



**NATIONAL CENTER FOR
EDUCATIONAL QUALITY
ENHANCEMENT**

Accreditation Expert Group Report on Cluster of Higher Education Programmes

**Preschool Education (BA), Teacher Training Educational Program,
Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels**

LEPL – Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University

25.-26. 4. 2025

July 1, 2025

Tbilisi

Information on the Higher educational Institution

Name of Institution Indicating its Organizational Legal Form	LEPL - Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University
Identification Code of Institution	220407888
Type of the Institution	University

Expert Panel Members

Chair (Name, Surname, HEI/Organization, Country)	Milan Pol, Masaryk University, Czech Republic
Member (Name, Surname, HEI/Organization, Country)	Revaz Tabatadze, University of Georgia, Georgia
Member (Name, Surname, HEI/Organization, Country)	Diana Mtchedlishvili, Caucasus University, Georgia
Member (Name, Surname, HEI/Organization, Country)	Sophio Ugrekhelidze, LEPL - Educational Management Information System, Georgia
Member (Name, Surname, HEI/Organization, Country)	Gizo Uchaidze, Georgian-American University, Georgia

I. Information on the Cluster of Educational Programmes

	Programme 1	Programme 2	Programme 3
Name of the educational programme	“Preschool Education” Bachelor Education Programme	“Teacher Training” Educational Programme	Teacher Training Educational Programme for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels
Level of higher education	VI	VI	VI
Qualification to be awarded	Bachelor in Preschool Education		
Name and code of the detailed field	0112 Preparation of Preschool Education Teacher		
Indication of the right to provide teaching of subject/subjects/group of subjects of the relevant level of general education ¹		1. Field of Social Sciences: • Basic and Secondary Level (VII–XII) Teacher in Social Sciences – History Teacher • Basic and Secondary Level (VII–XII) Teacher in Social Sciences – Civic Education Teacher • Basic and Secondary Level (VII–XII) Teacher in Social	1. Georgian Language and Literature Field: · Primary Level (I–VI) Georgian Language and Literature Teacher · Basic and Secondary Level (VII–XII) Georgian Language and Literature Teacher 2. Mathematics Field: • Primary Level (I–VI) Mathematics Teacher - Basic and Secondary Level

¹ In case of Integrated Bachelor’s–Master’s Teacher Training Educational Programme and Teacher Training Educational Programme

		Sciences – Geography Teacher 2. Natural Sciences Block: • Basic and Secondary Level (VII-XII) Biology Teacher • Basic and Secondary Level (VII-XII) Chemistry Teacher 3. Foreign Languages Field: • Primary, Basic, and Secondary Level Foreign Language Teacher – English Language Teacher 4. Aesthetics and Sports Field: • Primary, Basic, and Secondary Level Physical Education and Sports Teacher	(VII-XII) Mathematics Teacher 3. Primary Level Computer Technology Teacher 4. Primary Level (Grades I-IV) Teacher of Georgian Language and Literature, Mathematics, and Natural Sciences 5. Natural Sciences Field: • Primary Level (I-VI) Natural Sciences Teacher
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		Primary, Basic, and Secondary Level Music Teacher	
Language of instruction	Georgian	Georgian	Georgian
Number of ECTS credits	240	60	60
Programme Status (Accredited/Non-accredited/Conditionally Accredited/New/International Accreditation) Indicating Relevant Decision (number, date)	Accredited, N: 848123; 07.07.2023	Accredited, N:137, 14.12.2016	New

II. Accreditation Report Executive Summary

- **General Information on the Cluster of Education Programmes**

The cluster of educational programs consists of three programs: Preschool Education, BA, Teacher Training Educational Program, and Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels. Together, they can be seen as well correlating.

Bachelor program is designed as the program of 240 ECTS, while the other two programs have an allocation of 60 ECTS.

All programs have Georgian as the language of instruction.

Two programs are accredited until September 2025: Preschool Education, BA (since 2023), and Teacher Training Educational Program (since 2016), the third program is new.

All programs are built on the analysis of the labour market needs, and also with regard to similar existing programs nationally and beyond.

The material and other conditions as well as the infrastructure for realisation of the programs grouped into this cluster are on a good, sometimes a very good level.

- **Overview of the Accreditation Site Visit**

The site visit took place on April 25–26, 2025. Before the site visit, the panel provided documentation related to the cluster of programs and had a good chance to study it. During a preparatory meeting on April 17, 2025, the panel discussed preliminary findings and agreed upon the way of cooperation. Some documents were additionally requested during the site visit and provided by the university timely.

The site visit was well prepared by the Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University. During the two days, the panel had a very good chance to meet representatives of all relevant groups across the university and beyond and discuss with them issues related to the cluster of evaluated programs. Also, the panel had a chance to visit premises of the university that relate to the conduction of the cluster programs.

The work of the panel was effectively supported by colleagues from the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement, namely by Tatia Mamrikishvili before the very site visit, and by Lali Odishvili during the site visit. Also, the interpretation of Mariam Khazhomia was very helpful during the whole site visit.

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

The panel agreed that the cluster of educational programs Complies with Requirements in the case of standards 3, 4, and 5. The panel also agreed that the cluster of educational programs Substantially Complies with Requirements in the case of standards 1, and 2.

- **Recommendations**

For the cluster:

- It is recommended to explicitly incorporate *children's rights* within the learning outcomes, emphasizing the importance of this issue in the preparation of future educators. (1.2)
- It is recommended that the university develop a regulatory framework outlining the delivery standards and characteristics of distance and e-learning components. (2.3)
- It is recommended to raise awareness among students and staff regarding academic integrity, as well as the mechanisms for plagiarism prevention, detection, and response. (2.4)
- It is recommended to revise the assessment methods and define only those that correspond to the specific characteristics of the program components and ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes defined by the program. (2.4)
- It is recommended that the workload allocation is logical for all academic personnel to support teaching, supervision, curriculum development, and student engagement without overextension, which contributes positively to the quality of educational delivery and student outcomes. (4.1)
- It is recommended to continue in your effort to improve the research, publication and English language proficiency profile of the academic staff. (4.3)
- It is recommended that the QA Office undertake measures to enhance program staff awareness regarding the program learning outcome assessment system in deeper detail and comprehensively. (5.1)

For Preschool Education, BA:

- It is recommended to review comparable international programs and involve foreign specialists in the program evaluation process. This approach would contribute to the program's development, strengthen the professional competencies of its academic staff, and promote its internationalization. (1.4)
- It is recommended that the number of credits allocated to individual courses, as well as the proportion of contact and independent work hours, be reviewed and adjusted to better reflect the specificity and academic requirements of each course. (1.5)

For Teacher Training Educational Program:

- It is recommended to categorize the program's learning outcomes into Knowledge and Understanding, Skills, and Responsibility and Autonomy, to ensure structural coherence and alignment with qualification standards. (1.2)
- It is recommended to review the compulsory elective subject block and consider increasing its total credit volume to ensure the attainment of the learning outcomes defined for the integrated subjects. (1.4)
- It is recommended that teacher training programs explicitly define the subject modules offered, indicating that students must select one module and will be awarded a certificate granting them the right to teach the respective subject. (1.4)
- It is recommended that the distribution and volume of credits within the subject-specific teaching methodology modules be revisited and adjusted to better reflect the actual instructional content and intended outcomes. Where appropriate, course integration and credit reallocation should be employed to strengthen other components of the program, particularly within the elective compulsory blocks. (1.5)

- It is recommended that the university specifies in the programme admission requirements only those prerequisites that correspond to the currently planned individual implementation format of the teacher training programme. (2.1)
- It is recommended that the university promptly renew the agreements with schools to ensure the smooth implementation of the practical component. These agreements should clearly state the number of students accepted for practice at the site, as well as the objectives and duration of the practice. (2.2)

For Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels:

- It is recommended to categorize the program's learning outcomes into Knowledge and Understanding, Skills, and Responsibility and Autonomy, to ensure structural coherence and alignment with qualification standards. (1.2)
- It is recommended to review the compulsory elective subject block and consider increasing its total credit volume to ensure the attainment of the learning outcomes defined for the integrated subjects. (1.4)
- It is recommended that teacher training programs explicitly define the subject modules offered, indicating that students must select one module and will be awarded a certificate granting them the right to teach the respective subject. (1.4)
- It is recommended that the distribution and volume of credits within the subject-specific teaching methodology modules be revisited and adjusted to better reflect the actual instructional content and intended outcomes. Where appropriate, course integration and credit reallocation should be employed to strengthen other components of the program, particularly within the elective compulsory blocks. (1.5)
- It is recommended that the university specifies in the programme admission requirements only those prerequisites that correspond to the currently planned individual implementation format of the teacher training programme. (2.1)
- It is recommended that the university promptly renew the agreements with schools to ensure the smooth implementation of the practical component. These agreements should clearly state the number of students accepted for practice at the site, as well as the objectives and duration of the practice. (2.2)

Suggestions for the cluster:

- It is suggested to provide targeted training for academic staff on contemporary methods of online teaching and assessment to ensure effective implementation and quality assurance of remote learning practices. (2.3)
- It is suggested to revise the acceptable similarity threshold, as a similarity of nearly one-third of the paper raises concerns about the originality of the work. (2.3)
- It is suggested to continue in the effort to familiarize and encourage students and staff with the effective use of resources available via e-databases. (4.4)
- It is suggested to consider a possibility to grant alumni free access to all learning resources of the university. (4.4)
- It is suggested that the university guards against allowing internal quality assurance processes to become mechanical exercises. This necessitates conducting thorough qualitative

analysis of data collected for quality assurance purposes and maintaining consistent focus on content development through ongoing collaboration with diverse stakeholders. (5.3)

- **Suggestions for the Programme Development**

None

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

None

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

The University expressed its agreement with most of the recommendations. The panel also discussed cases when the University disagreed or partially agreed with some recommendations. Except for the recommendation related to standard 2.3 (*It is recommended to revise the acceptable similarity threshold, as a similarity of nearly one-third of the papers raises concerns about the originality of the work.*) the expert panel decided to remain in its original position. The recommendation related to standard 2.3 was changed into the suggestion.

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

Evaluation approaches for the accreditation experts:

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

1. Cluster and individual evaluation
2. Cluster evaluation

Standard/Component	Assessment approaches:
1. Educational Programme Objectives, Learning Outcomes and their Compliance with the Programme	
1.1. Programme Objectives	Cluster and individual
1.2 Programme Learning Outcomes	Cluster and individual
1.3. Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes	Cluster
1.4 Structure and Content of Educational Programme	Cluster and individual
1.5 Academic Course/Subject	Cluster and individual
2. Methodology and Organisation of Teaching, Adequacy of Evaluation of Programme Mastering	

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

III. Compliance of the Programme with Accreditation Standards

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

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

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

1.1 Programme Objectives

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

Cluster and individual evaluation

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

The panel agreed that objectives of the programs grouped into the cluster consider specificity of the field of study, level and educational programs. They define clearly the set of knowledge, skills and competences that are planned to be developed in graduate students. The panel also agreed that the objectives of the programs grouped into the cluster also illustrate the contribution of the programs/cluster to the development of the field and society.

Description and Analysis - Programme 1 – Preschool Education, BA

In alignment with the university's mission, the faculty charter, and the strategic development plan, the program is designed to equip students with comprehensive knowledge of the principles governing early childhood development, the factors influencing such development, the foundational tenets of quality early childhood education, and the design of age- and developmentally appropriate curricula. Furthermore, it aims to foster the ability to implement effective educational strategies.

The stated objectives of the program emphasize the cultivation of student competencies in supporting the holistic development of the child, managing the educational process, evaluating both the child and their own pedagogical practices, and engaging in positive communication with children, parents, the community, professionals from childcare services, and primary education teachers—grounded in evidence-based knowledge.

The program places a particular emphasis on the preparation of early childhood education specialists who embody civic consciousness, democratic values and principles, the protection of children's rights, an understanding of the significance of preschool education, and a commitment to the promotion of inclusivity and ongoing professional development. These

competencies are deemed essential for addressing the current shortage of qualified specialists in the region.

To achieve these objectives, the program offers a synthesis of theoretical and practical training courses. It incorporates course offerings essential for acquiring the necessary knowledge in the field of preschool education. The structure, content, and volume of these courses, as well as the instructional formats employed, are broadly consistent with the standards required for a bachelor's degree.

