-	**4**
- **Professor**	2	-	-	2
- **Associate Professor**	1	-	-	1
- **Assistant-Professor**	4	2	1	**1**
- **Assistant**	-	-	-	-
Invited Staff	47	20	3	_
Scientific Staff	3	-	-	_

According to the SER, a total of 57 persons are involved in the BBA program, including 7 academic staff members and 47 invited lecturers. (Enclosed documents consist of CVs and diplomas of 57 persons).

The academic staff comprises 2 professors, 1 associate professor, and 4 assistant professors, among them 4 are affiliated with the university. Among them only 1 person, who holds the position of assistant professor,has been awarded a doctoral degree in Business Administration. 2 persons (the assistant professor and dean of Business school as well) have been awarded MBA degrees. Also, 3 scientists are related to this BBA program. Academic – 7 /Invited Staff – 47 / Scientist - 3. Among invited staff 7 lecturers have been awarded PhD degree (among them 3 hold PhD degree in the sectoral direction); 27 lecturers have been awarded master's degree (8 lecturers hold master's degree in the sectoral direction); 14 lecturers have been awarded bachelor's degree (9 lecturers hold bachelor's degree in sectoral directions). In addition, it should be mentioned that the program has a relatively high ratio of invited staff to academic staff (Ratio: 6.71 invited lecturers for every 1 academic staff member), which may suggest an over-reliance on invited lecturers. However, interviews indicate that this issue is being dealt with through long-term contracts with invited staff, and there are opportunities for invited staff to be promoted.

The staff turnover/retention rate (last 5 years) is significant, particularly among invited staff, with a turnover rate of 50.0%. This suggests potential instability in the teaching workforce, which may impact continuity and the quality of education. Regarding the Academic staff turnover, the panel noted the following: - New Academic Staff - 1 / Academic staff who left – 3; Ratio: Academic staff who left New Invited Staff - 28 / Invited Staff who left - 22. Ratio: Turnover – 50.0% / Retention – 46.3%.

Regarding the Student Enrollment and Ratios can be mentioned that the program has 629 students enrolled. The student-to-affiliated-academic-staff Ratio is very high - Affiliated academic personnel - 4 / Students: 629, (157.25 students per 1 affiliated academic staff member). Academic/scientific/invited staff

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[5] Staff implementing the relevant components of the main field of study

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

- 60 / Students – 629, ratio is -10.483 students per academic/scientific/invited staff. Total – Staff / Students - 2: 0.10.

Regarding the scientific-research aspects of the BBA program's development, the panel noted that for the last 5 years a total of 125 scientific activities have been reported, including: 58 published papers (19 in local journals and 38 in international journals), 18 conference presentations (10 at local conferences and 8 at international conferences), 50 other scientific or research activities.

The program demonstrates a weak commitment to scientific activity, with a diverse range of outputs including publications and conference presentations. This can be considered as a weak point of the program's global engagement and the academic staff's active participation in the broader academic community.

Thus, based on a detailed analysis of submitted documentation as well as site interview results, the panel noted that for the sustainable development and competitiveness program needs to be strengthened in terms of academic / affiliated staff recruitment and retention, particularly, staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction.

Evidences/Indicators

- The Self-evaluation report (and enclosed documents)
- Strategic Review and Action Plan of the Agricultural University of Georgia
- Methodology of Determining the Number of Academic, Scientific and Invited Personnel Per Program
- Workload scheme for the academic and invited staff involved in the program (Per Semester)
- Academic Staff Personnel Files: CVs of academic and invited staff.
- Site Interview Results

Recommendation(s):

1. To ensure the high quality and sustainable implementation of the BBA program, it is recommended to increase the number of affiliated academic staff holding PhD degrees in the sectoral direction.
2. It is recommended to pay attention to the staff's (academic, administrative, invite,) workload in the BBA program, taking into account the positions they simultaneously hold at other universities (or organizations) and total workload.

Suggestion(s):

1. To ensure the high quality of the BBA program implementation and further development, it is suggested to support and increase academic and invited staff's active participation in research and publishing activities.

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	☐	☐	✓	☐

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.