An analysis of labor market data indicates that graduates of the bachelor's program in preschool education are viewed as potential employees within early and preschool education institutions, both in educational roles (e.g., educator-pedagogue, educator, methodologist) and in administrative capacities. They are also suited for positions in formal and informal early childhood education programs, early childhood education and care institutions, as well as early intervention services and programs.

During the re-accreditation process, the program underwent several modifications. These included the integration of new courses aimed at enhancing practical skills, a comprehensive revision of the curriculum, the enrichment of the elective and free course components, and the introduction of a mandatory 20-credit language module. Accordingly, the program's learning outcomes were also revised to reflect these curricular changes.

In developing the program, particular attention was given to the content of analogous programs offered within the national educational framework. Peer evaluation was employed as a means of informing the development process.

Given that preschool education remains an evolving field within Georgia and continues to face various challenges, it is essential to incorporate international best practices and experiences into the program's ongoing refinement and development (see Sub-standard 1.3).

Description and Analysis - Programme 2 – Teacher Training Educational Program

In alignment with the university's mission, the faculty charter, and the strategic development plan, the program is designed to prepare primary, basic, and secondary school teachers in accordance with the current legislative framework governing education in Georgia. This includes compliance with the Law on Education, the Code of Professional Ethics for Teachers, established professional standards, and the requirements outlined in the relevant sectoral guidelines.

The program aims to develop educators who will:

- demonstrate critical thinking, innovative capacity, and academic proficiency;
- embody civic consciousness and democratic values;
- possess the requisite knowledge and pedagogical skills for teaching specific subjects;
- be oriented toward ongoing professional development;
- demonstrate competitiveness, openness to innovation, and the ability to apply such innovation within their pedagogical practice.

To realize these objectives, the program provides an integrated curriculum combining theoretical foundations with practical training components.

Based on labor market research analysis, graduates of the program are qualified to work as teachers at the relevant educational levels and subject areas within both public and private general education institutions. Additionally, they may engage in teaching within formal and informal general education programs.

During the re-accreditation preparation phase, the program underwent a series of modifications. Notably, elective courses were incorporated into the curriculum; teaching materials were updated across several training modules; and the program's learning outcomes were revised to reflect these enhancements.

In the development of the program, the structure and content of analogous programs within the local educational context were thoroughly reviewed. Furthermore, the program underwent peer evaluation to ensure its academic rigor and relevance.

Description and Analysis - Programme 3 - Teacher Training Educational Programme for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels

In alignment with the university's mission, the faculty charter, and the strategic development plan, the Teacher Training Educational Programme for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels is designed to prepare highly qualified teachers who meet the professional and legal standards defined by the current legislation of Georgia. These include the Law on General Education, the Code of Professional Ethics for Teachers, national professional standards, and the requirements outlined in the sectoral framework.

The program aspires to develop future educators who:

- possess critical thinking, innovation, and academic competencies;
- are committed to civic responsibility and democratic values;
- demonstrate comprehensive knowledge and pedagogical skills in their subject area(s);
- exhibit a strong orientation toward lifelong professional development;
- are competitive, open to pedagogical innovation, and capable of integrating modern teaching strategies into practice.

To fulfill these objectives, the program offers an integrated approach, combining robust theoretical instruction with extensive practical training. The curriculum is structured to ensure that students gain both foundational knowledge and the applied skills necessary for successful teaching at the primary, basic, and secondary levels.

Based on a detailed labor market analysis, graduates of the program are eligible to assume teaching positions at various levels within public and private general education institutions. They are also equipped to engage in both formal and non-formal general education settings.

According to the higher education institution, the program was revised and aligned with labor market needs following feedback from potential employers. This feedback included specific requirements and recommendations, which led to the addition of new modules aimed at further

enhancing the program's relevance and responsiveness to contemporary educational challenges.

During the program's development, a comparative analysis of similar programs within the local higher education landscape was conducted. Moreover, a peer evaluation process was implemented to ensure the program's academic quality and alignment with national and international standards in teacher education.

Evidences/Indicators

- **Annex 1.** "Preschool Education" Bachelor Educational Program, Syllabi
- **Annex 2.** "Teacher Training" Educational Program, Syllabi
- **Annex 3.** Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, Syllabi
- **Annex 4.** Mission of Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University
- **Annex 5.** Rule for Planning/Selecting, Designing, Evaluating, and Developing of Higher Educational Programs at the University
- **Annex 6.** Labor Market and Employer Demand Analysis

General recommendations of the cluster: None

General suggestions of the cluster: None

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes: None

Evaluation

Component 1.1 - Programme Objectives	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies the requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Preschool Education, VI)	x	☐	☐	☐
Programme 2 (Teacher training Educational Program, VI)	x	☐	☐	☐
Programme 3 (Teacher Training Educational program for	x	☐	☐	☐

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.
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Cluster and individual evaluation

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

The panel agreed that the learning outcomes of the programs grouped into this cluster are mostly (with minor exceptions requiring improvement) logically related to the objectives of the programs and the specificity of the field of study. The panel also agreed that the learning outcomes of the programs grouped into this cluster mostly well describe knowledge, skills, and sense of responsibility and autonomy which students gain upon completion of the programs.

Description and Analysis - Programme 1 - Preschool Education, BA

The learning outcomes of the Preschool Education BA program have been formulated in alignment with the requirements stipulated in the sectoral characteristics for preschool education. These outcomes are structured according to the standard domains of **knowledge and awareness, skills, responsibility and autonomy**, ensuring a holistic and comprehensive educational framework.

Emphasis is placed on the development of student autonomy and responsibility through the integration of targeted components within the academic curriculum. This focus is consistent with contemporary pedagogical priorities that encourage learning agency and reflective professional practice.

The formulation and subsequent modification of the program's learning outcomes were undertaken primarily by the program leadership and representatives of the institutional quality assurance office. Academic and invited teaching personnel were also engaged in this process, particularly through their involvement in the self-evaluation working group, affirming a collaborative and quality-oriented approach to curriculum development.

The revised learning outcomes are as follows:

1. Knowledge and Awareness

1.1. The graduate **describes and explains** the developmental characteristics of early childhood, including developmental disorders and influencing factors. They discuss foundational theories of learning and development, as well as methods of child instruction and key issues related to childcare and health protection.

1.2. The graduate **demonstrates understanding** of a variety of strategies for early childhood teaching and learning, articulates principles for organizing learning environments, and justifies the essential role of play in child development. They can compare and analyzing different early childhood education curricula and identify strategies for working within multicultural settings.

1.3. The graduate **analyzes** the significance of positive parenting for a child's holistic development, evaluates the influence of parental attitudes on the developmental trajectory of children, and explains the essence and principles of child-rearing practices, as well as the role of these methods in fostering developmental outcomes.

1.4. The graduate **describes and explains** the regulatory domains and foundational principles of legal and normative acts relevant to early and preschool education, including legal frameworks related to child protection.

2. Skills

2.1. The graduate **conducts child observation** identifies special educational needs, and documents developmental progress. They are able to plan and implement diverse, developmentally appropriate strategies, activities, and projects tailored to children's needs, interests, and abilities. Furthermore, they plan individualized support strategies and facilitate family and community involvement in the educational process.

2.2. The graduate **designs and implements** the transition plans, engages in reflective evaluation of both their own and others' pedagogical practices, and participates actively in professional discourse.

3. Responsibility and Autonomy

3.1. The graduate **plans and manages** educational processes based on clear instructional guidelines, documents professional activities, shares expertise with colleagues, and participates constructively in professional discussions, demonstrating openness to divergent perspectives.

The learning outcomes clearly correspond to the expected competencies at the bachelor's qualification level. They are explicitly formulated, measurable, and achievable within the framework of the program. The alignment of the outcomes with the broader program objectives further underscores their internal coherence and relevance.

Moreover, the program reflects sector-specific demands, as evidenced by the thematic diversity of its constituent courses and by its responsiveness to market requirements. This alignment has been substantiated through both document analysis and interview data obtained during the external review process.

The program's self-assessment documentation provides a comprehensive account of the rationale behind the program's revision process and the factors that influenced the structuring of its content and objectives. This is evidence of a reflective and evidence-informed approach to continuous program improvement.

Description and Analysis - Programme 2 - Teacher Training Educational Program

The learning outcomes of the Teacher Training Educational Program have been predominantly developed in alignment with the requirements outlined in the sectoral characteristics specific to teacher training. The formulation and subsequent revision of these outcomes were primarily undertaken by the program leadership and representatives from the Quality Assurance Office. Additionally, academic and invited teaching personnel confirmed their involvement in the development process, particularly through their participation in the program's self-assessment working group.

As a result of this collaborative process, the learning outcomes were revised and are currently articulated as follows:

- Learning Outcome 1: Plans both short-term and long-term student-centered and results-oriented learning processes; designs informal learning activities based on the interests and capabilities of students; integrates principles of universal design, national goals for general education, the national curriculum, school priorities, and student needs into planning.
- Learning Outcome 2: Applies knowledge of developmental and educational theories to establish a safe, inclusive, and motivating learning environment that considers each student's individual and special educational needs, cultural diversity, and differentiated learning approaches.
- Learning Outcome 3: Integrates democratic values and the principles of sustainable development into the learning process with the aim of fostering responsible citizenship and social and environmental awareness.
- Learning Outcome 4: Develops assessment frameworks and rubrics to ensure objective evaluation of student achievement and progress; effectively utilizes formative assessment outcomes to support student development.
- Learning Outcome 5: Identifies, develops, and utilizes appropriate educational resources and digital technologies to enhance student learning outcomes, based on individual student needs.
- Learning Outcome 6: Employs innovative strategies to foster a collaborative school culture; demonstrates professional responsibility in adhering to ethical standards; cultivates an environment conducive to effective communication and constructive cooperation with students, colleagues, and parents.
- Learning Outcome 7: Engages with current scientific research and emerging trends in education for the purposes of ongoing professional development; designs and implements research into one's own pedagogical practice, evaluates outcomes, and reflects on practice within the framework of applicable educational legislation.

It is important to note that the current formulation of learning outcomes does not differentiate between the domains of knowledge and understanding, skills, and responsibility and autonomy. In light of this, the accreditation expert group recommends that the learning

outcomes be revised and reorganized according to these standard categories to enhance clarity, coherence, and alignment with national and international qualification frameworks.

Moreover, while the program demonstrates alignment with labor market demands—as evidenced by submitted documentation and interview data—it is also recommended that the topic of children’s rights be explicitly integrated into the stated learning outcomes to reflect both national educational priorities and international pedagogical standards.

Description and Analysis - Programme 3 - Teacher Training Educational Programme for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels

The learning outcomes of the Primary/Basic/Secondary Level Teacher Training Educational Program have been predominantly developed in alignment with the requirements outlined in the sectoral characteristics specific to teacher training. The formulation and subsequent revision of these outcomes were primarily undertaken by the program leadership and representatives from the Quality Assurance Office. Additionally, academic and invited teaching personnel confirmed their involvement in the development process, particularly through their participation in the program’s self-assessment working group.

As a result of this collaborative process, the learning outcomes were revised and are currently articulated as follows:

- Learning Outcome 1: Plans both short-term and long-term student-centered and results-oriented learning processes; designs informal learning activities based on the interests and capabilities of students; integrates principles of universal design, national goals for general education, the national curriculum, school priorities, and student needs into planning.
- Learning Outcome 2: Applies knowledge of developmental and educational theories to establish a safe, inclusive, and motivating learning environment that considers each student’s individual and special educational needs, cultural diversity, and differentiated learning approaches.
- Learning Outcome 3: Integrates democratic values and the principles of sustainable development into the learning process with the aim of fostering responsible citizenship and social and environmental awareness.
- Learning Outcome 4: Develops assessment frameworks and rubrics to ensure objective evaluation of student achievement and progress; effectively utilizes formative assessment outcomes to support student development.
- Learning Outcome 5: Identifies, develops, and utilizes appropriate educational resources and digital technologies to enhance student learning outcomes, based on individual student needs.
- Learning Outcome 6: Employs innovative strategies to foster a collaborative school culture; demonstrates professional responsibility in adhering to ethical standards; cultivates an environment conducive to effective communication and constructive cooperation with students, colleagues, and parents.
- Learning Outcome 7: Engages with current scientific research and emerging trends in education for the purposes of ongoing professional development; designs and implements research into one’s own pedagogical practice, evaluates outcomes, and reflects on practice within the framework of applicable educational legislation.