N/A

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

Based on the information provided in the Self Evaluation Report, submitted relevant documents and site-interview results, the panel noted that the Agricultural University of Georgia evaluates the performance of academic and invited staff involved in the BBA program regularly, supporting their professional development academic, as well as scientific/research activities. To facilitate this process, the university has developed the Concept for the Staff Evaluation and Professional Development, a scope of activities that outline planning, evaluation metrics, and a workload scheme. etc. This scheme specifies the mandatory portion of academic/research activities for academic staff and besides the academic side, also details various scientific activities, assigning specific time (hours) to each. Regarding the people responsible for the organizations and analysis of the evaluation, the panel was informed that the results of the annual activity evaluation of staff are monitored by the Faculty Development Manager and the Research Activities Coordinator.

In submitted documentation, as well as interview results, it was mentioned that the Faculty Development Manager oversees tasks aimed at fostering the professional growth of staff, which include: (a) Developing methods for the professional development of academic staff (b) Promoting the implementation and advancement of modern teaching methods, technologies, and evaluation systems at the university; (c) Supporting and guiding academic staff in effectively integrating teaching and learning strategies into syllabi; (d) Conducting training sessions to enhance the teaching methodologies and evaluation systems of academic staff; (e) Ensuring the placement of syllabi in the university's electronic platforms; (f) Participating in demonstration lectures as part of the academic staff selection process; (g) Contributing to the methodological development of educational programs.

Regarding the evaluation of research activities, the panel was informed that the Research Activities Coordinator is responsible for facilitating scientific and research endeavors by the investigating new grant opportunities, reviewing contest conditions, and disseminating information; collecting and processing competition documentation, as well as organizing grant submission documents for scientists; developing budgets for scientific projects; preparing annual and interim reports, maintaining a register of current and completed grants; generating science ratings; establishing professional relationships with grant competition coordinators; coordinating scientific service-related meetings, conferences, presentations, seminars, and internal university projects; developing project budgets and updating website information; conducting research, processing, and analyzing essential information; communicating with scientists for documentation analysis and processing; producing various types of current documentation as required.

The panel also was informed that annual self-assessment reports evaluate academic performance based on compulsory and optional scientific activities, as outlined in the university's research concept and evaluation rules.

In the scheme mentioned above, it is specified that the scientific personnel productivity is evaluated once a year, when information about scientific activities is sent to the Research Activities Coordinator which is read by the Rector and the Research Activities Coordinator.

Regarding the evaluation method it is mentioned that this complex includes bibliometric data and other types of activities, which allow to motivate the scientist and allocate resources adequately. The activity of a scientist is evaluated every year both individually and according to institutes/directions, and the results are analyzed in terms of 3-year dynamics.

The assessment is carried out taking into account the following eight criteria: (a) Funding provided by the Knowledge Fund and the University; (b) The volume and amount of grants received by the scientists per year; (c) Utilization of University infrastructure and space; (d) The number and rating of articles published in Impact Factor journals; (e) Scholar citation index (if any); (f) Published books, textbooks and monographs; (g) Involvement in the teaching process (annual academic workload, number of hours); (h) Supervision of Doctoral students per year and number of defended dissertations.

The coefficients are calculated according to the elaborated Mechanisms for the Evaluation of Activities and Professional Development of Personnel. Each criterion is summed up after calculating each indicator and the final points are received. The results of the evaluation of the research activity of the personnel are monitored by the research activities coordinator together with the Rector, and, if necessary, measures are planned to promote the professional development of the personnel.

According to the information provided, while evaluating the academic performance of personnel, the university applies the **Evaluation Scheme of Academic Personnel Activities,** where the following three key components for the evaluation are identified: (a) pedagogical skills; (b) course management; (c) professional/research activity.

The panel was informed that, in general, **Pedagogical Skills** are evaluated twice: first, before the start of the academic process Administration evaluates the performance of personnel, the evaluation is focused on the compliance of the selected teaching methods and strategies with the academic course. While the quality of pedagogical skills relevant to the academic course is evaluated by students at the end of the academic process.

Regarding Course Management, the panel noted that the university administration, as well as the administration of the respective school/program evaluate the coherence of syllabus before the beginning

of the academic process, while the symmetry of the distribution of marks is evaluated at the end of the academic process. Moreover, at the end of the academic process, the administrative/logistical issues related to the management of the subject (adherence to syllabus, timeliness of assessment, punctuality, attendance of the lecturer,) are assessed by the student.

Professional/research activity is the 3rd component in the above-mentioned Scheme and focuses on monitoring, measuring and evaluating academic/invited staffs' performance in this field. According to the applied methodology mentioned above, professional activity of personnel is monitored based on the analysis of the CVs and information on other relevant activities provided by the Rector, Human Resources Manager, Research Activities Coordinator and the relevant school administration.

It should be mentioned that within the framework of the academic personnel activities evaluation scheme, the criteria of pedagogical skills and subject management are measured with grades, where maximum (positive) grade is defined as - 5 points, and the minimum (negative) grade - 1 point (very good - 5, good - 4, neutral - 3, bad - 2, Very bad - 1). When a criterion is evaluated several times and/or by more than one evaluator, the final score is calculated using the arithmetic mean method. In accordance with the methodology mentioned, while analyzing the results of the Pedagogical Skills and Subject Management Criteria assessment, in the case of bad/very bad assessment, the issue is examined, the solutions are determined, and further response is carried out. In the case of a neutral assessment, it is considered that no significant problem has been identified. If the evaluation is between very good and good, it is considered that the activities implemented by the University in the direction of personnel development are effective. Moreover, within the framework of the academic personnel activities evaluation scheme, the professional /research activity component is evaluated using a binary system (namely, satisfactory/unsatisfactory). When an unsatisfactory result is obtained, the issue is studied, appropriate recommendations are issued, and developmental measures/activities are planned to correct the outcome. If a satisfactory result is established, it is considered that the mechanisms supporting the research and professional activities of the university are effective.

Regarding the **Personnel Professional Development Mechanisms** should be mentioned the following: academic personnel is supported by the university to promote professional development, conduct quality research or business trips, ensuring to reduce or reschedule their workload in the relevant semester as well as ensuring to maintain their fixed salaries, which personnel can use for their own professional development if they wish.

Notable, that the university creates opportunities for academic personnel professional development. For this purpose, the academic staff applies to the founding organization, the Knowledge Fund or the Agricultural University of Georgia for financing or co-financing of their scientific activities (publishing an article, organizing a conference or participating in an international conference, implementing a national or international grant, etc.).

Besides the mentioned above, at the beginning of every semester the university holds orientation meetings for academic personnel (individually per program) for the purpose of promoting full integration in the academic processes. These orientation meetings are focused on supporting personnel with assuring that the syllabus and evaluation systems are based on appropriate methodology; refining and improving the teaching and learning strategies; implementing modern teaching methods and techniques; ensuring effective use of the electronic management system; creating appropriate registry, etc. Orientation meetings are conducted by the Vice-Rectors, the School Dean/Head of Program, the Head of the Quality Assurance Office and the Faculty Development Manager.

Moreover, the panel noted that the Faculty Development Manager, based on his/her functions, develops methods and mechanisms for the development of the academic personnel of the University and their integration into the university space, which ensures the improvement of the quality of learning and teaching in the university.

To ensure this, the training and consultation are usually used. Training is focused more on introducing academic personnel to contemporary principles, strategies and trends in teaching and learning, including methodologies for developing syllabuses, assessment systems, forms of knowledge assessment and learning outcomes. While consultation establishes a plan of orientation meetings, which involves helping the academic personnel in the proper methodological provision of the syllabi, developing a relevant evaluation system for the course, or establishing evaluation methods in accordance with modern teaching technologies and approaches.

For promoting highly effective involvement of academic personnel in the academic process of the university and the development of teaching quality through pre-planned periodical training and individual consultations, the Faculty Development Manager applies a proactive approach. Reactive approach is applied to solve the gaps identified in the evaluation process, the development of an individual plan for the development of academic personnel and the planning/implementation of relevant activities. This helps them refine their teaching strategies and methods. Consequently, to further develop their pedagogical skills and improve the quality of teaching, international training mechanisms are used for employees involved in the process of professional development of academic personnel.