It is important to note that the current formulation of learning outcomes does not differentiate between the domains of knowledge and understanding, skills, and responsibility and autonomy. In light of this, the accreditation expert group recommends that the learning outcomes be revised and reorganized according to these standard categories to enhance clarity, coherence, and alignment with national and international qualification frameworks.

Moreover, while the program demonstrates alignment with labor market demands—as evidenced by submitted documentation and interview data—it is also recommended that the topic of children’s rights be explicitly integrated into the stated learning outcomes to reflect both national educational priorities and international pedagogical standards.

Evidences/Indicators

- Annex 1. “Preschool Education” Bachelor Educational Program, Syllabi;
- Annex 2. "Teacher Training" Educational Program, Syllabi;
- Annex 3. Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, Syllabi;
- Map of correspondence between program learning outcomes and sectoral benchmarks (see Self-Evaluation Report)
- Annex 6: Analysis of Labor Market and Employer Demand;
- Map of the Program Objectives and Learning Outcomes (see Self-Evaluation Report).

General recommendations of the cluster:

- It is recommended to explicitly incorporate *children’s rights* within the learning outcomes, emphasizing the importance of this issue in the preparation of future educators.

General suggestions of the cluster: None

Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes:

Programme 2 – Teacher Training Educational Program

Recommendation(s):

- It is recommended to categorize the program’s learning outcomes into Knowledge and Understanding, Skills, and Responsibility and Autonomy, to ensure structural coherence and alignment with qualification standards.

Programme 3 – Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels

Recommendation(s):

- It is recommended to categorize the program's learning outcomes into Knowledge and Understanding, Skills, and Responsibility and Autonomy, to ensure structural coherence and alignment with qualification standards.

Evaluation

Component 1.2 Programme Learning Outcomes	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Preschool Education, VI)	☐	x	☐	☐
Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational program, VI)	☐	x	☐	☐
Programme 3 (Teacher Training Educational Programme for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, VI)	☐	x	☐	☐

1.3 Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes

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

LEPL – Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University conducts the evaluation of learning outcomes for its educational programs through a comprehensive and inclusive process. This process is led by program coordinators and actively involves the faculty quality assurance service, academic and invited staff affiliated with the program, professional students, practice supervisors, program graduates, and potential employers.

The system for assessing learning outcomes is tailored to the specific characteristics of each academic field and incorporates appropriate assessment forms and methods. These approaches are designed to reliably determine the extent to which students have achieved the intended learning outcomes of their respective educational programs.

Both **direct** and **indirect** assessment methods are employed to ensure a holistic evaluation. **Direct assessment methods** include examinations, professional practice, and the defense/presentation of practice-related work. **Indirect assessment methods** involve program supervisor observations, surveys conducted with practice supervisors, and additional feedback collected from employers, peers, and graduates.

Furthermore, the university is committed to ongoing monitoring of assessment results, which will be systematically compared against predefined target indicators. This process includes the establishment of appropriate commissions responsible for the review and evaluation of learning outcomes.

Evidences/Indicators

- **Annex 1.** "Preschool Education" Bachelor Educational Program, Syllabi;
- **Annex 2.** "Teacher Training" Educational Program, Syllabi;
- **Annex 3.** Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, Syllabi;
- **Annex 7.** Quality Assurance Mechanisms
- **Annex 8:** Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan;
- **Annex 9:** Methodology for Program Planning, Designing, and Development;
- **Annex 10:** Document Confirming the Participation of Stakeholders in the Development of the Program's Learning Outcomes;
- University Website;
- **Annex 11:** Target Benchmarks;
- **Annex 12:** Minutes Confirming the Review of Learning Outcomes Assessment Results (or other relevant document).

General recommendations of the cluster: None

General suggestions of the cluster: None

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes: None

Evaluation

Component 1.3 Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Preschool Education, VI)	x	☐	☐	☐
Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational program, VI)	x	☐	☐	☐
Programme 3 (Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, VI)	x	☐	☐	☐

1.4. Structure and Content of Educational Programme

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

Cluster and individual evaluation

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

The structure and content of the educational programs included in the cluster have been developed in accordance with the methodology for planning, designing, and developing academic programs established by LEPL – Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University. Both the content and the credit volume of the programs align with the respective levels of study.

Moreover, comprehensive information about the programs is publicly accessible and transparently disseminated.

Description and Analysis – Programme 1 – Preschool Education, BA

The programme offered by LEPL – Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University, is designed in alignment with the legislative framework of Georgia and the principles of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). The program's structure and complexity are consistent with the first cycle of higher education.

The program complies with institutional regulations governing academic programs and comprises a total of 240 ECTS credits, structured as follows:

- Compulsory courses in the main field of study: 140 ECTS
- Compulsory courses within the free component: 40 ECTS
- Elective courses in the main field of study: 50 ECTS
- Elective courses within the free component: 10 ECTS

Each credit equals 25 hours of academic work, inclusive of both contact and independent learning activities. The distribution of credits across courses and semesters is clearly delineated in the curriculum.

The program content is appropriate to the undergraduate level and includes both theoretical and practical components, reflecting the program's objective—to equip students with foundational theoretical knowledge and practical skills relevant to preschool education. The

standard duration of the program is four years (eight semesters), during which students typically complete between 25–35 credits per semester.

Upon fulfilling all curriculum requirements totaling 240 ECTS credits, students are awarded the academic degree of Bachelor of Preschool Education.

The curriculum structure enables students to tailor their learning pathways through the selection of elective and free elective courses in accordance with their academic interests. While the standard annual credit load is 60 ECTS, flexibility is allowed based on program characteristics or individual learning trajectories.

Curricular structure by semester:

- Semester 1:
 - Compulsory courses in the main field: 10 ECTS
 - Compulsory free component courses: 15 ECTS
- Semester 2:
 - Compulsory courses in the main field: 25 ECTS
 - Compulsory free component courses: 10 ECTS
- Semester 3:
 - Compulsory courses in the main field: 25 ECTS
 - Compulsory free component courses: 10 ECTS
- Semester 4:
 - Compulsory courses in the main field: 10 ECTS
 - Elective courses in the main field: 10 ECTS
 - Compulsory free component courses: 5 ECTS
- Semester 5:
 - Compulsory courses in the main field: 25 ECTS
 - Elective courses in the main field: 10 ECTS
- Semester 6:
 - Compulsory courses in the main field: 15 ECTS
 - Elective courses in the main field: 10 ECTS
- Semester 7:
 - Compulsory courses in the main field: 15 ECTS
 - Elective courses in the main field: 10 ECTS
- Semester 8:
 - Compulsory courses in the main field: 15 ECTS
 - Elective courses in the main field: 10 ECTS
 - Free elective courses: 10 ECTS

The program's structure is coherent and ensures the attainment of its declared learning outcomes. The academic qualification conferred upon graduation is fully aligned with the program's content and expected outcomes.

Upon enrollment, students are provided with comprehensive information about the bachelor's program and the academic and invited staff engaged in its delivery.

The program's credit structure and course distribution were benchmarked against analogous bachelor's programs in preschool education offered by Georgian higher education institutions.

Comparative analysis also included international programs, specifically those of the University of Wolverhampton and the University of Hertfordshire in the United Kingdom.

Given that preschool education remains a developing field in Georgia and continues to encounter various systemic challenges, it is essential to draw on international practices and experiences to enhance and refine the program. Therefore, collaboration with international experts in the evaluation of the program is strongly encouraged. Such collaboration would not only support the professional development of program staff but also contribute to the program's internationalization.

Description and Analysis - Programme 2 – Teacher Training Educational Programme

The Teacher Training Educational Program offered by LEPL – Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University is designed in accordance with the regulations established by the legislation of Georgia and adheres to the principles of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

The regulation of the university's academic programs reflects compliance with the aforementioned legislative standards, and the structure of the teacher training program comprises a total of **60 ECTS credits**, distributed as follows:

1. **Pedagogy-Psychology Cycle (Pedagogical-Psychological Module) – 30 ECTS credits** (all compulsory);
2. **Compulsory Elective Disciplines – 2 ECTS credits**;
3. **Subject Teaching Methodology Cycle (Subject Methodology Module) – 18 ECTS credits** (all compulsory);
4. **School Practice – 10 ECTS credits** (compulsory).

Each credit is equivalent to 25 hours, encompassing both contact (classroom) and independent learning activities. The detailed distribution of credits across academic disciplines and semesters is delineated in the program's curriculum.

The program includes both theoretical and practical components, which reflect its core objective: the development of theoretical knowledge and practical pedagogical competencies relevant to the teacher training context.

It is commendable that the program underwent revisions during the re-accreditation process. Notably, it was enriched by the addition of compulsory elective courses and updated teaching literature. However, certain changes raise concern regarding the credit allocation for some integrated courses. Specifically, the program includes three compulsory elective courses, each allocated only 2 ECTS credits:

- **Media Literacy**
- **Education for Sustainable Development**
- **The Role of the Educational Program in the Formation of a Student**

According to the curriculum, each of these courses corresponds to 2 ECTS (i.e., a total of 50 hours, including both contact and non-contact learning). Upon analysis of the respective syllabi, the expert group concludes that the allocated time is insufficient to achieve the declared learning outcomes of these courses. Therefore, it is deemed necessary to reassess the credit weight assigned to these subjects.

One possible solution would be to reduce the credit allocation within the subject teaching methodology component—from 18 to 15 ECTS credits—since a portion of the thematic content (e.g., modern approaches to learning and teaching, discipline, classroom management, personal development, and teaching theories) overlaps with subjects already included in the program’s mandatory module.

Moreover, it is essential for teacher training programs to clearly identify the modules to be offered, explicitly stating that students will select one module and, upon successful completion, receive a certificate entitling them to teach the corresponding subject. The categorization of program directions in the self-assessment documentation must align with the requirements of both the relevant sectoral framework and the national curriculum.

Description and Analysis - Programme 3 - Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels

The educational program for the preparation of primary, basic, and secondary school teachers, presented by LEPL – Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University, is designed in accordance with the regulations established by Georgian legislation and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

The university’s program regulation adheres to the legal requirements and includes a total of 60 ECTS credits, structured as follows:

- Pedagogical-Psychological Module – 30 ECTS credits (all compulsory)
- Compulsory Elective Disciplines – 2 ECTS credits
- Subject Teaching Methodology Module – 18 ECTS credits (all compulsory);
- School Practice – 10 ECTS credits (all compulsory).

Each credit corresponds to 25 academic hours, comprising both contact and independent learning components. The detailed distribution of credits across academic courses and semesters is presented in the curriculum.

The program integrates both theoretical and practical coursework, which aligns with its primary objective: the development of theoretical knowledge and practical pedagogical skills essential for teacher training.

It is noteworthy that revisions were introduced during the re-accreditation process. Specifically, the program was enriched with additional compulsory elective courses and updated academic literature. However, the modifications raise concerns regarding the adequacy

of credit allocation. Four compulsory elective subjects have been integrated into the teacher training curriculum:

- Media Literacy
- Education for Sustainable Development
- Teaching Mathematics in an Inclusive Environment
- The Role of the Educational Program in the Formation of the Student

Each of these courses has been allocated only 2 ECTS credits, equivalent to 50 total hours (contact and non-contact). Upon analyzing the syllabi for these subjects, the expert panel concluded that it is unrealistic to achieve the stated learning outcomes within this limited time frame. Therefore, it is recommended that the credit allocations for these courses be reviewed and revised.

To address this issue, it may be appropriate to reduce the credit load within the Subject Teaching Methodology Module from 18 to 15 ECTS credits. This adjustment is justified by the observation that portions of the subject content within this module overlap with content already included in the program's compulsory block (e.g., modern teaching and learning approaches, classroom management, theories of personal development, etc.).

Furthermore, the inclusion of the subject "Teaching Mathematics in an Inclusive Environment" within the compulsory elective block for all students, regardless of subject specialization, lacks clear justification and requires reconsideration.