For promoting highly effective involvement of academic personnel in the academic process of the university and the development of teaching quality through pre-planned periodical training and individual consultations, the Faculty Development Manager applies a proactive approach. A reactive approach applies to solve the gaps identified in the evaluation process, the development of an individual plan for the development of academic personnel and the planning/implementation of relevant activities, help them refine their teaching strategies and methods. Consequently, to further develop their pedagogical skills and improve the quality of teaching, international training mechanisms are used for employees involved in the process of professional development of academic personnel. Through the above-described mechanisms, the university provides effective professional development of academic, scientific and invited personnel.

In submitted documentation (particularly, in the university Survey Report on the evaluation of the performance of the staff and faculty involved in educational courses and programs) was noted that during the reporting period staff productivity was satisfactory, as evidenced by the results obtained. A total of 16752 individual surveys were distributed to students to evaluate courses/lecturers during the spring semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. Out of these, 1109 surveys received feedback, resulting in a participation rate of approximately 7%. The average participation rate of individual course surveys was also 7%.

The analysis of the evaluations revealed that the overall average rating for all criteria in the study courses/lecturers' survey was 4.4 out of a maximum of 5 points. Furthermore, the summation of the study course evaluations indicated that a majority of the students across the university expressed satisfaction with academic activities.

Out of the total surveys, 353 pertained to study courses/lecturers, while 20 focused on administration activities. Among the study course surveys, 239 (approximately 68%) received responses, while 18 (90%)

of the administration surveys were completed. The report provided an overview of the feedback received and its results.

It is worth noting that the overall evaluation of the study courses and teaching (Pedagogical Skills as well as Course Management components of the abovementioned scheme) in nearly all criteria were 4 points or higher. This indicates that the majority of respondents rated the study courses and their teaching as good to very good in the criteria. Namely, the following indicators received positive evaluations: subject matter deliverance - 4.37, ease of communication - 4.3, evaluation system adequacy - 4.17, alignment of course goals and outcomes - 4.24, overall course evaluation - 4.19. Positive evaluations were also observed regarding logistical aspects. Specifically, in the following criteria: punctuality - 4.67, timeliness of evaluation - 4.32, lecturer attendance - 4.7, make-up session scheduling - 4.47, adherence to lesson plan - 4.58.

Thus, following the analysis of feedback from the surveys concerning the study courses, academic staff of the programs during the reporting period, it was determined that there are no significant issues identified across the criteria outlined in the questionnaires at the Agricultural University of Georgia. The low response rate and passivity, as observed through experience and follow-up interviews, is interpreted as a sign of general satisfaction and the absence of significant problems. In addition, notable that the above-mentioned report does not contain personally identifiable information, and extensive information related to individual cases.

However, the panel noted a lack of information on scientific research activities related to the BBA program. Thus, some areas for further improvement were identified, including fostering collaboration with partner universities through the organization of joint forums and conferences, as well as targeted training sessions related to the BBA program.

Regarding the evaluation of academic, research and/or administrative activities of staff involved in implementation of the BBA program, the panel suggested implementing a comprehensive 360-degree evaluation system that will be linked to transparent staff remuneration and incentive scheme.

Evidences/Indicators

- The Self-evaluation report;
- Academic Staff Personnel Files;
- Agricultural University of Georgia Strategic Review and Action Plan;
- Mechanisms for the Evaluation of Activities and Professional Development of Personnel.
- 2022-2023 Academic Year Spring Semester, Survey Report
- Interview Results

Recommendation(s):

Suggestion(s):

1. It is suggested to foster collaboration with partner universities through the organization of joint forums and conferences, as well as targeted training sessions related to the BBA program.

> 2. It is suggested to apply a comprehensive 360-degree evaluation system that will be linked to transparent staff remuneration and an incentive scheme.

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	✓	☐	☐	☐

4.4. 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.

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

The educational programs at the Agricultural University of Georgia, including the one for the given accreditation, is supported by a robust system of libraries and laboratories. The university ensures that the library houses all core literature listed in the syllabi, which are critical for achieving the program's intended learning outcomes. The expert team randomly double checked some titles from the courses' core literature, as it turned out most are scanned copies of books. Although the scanned copies of textbooks are intended for educational use, the expert team suggests that the university carefully consider copyright regulations when digitising entire textbooks that are available for purchase. It is important to ensure that these practices comply with international practice and principles of copyright laws to avoid potential legal issues.

The library also provides access to international electronic databases (currently only ScienceDirect and Scopus, that is provided within the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation and paid by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia), allowing students to stay updated on the latest advancements. However, it is worth noting ScienceDirect primarily focuses on the natural sciences and medicine. To further enrich the teaching resources, it would be beneficial for the university to subscribe to journals or

case repositories specific to the field of business. This would provide more relevant materials to support business education and research.

In terms of technical support, the university has ensured that the ratio of technical devices to the number of students is adequate, facilitating a smooth educational experience. The availability of materials in general is not limited to students alone but extends to academic and administrative staff, ensuring an inclusive approach to resource accessibility. Moreover, students are well-informed about the available resources and are guided on how to utilise them effectively, which enhances their academic journey.

However, despite the resources described, the university's Self-Evaluation Report (SER) does not provide specific information about the library facilities, which are a key component under this substandard. This omission is noteworthy, especially since the substandard is largely focused on evaluating the quality of the library and related resources. As all relevant data about the library was gathered during the site visit, it is suggested that the university address this in future SER drafts to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of its library resources.

Evidences/Indicators:

- Self-evaluation report;
- Interviews during the site-visit;
- Observation of the facilities during the site-visit;
- University webpage

Recommendations

suggestions:

1. It is suggested that the university carefully considers copyright regulations when digitising entire textbooks that are available for purchase, to ensure that these practices comply with international practice and principles of copyright laws to avoid potential legal issues;
2. To further enrich the teaching resources, it is suggested the university subscribe to journals or case repositories specific to the field of business;
3. It is suggested that 4.4 substandard description in the SER directly addresses library services to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of library resources as per standard requirements.

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	✓	☐	☐	☐

The allocation of financial resources stipulated in 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

According to the information provided in the SER, submitted documentation (particularly, the document that describes financial model and operations of the Agricultural University of Georgia) and interview results, the panel noted that the HEI operates under a centralized budget model, where all educational programs are financed from a common pool and do not have independent budgets, thus, the financial model combines the budget of all programs and administrative units.

It can be said that the university budget is purposeful and encompasses the primary objectives and strategic development plans of institutions. The university Rector and Chancellor make budgetary decisions in the university. While preparing a new budget the previous year's budget is taken into account. The financial analyst, with the Rector and Chancellor forecast the expected total income and operating expenses for the following year, considering the priorities and goals. The persons mentioned above oversee the budget execution. Also, budget control is conducted by the rector and chancellor through reviews prepared by the financial analysts.

According to the presented documentation, the main source of financing of the university's performance is the amount received from tuition fees of bachelor's, master's and doctoral students (65.7% of total income). Based on provided information, in turn, students' tuition fees consist of the following main sources: - **Student payments 62%; - State Grants 35%; -Knowledge Fund - "Sagzuri" 2%; - Other Financing 1%.** Regarding the income from tuition fees, the panel was informed that the university also has local and international grants for financing scientific projects (14.7% of total income), direct funding of the Knowledge Fund for educational and scientific purposes (6.1% of total income) and income from other educational-practical and laboratory activities (13.5% of total income).