Additionally, the program should clearly specify the subject-specific modules to be offered. Students must be able to select one module, upon the completion of which they are awarded a certificate granting them the right to teach that particular subject. Finally, the grouping of subject areas in the program's self-assessment documentation should be revised to ensure compliance with the sectoral qualification document and the National Curriculum of Georgia.

Evidences/Indicators

- Annex 1. "Preschool Education" Bachelor Educational Program, Syllabi
- Annex 2. "Teacher Training" Educational Program, Syllabi
- Annex 3. Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, Syllabi
- Annex 5. Rule for Planning/Selecting, Designing, Evaluating, and Developing of Higher Educational Programs at the University
- University Website
- Annex 11. Benchmarking and Analogies of the Preschool Education Bachelor Program
- Annex 13: Comparison of the "Preschool Education" Bachelor Educational Program to the programs at University of Wolverhampton and University of Hertfordshire
- Annex 14: Collegial Evaluation of the Preschool Education Program – BSU
- Annex 15: External Evaluation of Teacher Training Programs – SSU
- Annex 16: Teacher Training Programs – Benchmarking... Analogies

General recommendations of the cluster: None

General suggestion of the cluster: None

Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes:

Programme 1 – Preschool Education, BA

Recommendation(s):

- It is recommended to review comparable international programs and involve foreign specialists in the program evaluation process. This approach would contribute to the program's development, strengthen the professional competencies of its academic staff, and promote its internationalization.

Programme 2 – Teacher Training Educational Programme

Recommendation(s):

- It is recommended to review the compulsory elective subject block and consider increasing its total credit volume to ensure the attainment of the learning outcomes defined for the integrated subjects.
- It is recommended that teacher training programs explicitly define the subject modules offered, indicating that students must select one module and will be awarded a certificate granting them the right to teach the respective subject.

Programme 3: Teacher Training Educational Programme for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels

Recommendation(s):

- It is recommended to review the compulsory elective subject block and consider increasing its total credit volume to ensure the attainment of the learning outcomes defined for the integrated subjects.
- It is recommended that teacher training programs explicitly define the subject modules offered, indicating that students must select one module and will be awarded a certificate granting them the right to teach the respective subject.

Evaluation

Component 1.4 Structure and Content of Educational Programme	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Preschool Education, VI)	☐	x	☐	☐
Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational program, VI)	☐	x	☐	☐
Programme 3 (Teacher Training educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, VI)	☐	x	☐	☐

1.5. Academic Course/Subject

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

Cluster and individual evaluation

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

The panel agreed that the content of subjects and the number of credits mostly ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes defined by the subject - in the programs grouped in this closure of programs. Some adjustments of allocation of credits as well as some adjustments as for the proportion of contact hours and independent work of students are recommended, though. The panel also agreed that the content and the learning outcomes of academic subjects of the main field of study mostly ensure the achievement of learning outcomes of the programs grouped into this cluster of programs. According to the panel the study materials indicated in the syllabus ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes of the programs grouped in this cluster of programs.

Description and Analysis – Programme 1 – Preschool Education, BA

The courses offered within the framework of the Preschool Education Program at LEPL – Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University correspond to the intended learning outcomes of the program, taking into consideration the results embedded in the course syllabi. The learning outcomes of most courses align with the expected standards of bachelor's level qualifications.

An analysis of the program curriculum reveals that a significant majority of the courses integrated into the program—whether they pertain to the core professional field, general education, or university-wide competencies—are uniformly assigned 5 ECTS credits (equivalent to 125 academic hours). This includes contact hours and independent work. Both profession-specific and non-professional courses are allocated the same credit value. The only exceptions to this uniform credit distribution are the practice-oriented courses: *Professional Practice in Preschool Institution 1, 2, and 3*, each of which is assigned 10 credits.

The expert panel has taken particular note of this homogeneity in credit allocation, regardless of the subject's specificity, learning content, or instructional volume. This includes concerns about how contact and independent hours are assigned and how appropriate teaching and learning methodologies—such as lectures, practical sessions, seminars, or laboratory work—are determined and justified within the program and syllabi submitted for accreditation.

Given these observations, the expert group concludes that it is necessary to review and revise the credit allocations of the individual courses. In particular, attention should be given to adjusting both the time allocated for contact and independent learning activities and aligning them more closely with the content and complexity of each specific course.

The analysis of the submitted program and relevant syllabi confirms that learning outcomes are assessed through a combination of mid-term and final examinations, presentations, quizzes, and both oral and written evaluations. In discussions held with academic personnel and course coordinators, it was confirmed that appropriate evaluation criteria are employed. Moreover, students are informed of the assignment details and corresponding assessment rubrics through the university's online portal.

Furthermore, the analysis of the program documentation indicates that the main literature referenced in the course syllabi is appropriate to the field, diverse in scope, and supports the achievement of the designated learning outcomes.

Description and Analysis – Programme 2 – Teacher Training Educational Programme

The courses offered within the framework of the teacher training educational program at LEPL – Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University are, based on their intended outcomes, largely aligned with the overall learning outcomes of the program.

An analysis of the curriculum reveals that the credit allocation across various courses is differentiated in accordance with course content and complexity (e.g., *Modern Approaches to Learning and Teaching* – 5 credits; *Pedagogical Research* – 4 credits; *Development of Democratic Culture Competencies in Students* – 3 credits, etc.).

However, the analysis of the curriculum, course syllabi, and findings from faculty interviews highlighted a notable issue concerning the subject-specific teaching methodology modules. Specifically, some teaching modules (e.g., in English Language) integrate three separate subjects, while others (e.g., Geography) include only two.

Further analysis of the subject content indicates that the number of subjects and their assigned credits do not, in many instances, correspond appropriately to the achievable learning outcomes and instructional content. This gives the impression that the modules are being uniformly assigned 18 credits, and the division of content among subjects is being done in a formulaic manner rather than based on pedagogical necessity. For example, the English language methodology module comprises the following three subjects:

- English Language Teaching Methodology 1
- English Language Teaching Methodology 2
- English Language Teaching Planning and Assessment

Based on the content analysis of these subjects, it appears feasible to integrate the material from three courses into two, thereby reducing the total credits assigned to the module. The credit savings could then be redirected to enrich the block of elective compulsory courses. This recommendation is reinforced by the observation that several themes covered within the methodology subjects are already addressed in other core courses such as:

- *Modern Approaches to Learning and Teaching*
- *Pedagogical Research*
- *Theories of Personal Development and Teaching*
- *The Role of Information Technologies in the Educational Process*

A similar observation applies to the Geography teaching methodology module, which consists of two subjects with a combined total of 9 credits. Upon review, it is evident that the declared learning outcomes could still be attained even if each subject were assigned 6 credits instead of their current allocation.

Description and Analysis - Programme 3 - Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels

The courses offered within the framework of the teacher training educational program at LEPL - Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University align with the program's intended learning outcomes, as evidenced by the outcomes embedded within each course.

An analysis of the curriculum reveals that the credit allocations among the integrated training courses vary (e.g., *Modern Approaches to Learning and Teaching* – 5 credits; *Pedagogical Research* – 4 credits; *Development of Democratic Culture Competencies in Students* – 3 credits), indicating a certain level of differentiation based on content complexity and intended outcomes.

However, a detailed examination of the curriculum, syllabi, and interviews with faculty members has drawn attention to a particular issue related to the modules on subject-specific teaching methodology. Specifically, the analysis suggests that the number of subjects and the

corresponding credit allocations within these modules often do not accurately reflect the instructional content or the scope of the intended learning outcomes. In many instances, the structure appears to adhere to a predetermined total of 18 credits per module, leading to an impression that this figure is applied uniformly across modules without sufficient pedagogical justification.

For example, the mathematics teaching methodology module includes the following three subjects:

- *Teaching Mathematics at the Basic-Secondary Level*
- *Mathematics Teaching Methodology 1*
- *Mathematics Teaching Methodology 2*

A content-based analysis of these courses suggests that the material can be effectively consolidated into two subjects. This adjustment would allow for a reduction in the total number of credits assigned to the module and would enable the reallocation of credits to enrich the mandatory elective course block. This recommendation is further supported by the fact that certain topics within the mathematics methodology courses are already addressed in the following subjects:

- *Modern Approaches to Learning and Teaching*
- *Pedagogical Research*
- *Theories of Personal Development and Teaching*
- *The Role of Information Technologies in the Educational Process*

Additionally, the integration of the subject *Teaching Mathematics in an Inclusive Environment* into the block of elective mandatory courses—available to all student specializations—raises concerns regarding its pedagogical relevance and placement. The rationale for including a subject specific to mathematics teaching in a universally applicable elective block remains unclear and warrants further clarification.

Evidences/Indicators

- Appendix 1. "Preschool Education" Bachelor Educational Program. Syllabi;
- Appendix 2. "Teacher Training Educational Program ," syllabi;
- Appendix 3. "Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels," syllabi;
- Appendix 7. Quality Assurance Mechanisms
- Appendix 8. Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan and Target Benchmarks.

General recommendations of the cluster: None

General suggestions of the cluster: None

Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes:

Programme 1 – Preschool Education, BA

Recommendation(s):

- It is recommended that the number of credits allocated to individual courses, as well as the proportion of contact and independent work hours, be reviewed and adjusted to better reflect the specificity and academic requirements of each course.

Programme 2 – Teacher Training Educational Programme

Recommendation(s):

- It is recommended that the distribution and volume of credits within the subject-specific teaching methodology modules be revisited and adjusted to better reflect the actual instructional content and intended outcomes. Where appropriate, course integration and credit reallocation should be employed to strengthen other components of the program, particularly within the elective compulsory blocks.

Programme 3 – Teacher Training Educational Programme for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels

Recommendation(s):

- It is recommended that the distribution and volume of credits within the subject-specific teaching methodology modules be revisited and adjusted to better reflect the actual instructional content and intended outcomes. Where appropriate, course integration and credit reallocation should be employed to strengthen other components of the program, particularly within the elective compulsory blocks.

Suggestion(s): None

Evaluation

Component 1.5 Academic Course/Subject	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Preschool Education, VI)	☐	X	☐	☐

Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational program, VI)	☐	X	☐	☐
Programme 3 (Teacher training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, VI)	☐	X	☐	☐

Compliance of the programmes with the standards

1. Educational Programme Objectives, Learning Outcomes and their Compliance with the Programme	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirement s	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Preschool Education, VI)	☐	x	☐	☐
Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational program, VI)	☐	x	☐	☐
Programme 3 (Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, VI)	☐	x	☐	☐

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

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

2.1 Programme Admission Preconditions

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

Cluster and individual evaluation

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

The admission preconditions of the programmes grouped in a cluster are appropriately aligned with the specific characteristics and objectives of each programme. These requirements are set to ensure that incoming students possess the prior knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to successfully engage with the programme content and meet its academic and practical demands. Admission procedures follow current national legislation. There is a logical connection between the admission criteria and the programme's content, intended learning outcomes, level of education, and the qualification to be awarded.

While planning the student contingent for each educational programme, HEI considers the characteristics of the programme as well as the university's available academic, infrastructural, and supervisory resources. This alignment facilitates the smooth administration and delivery of the educational process.

The admission preconditions are publicly accessible, as they are published on the university's website, and clearly communicated to prospective students and other interested parties, reflecting the institution's commitment to transparency, fairness, and equal access to educational opportunities.

Description and Analysis - Programme 1: Preschool Education, BA

The admission preconditions of the programme state that applicants eligible for enrollment in the Bachelor's Educational Programme in "Preschool Education" must be Georgian citizens who hold a state-recognized certificate of complete general education or an equivalent qualification. Admission is based on the results of the Unified National Examinations. Enrollment without Unified National Examinations or via student mobility is carried out in accordance with the relevant national legislation and the internal regulations established by the university, namely the "Educational Process Regulation" of Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University

Evidence/Indicators

- Educational programme;
- The university's website;
- Educational Process Regulation;
- Self-evaluation report of HEI;
- Interviews.

Description and Analysis - Programme 2: Teacher Training Educational Program, 60 ECTS

Description and Analysis - Programme 3: Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, 60 ECTS

The admission preconditions of the programmes state that an individual holding a Bachelor's or Master's degree or an equivalent academic qualification in a subject or subject group specified in the National Curriculum or possessing relevant vocational qualification in the fields of arts, sports, or military education, is eligible for admission to the teacher training educational programme. Additionally, the individual must have successfully passed the subject-specific examination, as determined by law, which is required for admission to the teacher training educational program (in accordance with the modules included in the teacher training programme). In addition, the individual must have successfully passed an examination determined by the higher education institution.

The educational programmes and the self-evaluation report indicate that students are eligible to enroll in the teacher training educational programme without passing the subject-specific examination or an examination determined by the higher education institution, provided that they are enrolled, according to the rules established by Georgian legislation, in a bachelor's educational programme in a major field of study corresponding to the relevant subject/subject group, which includes the teacher training educational component, and have completed at least 90 ECTS credits in courses/modules covered by that bachelor program.

This provision implies that the teacher training programme may be offered as an integrated component within a bachelor's programme. However, during the interview, it was stated that such integration is not currently planned and may be considered in the future. Moreover, the programme does not currently include a curriculum for the teacher training programme integrated in bachelor's level. Therefore, this statement in the programme may be misleading for interested parties.

Accordingly, it is recommended that the university specifies in the programme admission requirements only those prerequisites that correspond to the currently planned individual implementation format of teacher training programme.

Evidence/Indicators

- Educational programme;
- The university's website;
- Educational Process Regulation;
- Self-evaluation report of HEI;
- Interviews.

General recommendations of the cluster: None

General suggestions of the cluster: None

Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes:

Programme 2: Teacher Training Educational Program, 60 ECTS

Programme 3: Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, 60 ECTS

Recommendation(s): It is recommended that the university specifies in the programme admission requirements only those prerequisites that correspond to the currently planned individual implementation format of the teacher training programme.

Evaluation

Component 2.1 Programme admission preconditions	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1: (Preschool Education, VI)	X	☐	☐	☐
Programme 2: (Teacher Training Educational Program, VI)	☐	X	☐	☐
Programme 3: (Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, VI)	☐	X	☐	☐

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

Programme ensures the development of students' practical,

scientific/research/creative/performing and transferable skills and/or their involvement in research projects, in accordance with the programme learning outcomes.

Cluster and individual evaluation

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

The programmes grouped in a cluster effectively integrate practical and/or creative-performance components that are directly aligned with their defined learning outcomes and level of education. These elements play a critical role in ensuring that students not only acquire theoretical knowledge but also develop practical competencies necessary for professional or academic advancement. The design and implementation of the practical elements are clearly structured. Practical components are logically planned to reinforce and support the achievement of targeted learning outcomes.

Students engaged in internships are supervised by qualified professionals in the relevant field. These supervisors play an active role in guiding and evaluating student work. The university provides structured mentorship support, with the students' activities being overseen by a designated mentor, a university-appointed supervisor, and the practice coordinator. The learning outcomes achieved through the practice component are assessed collaboratively by the mentor, supervisor, practice coordinator, and the practice defense committee. This multi-level supervision and evaluation process ensures both the effective attainment and accurate assessment of the learning outcomes defined for the practice component.

The programmes are supported by formal agreements with external internship partners, including potential employers. This structured approach ensures that practical experiences contribute meaningfully to the students' academic development and the fulfilment of programme learning outcomes.

Overall, the programmes demonstrate a coherent and well-resourced integration of practical, creative, or research elements that are essential for achieving the expected competencies.

Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University actively supports students' creative initiatives. Students are provided with opportunities to participate in scientific conferences at the university, national, and international levels. To facilitate this, the faculty has formed a dedicated group of highly qualified professors who mentor and prepare students for effective participation in these academic events.

If necessary, description and analysis according to the education programmes

Description and Analysis – Programme 1: Preschool Education, BA

The educational programme offers courses designed to develop and strengthen practical skills, with a particular focus on teamwork and interactive, student-centered methodologies. These include problem-based learning, brainstorming, discussions and debates, exercises, case studies and resolutions, situational tasks, task-based learning, and project preparation or project-based learning. These methods foster essential practical competency, such as problem identification and analysis, information gathering and evaluation, and integration of

theoretical knowledge with real-world practice. Thus, these methods are intended to ensure that graduates are well-prepared to operate effectively in real-world professional environments.

The programme's compulsory practice component, which includes both introductory and professional practice, plays a vital role in the development of students' practical skills. A total of 40 ECTS credits is allocated to this component, underscoring its significance within the overall curriculum. This number of practice credits is in accordance with the requirements of the higher education sectoral benchmark document for early childhood education.

The practice components are integrated into the programme as mandatory elements. Students are required to complete 51 hours of passive practice and 103 hours of professional practice at designated practice sites, specifically in preschool educational organizations. This engagement is essential for the development of practical skills and for the effective application of theoretical knowledge to real-world situations. As such, these components play a critical role in achieving the programme's objectives related to the development, enhancement, and reinforcement of students' practical competencies.

The implementation of the practical components, specifically, the professional practice in preschool educational institutions, is ensured through a memorandum of cooperation signed with the Preschool Educational Institutions Management Center, which oversees 63 state-run kindergartens. These kindergartens, located within the Zugdidi municipality, serve as official practice sites for students.

In advance of each practice cycle, the Management Center is consulted to determine and agree upon the number of students to be placed, as well as the duration and schedule of the practice. The memorandum outlines key details, including the maximum number of students that may be hosted per semester or academic year, the objectives of the practice, and the responsibilities of each party involved. This formalized agreement ensures consistent and full provision of the pedagogical practice component for students enrolled in the Bachelor's Programme in Preschool Education, supporting the practical application of acquired knowledge in a real-world educational environment.

To foster the development of research skills, the Bachelor's Educational Programme in Preschool Education includes two key courses: "Academic Writing" (5 ECTS) and "Research Methodology and Methods in Education" (5 ECTS). These courses are designed to equip students with essential competencies in locating, processing, analyzing, and interpreting information and data, thereby laying a foundation for academic research and evidence-based practice.

Evidences/Indicators

- Educational programme;
- Syllabi;
- Memorandums with practice partners;
- Practice documentation;
- Self-evaluation report of HEI;
- Interviews.

Description and Analysis – Programme 2: Teacher Training Educational Program, 60 ECTS

Description and Analysis – Programme 3: Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, 60 ECTS

The programme's mandatory practical component, "Pedagogical Practice," carries 10 ECTS credits and plays a crucial role in the development of students' practical teaching competencies. This component requires students to engage both partially and fully in classroom and extracurricular activities within a general education institution. Its primary aim is to enable students to apply diverse teaching methods and instructional approaches in the classroom setting, promote the development of high-level cognitive skills, align teaching with the national objectives of general education, utilize information technologies to enhance the teaching and learning process, and effectively identify and employ appropriate educational resources. Students are required to complete 155 hours at a designated practice site. This experience is essential for the practical application of theoretical knowledge gained throughout the programme and ensures the achievement of key objectives related to the development, enhancement, and reinforcement of pedagogical skills.

The implementation of the pedagogical practice component is ensured through formal memoranda of understanding established with general education institutions that serve as practical sites. Within the framework of the teacher preparation educational programme, memoranda have been signed with both public and private schools located in the Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti region. These agreements define the objectives of the practice and outline the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved but do not specify the maximum number of students that can be accommodated at each practice site during a semester or academic year. Moreover, these memorandums were signed in March 2019 and had expired by the time of the visit. They also do not specify the planned duration of the practice. It is recommended that the university promptly renew the agreements with schools to ensure the smooth implementation of the practical component. These agreements should clearly state the number of students accepted for practice at the site, as well as the objectives and duration of the practice. These arrangements should enable a comprehensive and feasible provision of the pedagogical practice component for all enrolled students.

Each practice placement includes mentorship support. Students' activities at the practice site are jointly supervised by an on-site mentor and a university-appointed practice supervisor. The learning outcomes attained through the practice component are assessed collaboratively by the mentor, the supervisor, and the practice defense committee. This structure ensures the effective achievement and evaluation of the learning outcomes defined by the pedagogical practice component.

To foster the development of research skills, the teacher training educational program includes the study course "Pedagogical Research" (4 credits). This course plays a vital role in introducing students to the processes involved in identifying research issues or problems within their own pedagogical practice. Additionally, it aims to deepen their understanding of educational research methodology and emphasize its importance for continuous professional development.

Evidences/Indicators

- Educational programmes;
- Syllabi;
- Memorandums with practice partners;
- Practice documentation;
- Self-evaluation report of HEI;
- Interviews.

General recommendations of the cluster: None

General suggestions of the cluster: None

Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes:

Programme 2: Teacher Training Educational Program, 60 ECTS

Programme 3: Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, 60 ECTS

Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that the university promptly renew the agreements with schools to ensure the smooth implementation of the practical component. These agreements should clearly state the number of students accepted for practice at the site, as well as the objectives and duration of the practice.

Evaluation

Component 2.2. The Development of practical, scientific/research/creative/performing and transferable Skills	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1: (Preschool Education, VI)	X	☐	☐	☐
Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational Program, VI)	☐	X	☐	☐
Programme 3: (Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, VI)	☐	X	☐	☐

2.3. Teaching and Learning Methods

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

Cluster and individual evaluation

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

The teaching and learning methods employed across the academic courses are appropriately aligned with the level of education, the specific content of each course, and the intended learning outcomes. These methods also reflect the sectoral benchmark requirements relevant to the programmes.

The teaching process is structured to employ methodologies that ensure the development of knowledge and skills aligned with the qualifications required for the teacher. The programme's objectives and learning outcomes are achieved through a combination of interactive lectures, collaborative group activities, practical sessions, independent student work, and active engagement in practice-based experiences.

Teaching strategies are purposefully designed to foster active student engagement. The methods promote meaningful interaction among students as well as between students and academic staff. Students are provided with opportunities to participate in the learning process actively, which supports the development of both subject-specific knowledge and essential transferable skills, including critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and effective communication.

The teaching approach within the programme is grounded in the principles of constructivism, emphasizing the incorporation of students' interests and prior experiences to the extent possible. To ensure the alignment of teaching and learning methods with the intended learning outcomes, a detailed mapping has been developed within the programmes. This mapping links specific teaching and learning methods to each of the defined learning outcomes, identifying the extent to which each method supports their achievement - classified as high, medium, or low. This structured approach enables a clear evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching strategies in fostering the competencies targeted by the programmes.

The university accommodates individual learning needs by offering tailored support and, where appropriate, developing individual learning plans based on a student's academic interests and readiness. This learner-centered approach enhances inclusivity and ensures that diverse learning pathways are effectively supported.

As noted during the interviews, the Higher Education Institution provides access to electronic and/or distance learning options when necessary, and these are made available only under

specific circumstances and upon the request of the students. It is recommended that the university develop a regulatory framework outlining the delivery standards and characteristics of distance and e-learning components. Additionally, it is advisable to provide targeted training for academic staff on contemporary methods of online teaching and assessment to ensure effective implementation and quality assurance of remote learning practices.

If necessary, description and analysis according to the education programmes

Description and Analysis - Programme 1: Preschool Education, BA

The delivery of knowledge within the Preschool Education bachelor's programme is facilitated through various methods, including lectures, verbal (oral) method, method of working with a book, method of written work, practical methods, problem-based learning (PBL), cooperative teaching and the use of electronic resources and e-learning (in-person, hybrid, fully distance learning). The teaching and learning process also incorporates a range of interactive activities such as discussions, debates, demonstrations, brainstorming, role plays, presentations, and seminars, tailored to support the achievement of the programme's learning outcomes.

Evidences/Indicators

- Educational programme;
- Syllabi;
- Educational Process Regulation;
- Self-evaluation report of HEI;
- Interviews.

Description and Analysis - Programme 2: Teacher Training Educational Program, 60 ECTS

Description and Analysis - Programme 3: Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, 60 ECTS

The delivery of knowledge within the teacher training educational programme is facilitated through various methods, including lectures, group work, practical sessions, seminars, and the use of electronic resources and e-learning. The teaching and learning process also incorporates a range of interactive activities such as discussions, debates, demonstrations, presentations, and seminars, tailored to support the achievement of the programme's learning outcomes.

Evidences/Indicators

- Educational programmes;
- Syllabi;
- Educational Process Regulation;
- Self-evaluation report of HEI;
- Interviews.