Besides the presented documents, while interviewing the university/faculty administration, it was mentioned by them that the HEI has consistently demonstrated its financial stability, fulfilling its obligations fully, appropriately, and with integrity, which is due to the following:

- **Ease of Defining Student Flows** - the university's income remains stable and easily projected, as it consistently enrolls close to 100% of its announced student capacity each year;

- **Being a Subsidiary of a Charitable Organization - it** is worth noting that the Agricultural University of Georgia is part of the charitable organization NNLE "Knowledge Fund", which, as required by law, has no private beneficiaries interested in dividends;

- **100% Reinvestment in Education** – the HEI is a non-entrepreneurial (non-commercial) legal entity, which is aimed to promote education in Georgia. Yearly revenue surplus is reinvested entirely in education. Surplus funds are also used to increase the reserve deposit to provide an even more secure financial cushion for the university;

- **Being a Member of a Stable Group** – the HEI is a member of the non-profit organization Knowledge Fund, which has considerable financial resources to financially support the university in unforeseen and force majeure circumstances. Students of the Agricultural University of Georgia often address the non-profit organization Knowledge Fund to fund their participation in various international events, competitions and conferences. The non-profit organization Knowledge Fund sponsors not only their participation fees but also their travel, visa, accommodation and even daily expenses.

- **Tuition Fee Policy** - Each year, the Agricultural University of Georgia considers the factors existing on the market, the student's ability to pay, and competition. Based on financial modeling and analysis, the university's administration determines the tuition fee rates and the number of accepted students for the next academic year. Due to its healthy tuition fee policy, the university annually attracts highly qualified students. It offers the students the best ratio of price and quality;

- **Salary Policy** - the personnel management policy of the HEI is built on principles of fairness in evaluating professional skills and fostering competitiveness. The academic and teaching salary policy of the university aims to enhance the productivity of the academic staff while supporting their growth as researchers and professionals. In many cases, lecturers also receive a fixed salary in addition to the hourly wage and actively participate in various administrative and scientific activities. As was mentioned, the salary system at the university is designed to be competitive, with a high retention rate. This enables the university to consistently attract highly qualified lecturers and administrative personnel.

- **Remuneration of Academic and Administrative Staff** - the financing of the salaries and other expenses of the academic personnel from the salary fund of the HEI is triple the amount of similar administrative salaries. Such a ratio in the university's salary fund can be considered as a sign of high effectiveness, taking into account the fact that the goals of teaching are met.

- **Research Funding** - the funding of research at the university has two main sources: (a) **Research grants** received from outside the university (e.g. Shota Rustaveli National (a) Science Foundation grants) (45.2% of research budget); (b) **Salary fund for individual research and professional development** and the university's internal budget (54.8% of research budget). Also, it was mentioned that the university aims to spend at least 10% of its total operating expenses on research. 5% is expected to come from outside the university, whereas 5% from internal funding.

Regarding the other **Educational, Practical, and Laboratory Activities -** was mentioned that the university is actively involved in these activities. Moreover, the HEI's practical and laboratory units include various specialized laboratories, which provide high-quality services to customers with high standards of demand, they are financially sustainable and stable. It should be noted that the teaching-practical and laboratory units of the university are actively used for students to acquire practical knowledge. Thus, in all its existence, the university has always dutifully, timely and appropriately met all its financial obligations towards its students, employees, private or legal entities and state structures. In addition, the budget of

the Agricultural University of Georgia is in surplus, allowing the university to cover expenses with its own income.

Below is done the information about the budget of the Agricultural University of Georgia for the academic year 2023-2024:

Inflows	106.0%
Earnings from Bachelor's programs	60.7%
Earnings from Master's and Ph.D. programs	9.0%
Earnings from scientific grants and research	15.6%
Knowledge Fund financing for scientific and teaching purposes	6.5%
Earnings from other teaching-practical and laboratory activities	14.3%
Outflows	**100.0%**
Academic Salaries	32.3%
Administrative Salaries	13.7%
Scientific Grants and Research	15.6%
Salary financing of individual research and professional development and internal budgetary financing of the university	*8.5%*
Scientific grants obtained outside the university	*7.0%*
General and administrative expenses	4.9%
Marketing and communication	3.2%
Lease and utilities	9.7%
Functioning and development of the library	0.8%
Other educational expenses	6.5%
Teaching-practical and laboratory activity expenses	13.2%

The information about the financing dynamics over the last 5 years, that approved the HEI's financial stability, is done in the table below.