General recommendations of the cluster:

It is recommended that the university develop a regulatory framework outlining the delivery standards and characteristics of distance and e-learning components.

General suggestions of the cluster:

It is suggested to provide targeted training for academic staff on contemporary methods of online teaching and assessment to ensure effective implementation and quality assurance of remote learning practices.

Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes: None

Evaluation

Component 2.3. Teaching and learning methods	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1: (Preschool Education, VI)	☐	X	☐	☐
Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational Program, VI)	☐	X	☐	☐
Programme 3 (Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, VI)	☐	X	☐	☐

2.4. Student Evaluation

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

Cluster and individual evaluation

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

The university has established and implemented a comprehensive and clearly defined student evaluation system that functions in full compliance with the applicable Georgian legislation. The evaluation process is fair, transparent, and compliant with university internal regulatory

documents. The assessment components of study courses are developed to reflect the specific nature and objectives of the respective discipline. They are aligned with the intended learning outcomes and allow for accurate evaluation of student achievement. The use of diverse and course-appropriate assessment tools contributes to the reliability of the overall evaluation system.

Throughout all programmes, students are informed in advance about the evaluation criteria, components, methods, and rubrics as these are clearly outlined in the syllabi introduced by lecturers at the beginning of each semester. Assessment results are communicated transparently through the university's Learning Management System (LMS), and students receive feedback that identifies both their strengths and areas for improvement. This contributes to their academic growth and encourages reflective learning.

Student knowledge is assessed using a 100-point grading system, which incorporates mandatory assessment components - midterm and final evaluations. The sum of these components constitutes the final grade, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of the student's academic performance. The midterm assessment must not exceed 70% of the total grade, while the final assessment must account for at least 30%. The distribution of weight for each component is determined by the course leader. Each assessment component (midterm and final) must include a defined minimum competence threshold that students are required to meet or exceed.

The minimum competence threshold for the midterm evaluations must range between 30% and 50% of its maximum score, as set by the course leader. For the final assessment, this threshold must not exceed 60% of the maximum score. Furthermore, each assessment component (midterm and final) must include assessment methods that are individually selected and applied by the course leader.

Assessment methods are evaluated through specific criteria that measure the extent to which learning outcomes have been achieved. A course is considered successfully completed if the combined score from the midterm and final assessments amounts to at least 51 points. Credits are awarded only when a student earns one of the legally defined positive grades. Meeting the minimum competence threshold in both midterm and final evaluations is mandatory to gain the credit.

Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State Teaching University has developed and implemented the "Rule on the Use of the Plagiarism Detection Software Turnitin and the Activities of the Plagiarism Detection Commission." According to this regulation, the acceptable similarity index in a scientific paper may range from 20% to 30%, depending on the specifics of the discipline, field, and research subject. It is recommended to revise the acceptable similarity threshold, as a similarity of nearly one-third of the paper raises concerns about the originality of the work.

According to the self-evaluation report, the university consistently organizes training sessions, workshops, and informational meetings aimed at promoting academic integrity, upholding ethical standards, increasing student awareness, and reinforcing compliance with these principles. However, during the interview, it became evident that academic staff, program coordinators, and students were not sufficiently familiar with the requirements of the academic integrity regulation. It is recommended to raise awareness among students and staff regarding

academic integrity, as well as the mechanisms for plagiarism prevention, detection, and response.

The university has established a systematic mechanism for monitoring students' academic performance, which involves the identification, collection, and analysis of key academic performance indicators. This process enables the university to track student progress and make decisions to support academic success. Evaluation results are regularly analyzed to identify trends and inform continuous improvement of teaching and assessment practices.

Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State Teaching University has developed and implemented the "Rules for Administering Examinations and Appealing Examination Outcomes". To facilitate the appeals process for midterm and final exam results, an appeal committee is established by the Rector order which operates in accordance with procedures defined and approved by the same order. A formal appeals process is in place for students who wish to challenge their evaluation results. The process is transparent and includes reassessment conducted by a commission established by the Rector's order. Students are informed of their right to appeal and the associated procedures in advance.

If necessary, description and analysis according to the education programmes

Description and Analysis – Programme 1: Preschool Education, Bachelor's

Within the Preschool Education programme a variety of assessment methods are employed to evaluate the achievement of learning outcomes. The programme description states that these methods include verbal/written exam/questionnaire, project, portfolio, test, essay (and other written assignments, e.g., curriculum-based educational plan designing, activity designing, etc.), demonstration (educational and developmental resources created by the student; reflective records; self-reflection; observation and assessment records), verbal report/presentation, discussion, audiovisual presentation, exhibition, practice portfolio, practice research report, case study analysis, needs-based professional development plans, bachelor's theses, participation in performance/staging a play, concert performance, practical/theoretical assignments, teamwork, participation in discussions, case-solving, participation in simulated processes, and others.

It should be noted that the programme does not include a bachelor's thesis, nor does it incorporate components for which assessment methods such as participation or staging in a play, concert performance, or participation in simulated processes would be applicable. It is recommended to revise the assessment methods and define only those that correspond to the specific characteristics of the programme components and ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes defined by the programme.

Evidences/Indicators

- Educational programme;
- Syllabi;
- Educational Process Regulation;
- Rule on the Use of the Plagiarism Detection Software Turnitin and the Activities of the Plagiarism Detection Commission;
- Rules for Administering Examinations and Appealing Examination Outcomes;

- Self-evaluation report of HEI;
- Interviews.

Description and Analysis - Programme 2: Teacher Training Educational Program, 60 ECTS

Description and Analysis - Programme 3: Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, 60 ECTS

Within the teacher training educational programmes a variety of assessment methods are employed to evaluate the achievement of learning outcomes. The programme description states that these methods include verbal/written exam/inquiry, project, portfolio, test, essay (and other written assignments (e.g., drawing up an educational plan according to the curriculum, developing activities, etc.), demonstration (educational and developmental resources created by the student; reflexive notes; self-reflection; observation and evaluation notes;), verbal report/presentation, discussion, performance of an audiovisual work, exhibition, practice portfolio; practice research report; case study, discussion/analysis; needs-based professional development plan; bachelor's thesis; participation/staging in a play, concert performance, performance of a practical/theoretical task, working in a group and etc.

It should be noted that the programmes do not consider bachelor thesis. It is recommended to revise the assessment methods and define only those that correspond to the specific characteristics of the programme components and ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes defined by the programme.

Evidences/Indicators

- Educational programmes;
- Syllabi;
- Educational Process Regulation;
- Rule on the Use of the Plagiarism Detection Software Turnitin and the Activities of the Plagiarism Detection Commission;
- Rules for Administering Examinations and Appealing Examination Outcomes;
- Self-evaluation report of HEI;
- Interviews.

General recommendations of the cluster:

- It is recommended to raise awareness among students and staff regarding academic integrity, as well as the mechanisms for plagiarism prevention, detection, and response.
- It is recommended to revise the assessment methods and define only those that correspond to the specific characteristics of the programme components and ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes defined by the programme.

General suggestions of the cluster:

- It is suggested to revise the acceptable similarity threshold, as a similarity of nearly one-third of the paper raises concerns about the originality of the work.

Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes: None

Evaluation

Component 2.4 – Student evaluation	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1: (Preschool Education, VI)	☐	X	☐	☐
Programme 2: (Teacher Training Educational Program, VI)	☐	X	☐	☐
Programme 3: (Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, VI)	☐	X	☐	☐

Compliance of the programmes with the standards

2. Methodology and Organisation of Teaching, Adequacy Evaluation of Programme Mastering	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1: Preschool Education, BA	☐	x	☐	☐
Programme 2: Teacher Training Educational Program	☐	x	☐	☐
Programme 3 Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels	☐	x	☐	☐

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.

Cluster and individual evaluation

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

Students receive information about all updates both verbally and electronically. To improve the planning and outcomes of the educational process, students can obtain necessary information and consultations from the faculty administration. Students have confirmed that regular surveys (in the form of questionnaires) are conducted, which focus on evaluating the compliance of the course structure, content, and the adequacy of material and human resources with established standards. Students have access to an upgraded computer infrastructure and an improved academic portal, providing them with uninterrupted access to the electronic resources necessary for their studies. Academic and career counseling function effectively, including guidance related to study planning, assessment and employment opportunities. The information provided to students is adequate, timely, and disseminated through multiple channels, which facilitates their better integration into university life. There are opportunities for student involvement in local and international projects, conferences, and research activities, which significantly enhance the practical value of the programs. Staff engagement is high, both academic and administrative personnel work actively with students and provide continuous support.

If necessary, description and analysis according to the education programmes

Description and Analysis - Programme 1: Preschool Education, BA

In recent years, access to and the functionality of the academic portal have improved significantly, providing current students with far greater access to electronic resources compared to graduates of previous years. The students and graduates interviewed demonstrated awareness of the procedures for appealing decisions made by academic and administrative personnel. Nevertheless, no one reported having initiated or expressed intent to initiate an appeal against any such decisions. The material and technical base has also been enhanced, and the number of computers has substantially increased, facilitating easier access to educational resources. Students receive comprehensive consultations regarding study planning, academic success, and career development. University personnel are actively involved in supporting students both within the academic programs and at the administrative

level. They are regularly provided with information about consultations and educational services. The head/co-head/coordinator of the educational program ensures that students receive up-to-date information regarding the program curriculum. Students also have the opportunity to participate in various projects, exchange programs, conferences which contribute to the development of their practical skills.

Description and Analysis – Programme 2: Teacher Training Educational Programme)

During the implementation of the program, students receive full support in study planning, improving academic achievement, and exploring employment opportunities. Information support functions effectively — students receive timely and comprehensive information regarding both academic processes and career-related opportunities. Technical support has significantly improved; additional computers have been provided, which considerably reduces barriers to accessing necessary resources. Students are well-informed about various projects, events, and opportunities for international mobility. Academic and administrative staff involved in the program provide regular individual and group consultations, which serves as a valuable component for student support. Student integration into the university environment is carried out systematically, enabling them to better utilize internal services and actively participate in institutional life.

Description and Analysis – Programme 3: Teacher Training Educational Programme for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels

The program provides students with structured and comprehensive support, which includes tools essential for academic advancement as well as resources that promote career development. The consultation system is well-organized, and students consistently receive support from both academic personnel and administrative structures. Information delivery is clear and timely, with students specifically emphasizing the efficiency of communication. The program is supported by appropriate infrastructure, including an updated computer base, which enables students to plan and manage their academic activities effectively. Students have opportunities for active involvement in local and international projects, conferences, and applied research activities, which contribute to their professional development. Students also have some opportunities to participate in international exchange programs (one of the interviewed graduates took part in an Erasmus+ exchange program). The level of student integration and support within the university environment is high.

Evidences/Indicators

- Appendix 1. Self-evaluation report,
- Appendix 26. Student support mechanisms,
- Interview results,
- University website: <http://www.zssu.ge/zssu2/>.

General recommendations of the cluster: None

General suggestions of the cluster: None

Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes:

Programme 1: Preschool Education, BA

Recommendation(s): None

Suggestion(s): None

Evaluation

Component 3.1 Student consulting and support services	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Preschool Education, VI)	x	☐	☐	☐
Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational Program, VI)	x	☐	☐	☐
Programme 3 (Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, VI)	x	☐	☐	☐

3.2. Master's and Doctoral Student Supervision

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

Cluster and individual evaluation

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

N/A

If necessary, description and analysis according to the education programmes

Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Name and Level)

N/A

Data related to the supervision of master's/doctoral students Programme 1 (name, level) ²	
Number of master's/doctoral theses supervisors	
//Number of doctoral thesis supervisors	
Number of master's students	
//Number of doctoral students	
Ratio - supervisors of master's theses/master's students	
Ratio - supervisors of doctoral theses/doctoral students	

Evidences/Indicators

N/A

General recommendations of the cluster: N/A

General suggestions of the cluster: N/A

Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes: N/A

Evaluation

Component 3.2. Master's and Doctoral Student Supervision	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
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² In case of necessity please add the appropriate number of tables for the educational programmes grouped in a cluster.