Financing Dynamics	2018-2019	2019-2020	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Total funding	80.6%	80.3%	88.1%	95.3%	100%
Funding increase from previous year	2%	- 0.4%	9.7%	8.1%	5%

However, it should be mentioned that there was not submitted any other document / information in which is done more detailed description of the BBA programs financial supporting.

Thus, based on the information provided by the SER, submitted information and interviews, the panel noted that the university is financially stable and sustainable, ensuring it fulfills its obligations diligently; and its revenues are stable and easily predictable. Moreover, the university administration claimed that they never had cases when the initial budget requested by faculty was not approved and decreased. The increase in library books is funded through the university's general budget, ensuring that the necessary literature for the BBA program is available. The professional development of staff (academic, invited, administrative) is funded by the university finances which amongst others includes their participation in scientific events (mostly in conferences and workshops). Additionally, the university regularly announces internal development competitions, managed by the faculty administration. The university also covers costs associated with the presentation and publication of research results. In addition, it should be mentioned that the financing of the salaries and other expenses of the academic personnel from the salary

fund of the university is approximately triple the amount of similar administrative salaries. The remuneration of the university's personnel includes a fixed (non-hour) component that is aimed at research and professional development and the academic personnel make decisions regarding the goals of its usage.

Despite the mentioned above, the panel suggested to highlight the information about the BBA program budget and describe it separately and clearly, focusing on such main budget items of a specific program, as international mobility, the development of the library fund to support the programs, enhancement of teaching and technical resources, student social support, provision of scholarships and incentives, sports, cultural, tourism, and entertainment events, professional development of personnel, support for scientific research activities, and the university reserve fund, etc.

Evidences/Indicators

- The Self-evaluation report
- Budget (document on provision of financial resources); Financial Statement of Knowledge Fund 2023.
- Interview results

Recommendation(s): -

Suggestion(s):

1. It is suggested to highlight the information about the BBA program budget and describe it separately and clearly.

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	✓	☐	☐	☐

Compliance with the programme standard

4. Providing Teaching Resources	Complies with requirements	☐
	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 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.

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

According to the submitted documentation the Agricultural University of Georgia has implemented a Total Quality Management (TQM) system designed to enhance the quality of its teaching, learning, and research activities. This comprehensive approach involves all university departments in both direct and indirect roles in quality control and improvement, ensuring continuous development across the institution.

The university's quality assurance system aligns with its strategic goal of maintaining an efficient, lean organisational structure that brings decision-makers and the educational process closer together. This collaborative system integrates contributions from various structural units, including the Quality Assurance Office, school coordinators, deans, program heads, the Dean of Students, and other administrative staff. These teams work collectively to identify issues, implement quality mechanisms, and ensure improvements.

As was noted during the site visit and explained in SER the Quality Assurance Office plays a central role in this system, operating according to the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle, a dynamic model that supports ongoing quality enhancement. The office ensures that quality assurance mechanisms meet both national legislation and international standards, provides guidance on the development of curricula and research processes, and oversees internal evaluations. These evaluations are conducted through surveys of students and staff, gathering anonymous feedback on various aspects, including teaching quality, the academic environment, and communication with administration. This feedback is used to inform decisions and modify educational programs as necessary. The expert team double checked with students

and alumni, as well as with the teaching staff and all those groups confirmed to be involved in the program development by filling the quaternaries in each semester.

As was seen during the site visit, the university's holistic approach ensures that quality assurance is a shared responsibility among all relevant departments. Regular evaluations, both quantitative and qualitative, are conducted to continuously improve academic processes, material resources, and overall student satisfaction.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation report
- Agricultural University of Georgia Strategic Review and Action Plan;
- Quality Assurance Mechanisms;
- Questionnaire Forms;
- Semester Evaluation Report;
- Interviews during the site-visit;
- University Webpage

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recommendations: -

suggestions: -

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
5.1 Internal quality evaluation	✓	☐	☐	☐

5.2. External Quality Evaluation
Programme utilizes the results of external quality assurance on a regular basis.

As it is described in the SER the Agricultural University of Georgia highly values the peer review process and actively embraces the recommendations that arise during authorization and accreditation reviews. The university carefully considers each piece of advice, engaging in critical evaluation and thorough discussions to determine which suggestions will most effectively enhance the quality of education within specific programs. This approach ensures a continuous focus on improvement and development in line with the highest academic standards.