Programme 1 (name, level)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Programme 2 (name, level)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Programme 3 (name, level)	☐	☐	☐	☐

Compliance of the programmes with the standards

3. Student Achievements, Individual Work with them	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Preschool Education, BA)	x	☐	☐	☐
Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational Program)	x	☐	☐	☐
Programme 3 (Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels)	x	☐	☐	☐

4. Providing Teaching Resources

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

4.1 Human Resources

- Programme staff consists of qualified persons who have necessary competences in order to help students to achieve the programme learning outcomes.
- The number and workload of programme academic/scientific and invited staff ensures the sustainable running of the educational process and also, proper execution of their research/creative/performance activities and other assigned duties. Quantitative indicators related to academic/scientific/invited staff ensure programme sustainability.
- The Head of the Programme possesses necessary knowledge and experience required for programme elaboration, and also the appropriate competences in the field of study of the programme. He/she is personally involved in programme implementation.
- Programme students are provided with an adequate number of administrative and support staff with relevant competence.

Cluster and individual evaluation

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

The personnel involved in the implementation of the programme are engaged in compliance with national legislation and the internal regulatory documents of the university. Recruitment and contractual processes are conducted transparently and in alignment with established institutional policies, ensuring the lawful and appropriate appointment of academic and invited staff.

The qualifications of both academic and invited staff are fully aligned with the academic requirements of the programme and the relevant sectoral benchmark standards. Staff members possess the necessary academic credentials, and their subject-matter competence is substantiated through relevant scholarly output within the last five years. This includes peer-reviewed scientific publications, monographs, textbooks, and, in the case of the arts, creative or performance-based projects. The qualifications of invited staff and teaching personnel are consistent with their assigned responsibilities and are validated by relevant educational background, professional experience, and subject-specific competencies. They possess the practical and pedagogical competencies necessary to effectively support students in attaining the programme's intended learning outcomes.

Each program within the cluster is supported by a sufficient number of affiliated academic staff, ensuring its sustainability. When it comes to invited staff, their workloads at other higher education institutions are considered. The program coordinators have experience in curriculum development and possess long-standing pedagogical expertise. The academic staff is appointed through a competitive selection process that evaluates their knowledge, experience, and qualifications. They possess the necessary competencies to support the achievement of the program's intended learning outcomes, hold academic degrees relevant to the program's profile, and demonstrate teaching and research experience, as evidenced by their submitted CVs and self-evaluation report Annex 1.

The programme is supported by a consistently updated academic and invited staff workload scheme, which is revised on a semester basis. Mostly, the cumulative workload of staff is managed in a way that ensures the smooth delivery of the educational programmes. However, according to the information retrieved from the QMS database, there are cases of academic staff whose total weekly workload across all higher education institutions amounts to 57, 53, or 43 hours. It is recommended that the workload allocation is logical for all academic personnel to support teaching, supervision, curriculum development, and student engagement without overextension, which contributes positively to the quality of educational delivery and student outcomes.

The number of academic and invited staff assigned to the programme is adequate to the size of the student body. This ensures effective mentorship, responsiveness to student needs, and the preservation of academic quality. The balance between affiliated academic staff and invited personnel is strategically managed to support both the sustainability and academic integrity of the programme. HEI conducts analyses of quantitative indicators related to the programme, including staff turnover rates, student-staff ratios, and workload distribution.

The heads of the programmes demonstrate the knowledge, qualifications, and professional experience necessary for the effective design, implementation, and continuous development of the academic programme. Their educational background is relevant to the programme's field

and level. In addition to academic qualifications, the head of the programmes possesses practical experience that directly contributes to the programme's academic development. The heads of programmes are actively engaged in all stages of the programme lifecycle, including its assessment and continuous improvement. This includes participation in curriculum development, evaluation of programme learning outcomes, and alignment with sectoral benchmarks and institutional goals. They play a key role in coordinating programme activities, monitoring teaching quality, and ensuring compliance with academic standards. Moreover, the heads maintain direct interaction with students through academic advising and mentorship, providing guidance on both academic progression and career planning.

The programme is adequately supported by a sufficient number of administrative and support staff, comprising 8 administrative staff members and 104 support staff members, totaling, whose presence contributes significantly to the effective management and day-to-day functioning of the programme. The staffing structure is designed to meet the academic, organizational, and logistical needs of both students and faculty. Administrative and support personnel possess the qualifications and competencies required for their respective roles. Their educational backgrounds, technical skills, and relevant work experience are aligned with the specific functions they perform, ensuring professional and efficient service delivery. Staff members demonstrate a clear understanding of institutional procedures and academic regulations, which enables them to support students effectively throughout their educational journey. This includes assistance with admissions, registration, academic records, scheduling, communication, and coordination of programme-related activities.

Description and Analysis – Programme 1: Preschool Education, BA

The bachelor's educational program in "Preschool Education" is supported by the following academic personnel: 1 professor, 12 associate professors, and 5 assistant-professors, including 1 affiliated professor, 10 affiliated associate professors, and 5 affiliated-assistant professors, as well as 19 invited specialists.

Programme 1[1]: Preschool Education, BA				
Number of staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, and invited staff)	Number of Programme Staff	Including the staff with sectoral expertise[2]	Including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction[3]	Among them, the affiliated academic staff
Total number of academic staff	18	11	11	16
- Professor	1	0	0	1
- Associate Professor	12	9	9	10
- Assistant-Professor	5	2	2	5

- Assistant	0	0	0	0
Invited Staff	19	18	17	–
Scientific Staff	0	0	0	–

Description and Analysis - Programme 2: Teacher Training Educational Program, 60 ECTS

The Teacher Training Educational Program is supported by the following academic personnel: 12 associate professors, and 1 assistant professor, including 10 affiliated associate professors, and 1 affiliated-assistant professors, as well as 15 invited specialists.

Programme 2)[4]: Teacher Training Educational Program, 60 ECTS				
Number of staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, and invited staff)	Number of Programme Staff	Including the staff with sectoral expertise[5]	Including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction[6]	Among them, the affiliated academic staff
Total number of academic staff	13	13	9	11
- Professor	0	0	0	0
- Associate Professor	12	12	9	10
- Assistant-Professor	1	1	0	1
- Assistant	0	0	0	0
Invited Staff	15	15	8	–
Scientific Staff	0	0	0	–

Description and Analysis - Programme 3: Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, 60 ECTS

The Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels is supported by the following academic personnel: 7 associate professors, and 1 assistant-professors, including 5 affiliated associate professors, and 1 affiliated-assistant professors, as well as 11 invited specialists.

Programme 3)[7]: Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, 60 ECTS

Number of the staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, and invited staff)	Number of Programme Staff	Including the staff with sectoral expertise[8]	Including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction[9]	Among them, the affiliated academic staff
Total number of academic staff	8	8	7	6
- Professor	0	0	0	0
- Associate Professor	7	7	7	5
- Assistant-Professor	1	1	0	1
- Assistant	0	0	0	0
Invited Staff	11	11	5	–
Scientific Staff	0	0	0	–

[1] In case of necessity please add the appropriate number of tables for the educational programmes grouped in a cluster.

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

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

[4] In case of necessity please add the appropriate number of tables for the educational programmes grouped in a cluster.

[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

[7] In case of necessity please add the appropriate number of tables for the educational programmes grouped in a cluster.

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

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

Evidences/Indicators

- Educational programme;
- Syllabi;

- Self-evaluation report of HEI and Annex 1;
- Personal files of academic/invited personnel involved in the program: Qualification certificates (CVs);
- Samples of employment contracts;
- Rules for determining the number of academic and invited staff at Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University;
- Webpage of the university;
- QMS data;
- Interviews.

General recommendations of the cluster:

It is recommended that the workload allocation is logical for all academic personnel to support teaching, supervision, curriculum development, and student engagement without overextension, which contributes positively to the quality of educational delivery and student outcomes.

General suggestions of the cluster: None

Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes: None

Evaluation

Component 4.1 Human resources	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Preschool Education, VI)	☐	X	☐	☐
Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational Program, VI)	☐	X	☐	☐
Programme 3 (Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, VI)	☐	X	☐	☐

4.2 Qualification of Supervisors of Master's and Doctoral Students

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

Cluster and individual evaluation

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

N/A

Programme 1 (name, level)			
Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses	These supervisors	Including the supervisors holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction	Among them, the affiliated academic staff
Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses			
- Professor			
- Associate Professor			
- Assistant-Professor			
Invited Staff			—
Scientific Staff			—

Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Name and Level)

N/A

Evidences/Indicators

N/A

General recommendations of the cluster: N/A

General suggestions of the cluster: N/A

Recommendations and suggestions according to the programmes: N/A

Evaluation

Component 4.2 Qualification of supervisors of master's and doctoral students	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (name, level)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Programme 2 (name, level)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Programme 3 (name, level)	☐	☐	☐	☐

4.3 Professional Development of Academic, Scientific and Invited Staff

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

Cluster and individual evaluation

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

Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University has a system in place of conducting evaluations of academic and invited staff, and this applies also to those staff members who are involved in the educational programs grouped into this cluster. In these evaluations, pedagogical (teaching) as well as research and other activities are considered, and a more balance that should enable staff members to be effectively involved in teaching, research as well as in other relevant activities is newly emphasized.

Such evaluations are focused on the performance of the staff, but also identification of their professional development needs. Evaluation is considering positions held by the individuals and also the need to promote university/program cluster development.

The key document that is guiding these processes at the Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University is “Regulation on the Evaluation of the Activities of Academic and Invited Staff”.

There are different forms of evaluation of the academic (and invited) staff used at the university. They include annual evaluation of scientific-research activities, annual evaluation of professional development, semester evaluation of academic activities by various structural units, by students (mostly with the use of questionnaires), evaluation of academic and invited staff by the dean, by the head of the program, by the Examination Center.

It was proven by the documents and also during the site visit interviews that the university is using results of evaluations for professional development of its staff. Training session opportunities related to various aspects of academic work (teaching, research, and other relevant activities) have been launched, and the staff encouraged to participate. The list of these activities organized in the recent period is quite long and includes a number of initiatives supported by various sources, including international ones. The university participation in some EU projects (those of education development nature) is also supportive in this respect. One of the persisting limits is low English language proficiency of many staff members – the university claims it provides language courses for those in need and also takes some other actions, but this process takes time. Without it, the international dimension of many university activities will always have limits, and this concerns the educational programs grouped into this cluster, too.

More emphasis than in the past is nowadays put on the research and publication profile of the staff. The university makes an effort to provide conditions (material, financial) to support this. Improvements are gradually visible, and yet more needs to be done in this respect, which concerns the programs grouped in the cluster of educational programs, too. At the same time, the programs of the cluster are of bachelor and teacher training levels (levels VI), and this also needs to be considered when evaluating this aspect of the university/cluster of programs’ activity.

If necessary, description and analysis according to the education programmes

N/A

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation Report
- Regulation on the Evaluation of the Activities of Academic and Invited Staff

- Interviews

General recommendations of the cluster: It is recommended to continue in your effort to improve the research, publication and English language proficiency profile of the academic staff.

- **General suggestions of the cluster:** None

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

Evaluation

Component 4.3 Professional development of academic, scientific and invited staff	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Preschool Education, VI)	☐	x	☐	☐
Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational Program, VI)	☐	x	☐	☐
Programme 3 Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, VI)	☐	x	☐	☐

4.4. Material Resources

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

Cluster and individual evaluation

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

Students and staff of educational programs grouped into the cluster can benefit from very solid material resources that are at their disposal at the university. They include the library, material

facilities and equipment, and digital resources. These resources and facilities are of a quantity and quality that is required for achieving objectives and learning outcomes of the programs as well as the whole cluster.

Over the years, there is an evident trend of updating and further developing these resources and facilities and this has a positive impact on the programs grouped within the cluster. This concerns the library, spaces for teaching and learning, as well as digital resources.

It was proven by the documentation and also during the site visit that the library keeps the core literature that is indicated in the syllabi, and also other teaching materials needed for realization of the programs of the cluster. Up-to-date periodicals from the fields of study, including the relevant international ones, are made available to students and staff via accessible relevant e-databases, yet it appears, the use of English-language learning resources is limited in the teaching process. According to the university representatives, the students and the staff are undergoing training/information sessions to become familiar with ways of using these resources. The use of resources supporting learning and teaching is free of charge to students, and students are informed about this. It appeared from the interviews; alumni do not have such access.

Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Preschool Education, BA)

The above-mentioned information about material resources fully relates to the realisation of the Preschool Education, BA program.

Description and Analysis - Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational Program)

The above-mentioned information about material resources fully relates to the realisation of the Teacher Training Educational Program.

Description and Analysis - Programme 3 (Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels)

The above-mentioned information about material resources fully relates to the realisation of the Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation Report
- Site visit
- Interviews

General recommendations of the cluster: None

General suggestions of the cluster:

It is suggested to continue in the effort to familiarize and encourage students and staff with the effective use of resources available via e-databases.

It is suggested to consider a possibility to grant alumni free access to all learning resources of the university.

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes: None

Evaluation

Component 4.4 Material resources	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Preschool Education, VI)	x	☐	☐	☐
Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational Programme, VI)	x	☐	☐	☐
Programme 3 (Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, VI)	x	☐	☐	☐

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

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

Cluster and individual evaluation

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

The budget of the university is built from several sources of income. The total revenues for 2024 amount to 7.335 719 GEL, and for the year 2025 it is 6.857 500 GEL. The budget is built by

revenues from economic activities (tuition fees, grants, donations, program funding, and more), there is also revenue from the sale of agricultural products, revenues from VET activities, interest income from monetary deposits and more.

The university has an integrated budget which contains all the funds and expenditures. And these funds are then allocated in accordance with the applicable legislation to finance different levels of educational programs, including the programs grouped into the cluster of programs.

The budget of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Health was for the year 2025 3.076 750 GEL. It is mainly built from financing from the state budget (307 000 GEL) and Sales of products and services (tuition fees) (2.769 750 GEL). The Faculty of Social Sciences and Health budget is not further explicitly structured into the allocations for individual programs of the cluster, or the cluster itself. From the items of the budget it is clearly seen, however, that the realization of the programs grouped into the cluster is though over and the budget of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Health can be considered as sufficient for realization of the programs of the cluster. In other words, the allocation of financial resources stipulated in the Faculty/University budgets is economically feasible and corresponds to the needs of the programs grouped into the cluster.

Description and Analysis - Programme 1: Preschool Education, BA

It can be assumed the program is sufficiently financed from the integrated budget of the university, resp. the budget of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Health. The budgeting seems to be economically feasible and corresponds to the needs of the program.

Description and Analysis - Programme 2: Teacher Training Educational Program

It can be assumed the program is sufficiently financed from the integrated budget of the university, resp. the budget of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Health. The budgeting seems to be economically feasible and corresponds to the needs of the program.

Description and Analysis - Programme 3: Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels

It can be assumed the program is sufficiently financed from the integrated budget of the university, resp. the budget of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Health. The budgeting seems to be economically feasible and corresponds to the needs of the program.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation Report
- Budget of the university
- Interviews

General recommendations of the cluster: None

General suggestions of the cluster: None

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes: None

Evaluation

Component 4.5 Programme/faculty/school budget and programme financial sustainability	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Preschool Education, VI)	x	☐	☐	☐
Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational Program, VI)	x	☐	☐	☐
Programme 3 (Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels, VI)	x	☐	☐	☐

Compliance of the programmes with the standards

4. Providing Teaching Resources	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Preschool Education, BA)	x	☐	☐	☐

Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational Program)	x	☐	☐	☐
Programme 3 (Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels)	x	☐	☐	☐

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 collaborate 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 processes. Programme staff utilizes quality assurance results for programme improvement.

Cluster and individual evaluation

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

The University's Internal Quality Assurance System operates according to formal regulations, with the primary framework for internal quality assurance mechanisms having received Academic Board approval. The University's QA system adheres to Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle principles. The regulations outline educational program assessment procedures, including the involvement of various stakeholders in this process.

Interview findings highlight the collaborative relationship between the QA Office and Program staff in planning quality assurance processes, developing assessment instruments, and analyzing results. The University has implemented both direct and indirect methods to assess programs and learning outcomes. Program staff generally demonstrate comprehensive understanding of the internal quality assurance system, its operations, and how relevant findings contribute to program enhancement. The development of the self-evaluation report for clustered educational programs was a collaborative effort involving program staff, students, alumni, and industry employers.

The Club for Parents, functioning at the University, aims to enhance public awareness regarding children's education. Club members have also actively participated in program development and assessment. As emphasized by club members, this university partnership holds significant

value for their personal development, providing insights into specific topics related to child development and establishing appropriate expectations for pre-school and general education institutions and educators. According to program staff, feedback from club members has been incorporated into curriculum development. Based on their findings, several additional subjects have been integrated into the program. Consequently, this initiative, which initially appeared unconventional, has proven to be a valuable instrument for program enhancement.

Program staff integrate student and alumni assessment feedback when making program-related decisions, while the QA office collaborates with them to address weaknesses identified through various surveys and assessments. However, it would be beneficial for academic and invited staff to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the University's internal program learning outcome assessment mechanisms.

Program staff consistently monitor direct evaluations from students and other stakeholder groups. Nevertheless, interviews revealed insufficient knowledge regarding program learning outcome assessment mechanisms developed for educational programs with appropriate benchmarking. These mechanisms represent critical tools for program quality enhancement, as they provide a comprehensive overview of how program staff and QA office initiatives have been implemented and program objectives achieved. Consequently, program staff should expand their focus beyond direct and indirect assessments at the course level to include comprehensive program learning outcome achievement data measured by the QA Office. Therefore, it is recommended that the QA Office undertake measures to enhance program staff awareness regarding the program learning outcome assessment system in deeper details. The effective implementation of this mechanism by both the QA Office and program staff would facilitate more efficient educational program development through their collaborative efforts.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-Evaluation Report and attached documents
- Interview Results

General recommendations of the cluster: It is recommended that the QA Office undertake measures to enhance program staff awareness regarding the program learning outcome assessment system in deeper details and comprehensively.

General suggestions of the cluster: None

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

Evaluation

Component 5.1 Internal Quality Evaluation	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Preschool Education, VI)	☐	X	☐	☐
Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational Program, VI)	☐	X	☐	☐
Programme 3 (Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary VI)	☐	X	☐	☐

5.2. External Quality Evaluation

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

Cluster and individual evaluation

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

Educational programs within this cluster regularly utilize the results of external quality assurance processes, primarily through accreditation procedures mandated by Georgian legislation. Teacher training programs curricula have been developed and enhanced in accordance with expert suggestions and recommendations arising from these accreditation procedures.

Additionally, the BA program was submitted to other Georgian higher education institutions for peer evaluation. The self-evaluation team incorporated their recommendations into the program curricula as well.

Programs were also benchmarked against comparable programs at other Georgian and international universities.

Ultimately, the programs' curricula presented in this cluster were developed by the self-evaluation team and other stakeholders based on the results of these evaluations, comparisons, and recommendations from partner employer organizations (details will be discussed in substandard 5.3).

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation report and submitted documentations
- Interview Results

General recommendations of the cluster: None

General suggestions of the cluster: None

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

Evaluation

Component 5.2 External Quality Evaluation	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Preschool Education, VI)	x	☐	☐	☐
Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational Program, VI)	x	☐	☐	☐
Programme 3 (Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary VI)	x	☐	☐	☐

5.3. Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review

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

Cluster and individual evaluation

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

Mechanisms for program monitoring and periodic review are defined in the internal quality assurance regulations and implemented with the participation of academic staff, invited personnel, students, graduates, employers, and other stakeholders through systematic data collection and analysis.

Students evaluate academic courses, educational programs, and the teaching-learning process through standardized questionnaires. The University administers regular surveys to gather feedback from students, academic staff, and invited personnel regarding their satisfaction levels. Relevant survey results were submitted with the Self-Evaluation Report (SER).

As noted in sub-standard 5.2, programs were benchmarked against similar curricula at foreign universities to ensure alignment with contemporary requirements in the international educational market. Comparative documentation has been provided accordingly.

Particularly significant is the collaboration between the University and external stakeholders, including employers, alumni, and members of civil society represented by the Parents Club.

The descriptions of these partnerships presented in the Self-Evaluation Report and supporting documentation were corroborated during interviews with the aforementioned focus groups. It was evident that employers, including representatives from municipal organizations, kindergartens, and local schools are actively engaged in curriculum development. These stakeholders demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of program content at both general and syllabus levels. Several courses were added or modified based on their recommendations, while teacher training programs incorporated additional modules for accreditation in response to specific school requirements.

The University provides professional development programs for pre-school educational institutions' staff. Drawing from this experience and through collaboration with kindergarten personnel, relevant courses were integrated into the Bachelor's degree program.

Interviews confirmed that collaboration between the University and various stakeholders is ongoing, with the institution regularly soliciting feedback regarding alumni and current students to provide continuous program enhancement.

As described in sub-standard 5.1, the Parents' Club (detailed from page 12 of the SER) has been actively involved in Bachelor's program development. This engagement merits special recognition as an example of the University's third mission, which is defined as "the selfless commitment by the University to societal welfare through specific activities and communication, encompassing collaboration between higher educational institutions and the broader society at local, regional, national, and global levels, related to social responsibility and horizontal accountability." (Vision of the Ministry of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia to strength and support third mission of the Universities, <https://www.mes.gov.ge/content.php?id=7755&lang=geo&csrt=2486796159906921165>)

To summarize the final evaluation of quality assurance enhancement for the clustered programs, it is evident that internal quality assurance mechanisms function effectively and are systematically applied to educational programs. For ongoing improvement, the University should guard against allowing these processes to become mechanical exercises. This necessitates conducting thorough qualitative analysis of data collected for quality assurance purposes and maintaining consistent focus on content development through ongoing collaboration with diverse stakeholders.

If necessary, description and analysis according to the education programmes

N/A

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation report and submitted documentations
- Interview Results

General recommendations of the cluster: None

General suggestions of the cluster:

It is suggested that the university guards against allowing internal quality assurance processes to become mechanical exercises. This necessitates conducting thorough qualitative analysis of data collected for quality assurance purposes and maintaining consistent focus on content development through ongoing collaboration with diverse stakeholders.

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

Evaluation

Component 5.3. Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Preschool Education, VI)	X	☐	☐	☐
Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational Program, VI)	X	☐	☐	☐
Programme 3 (Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary VI)	x	☐	☐	☐

Compliance of the programmes with the standards

5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
Programme 1 (Preschool Education, VI)	x	☐	☐	☐
Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational Program, VI)	x	☐	☐	☐
Programme 3 (Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary VI)	x	☐	☐	☐

Attached documentation (if applicable):

Name of the higher education institution: Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University

Name of Higher Educational Programmes, Levels: Preschool Education, BA; Teacher Training Educational Program; Teacher Training Educational Program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels

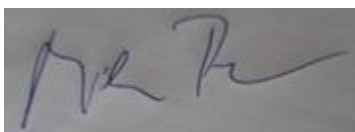
Compliance of the programmes with the standards

Contents Standard	1. Educational Programme Objectives, Learning Outcomes and their Compliance with the Programme	2. Methodology and Organisation of Teaching, Adequacy Evaluation of Programme Mastering	3. Student Achievements, Individual Work with them	4. Providing Teaching Resources	5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities
Programme 1 (Preschool Education, BA)	Substantially Complies with Requirements	Substantially Complies with Requirements	Complies with Requirements	Complies with Requirements	Complies with Requirements
Programme 2 (Teacher Training Educational Program)	Substantially Complies with Requirements	Substantially Complies with Requirements	Complies with Requirements	Complies with Requirements	Complies with Requirements
Programme 3 (Teacher Training Educational program for Primary/Basic/Secondary Levels)	Substantially Complies with Requirements	Substantially Complies with Requirements	Complies with Requirements	Complies with Requirements	Complies with Requirements

Signatures

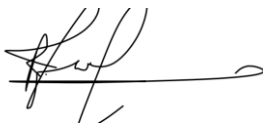
Chair of Accreditation Experts Panel

Milan Pol,



Of the member(s) of the Accreditation Experts Panel

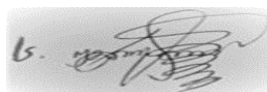
Revaz Tabatadze,



Diana Mtchedlishvili, signature



Sophio Ugrekhelidze, signature



Gizo Uchaidze, signature

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'G. Uchaidze', written on a light-colored background.