A notable example of the university's commitment to quality assurance is the full accreditation granted to its bachelor's Program in Business Administration. On August 31, 2018, the Accreditation Council of Higher Educational Programs awarded the program its second full accreditation. The expert team double checked the recommendations given in the previous accreditation process, as it was seen they were considered for this time. Some recommendations were addressed to specific courses and their pre-conditions, while some aimed at the university offering more professional development activities to its teaching staff. As noted during the site visit, the university contracted a person responsible for designing and delivering activities for the professional development of the staff. Moreover, the academics staff confirmed they are actively communicating with this person, mentioning to get instructions upon request.

By following through on peer recommendations and incorporating them into the ongoing development of its academic offerings, the Agricultural University of Georgia demonstrates its dedication to delivering superior educational experiences. This cycle of reflection and enhancement strengthens the university's programs and ensures that they remain aligned with both regulatory requirements and the evolving needs of students and stakeholders.

Evidences/Indicators

- o   Self-evaluation report
- o   Quality Assurance Mechanisms;
- o   Accreditation report of the program from 2018;
- o   Interviews during the site-visit;
- o   University Webpage

recommendations: -

suggestions: -

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
5.2. External Quality Evaluation	✓	☐	☐	☐

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.

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

As per submitted documentation and interview outcomes, the Agricultural University of Georgia conducts ongoing and systematic monitoring and evaluation of its educational programs, including the bachelor's Program in Business Administration. The SER describes that the university follows a continuous approach, ensuring that programs are reviewed across multiple academic cycles. This process involves the systematic gathering, analysis, and processing of diverse data using both direct and indirect research methods.

The submitted documents state that indirect methods include feedback from key stakeholders such as students, graduates, and employers, collected through surveys and other feedback mechanisms. This input helps to identify areas where programs can be enhanced, driving future improvements. Direct methods focus on evaluating the program's achievement of its objectives, examining learning outcomes, and reviewing grade statistics.

During the interviews with the Quality Assurance team, it was noted that to ensure the quality and ongoing development of each program, the university prepares periodic monitoring reports. These reports cover various aspects of the program, including competition, student mobility, academic performance, student activities, graduate career paths, and any program modifications. The preparation of these reports involves collaboration with relevant stakeholders such as academic and administrative staff, students, alumni, and employers, ensuring that all perspectives are considered in the evaluation process.

These comprehensive reports provide a detailed overview of the status of the program, outlining actions taken, changes implemented, and activities related to academic, administrative, and employment sectors. The expert team double checked this with the employers, students and alumni, all different groups of the stakeholders confirmed that they are involved in the program development.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation report
- Agricultural University of Georgia Strategic Review and Action Plan;
- Quality Assurance Mechanisms;
- Questionnaire Forms;
- Semester Evaluation Report;
- Interviews during the site-visit;
- University Webpage

recommendations: -

suggestions: -

Evaluation

45

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	✓	☐	☐	☐

Compliance with the programme standards

2. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities	Complies with requirements	✓
	Substantially complies with requirements	☐
	Partially complies with requirements	☐
	Does not comply with requirements	☐

Attached documentation (if applicable): -

Name of the higher education institution: N(N)LE Agricultural University of Georgia

Name of Higher Educational Programmes, Levels: BA Business Administration, BA

Compliance of the programmes with the standards

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	☐	✓	☐	☐

2. Teaching Methodology and Organisation, Adequacy Evaluation of Programme Mastering	✓	☐	☐	☐
3. Student Achievements, Individual Work with them	✓	☐	☐	☐
4. Providing Teaching Resources	☐	✓	☐	☐
5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities	✓	☐	☐	☐

Appendix N1 – Response of the expert group to the position of the Georgian Agrarian University

Signatures

Chair of Accreditation Experts Panel

Asnate Upmace

Of the member(s) of the Accreditation Experts Panel

Natia Surmanidze

Ekaterine Natsvlishvili

Giga Khositashvili

Giorgi Merabishvili