



Higher Education Institution Authorization Experts' Report

St. Andrew the First-Called Georgian University of the Patriarchate of Georgia

Expert Panel Members

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Authorization Report Resume

General information on the educational institution

St. Andrew the First-called Georgian University of the Patriarchate of Georgia (hereinafter referred as SANGU) is a small-size higher education institution with 1,047 students with active status and 3,213 graduates. The number of higher education graduation programs is 22 with a 21% rate of completion as lowest and 90% (60 ECTS Teacher Training Program) as highest. At the time of the evaluation, the University has a total number of employees 284, of whom, 50 are academic plus 5 scientific staff, and 78 non-academic staff. The number of affiliated and invited staff (44 and 115 respectively) is high representing 56% of the employees. The Charter of the higher education institution (HEI) established the fundamental governance structure in January 2018, replacing the previous one dated as July 11, 2013. The Management Provision is a subsequent document that delegated specific operational authorities within the framework established by the 2018 Charter. Additionally, Personnel Management Policy document (updated and approved on February 25, 2021, by Order №06-K) defines the principles, procedures, and criteria for hiring, appointing, evaluating, and developing staff within the university.

The Plenipotentiary Representative, appointed by the founder according to the university's regulatory documents serves as the university's director and spiritual leader. The representative holds executive powers, including the authority to appoint and dismiss the Rector, the Head of Administration (Chancellor), and other key personnel. The representative also approves the university's budget, strategic plans, internal regulations, staffing policies, and educational programs.

The Rector is the university's academic leader, responsible for the institutional level management of educational-scientific issues. His primary authority includes educational program approval, based on recommendations from schools. He is responsible for the academic personnel with authorized right on appointment and dismissal of staff. The Rector's authority extends to student certification, academic process orders, and the establishment of academic committees and working groups.

The Chancellor serves as the university's operational manager, controlling financial, material, and administrative resources. His financial authority includes developing budget proposals, managing approved expenditures, and concluding contracts, all major financial decisions require approval from the Plenipotentiary Representative. He manages administrative personnel, including appointment and dismissal authority, and handles procurement and service contracts in accordance with Georgian legislation.

The University initiated a reorganization since the previous authorization, aiming at optimizing the human resources and structural units. As part of this process the position of Vice-Rector was introduced to strengthen international integration, academic partnerships, mobility support, and the development and management of international grant programs and academic events. A Finance Office was also established to enhance the execution of financial tasks. Additionally, a Strategic Relations and Communications Manager was appointed to oversee the planning and implementation of key local and international partnership policies, although their role is not clear.

The University operates under a document management regulation (approved by Order #16 on May 14, 2021). The university uses digital systems such as UMS for academic and administrative automation, Uniman for financial data management, and electronic platforms like Dropbox and Google Drive for internal coordination. The Exams Center manages the national education registry, ensuring accurate and timely updates on students, staff, and programs in full compliance with legislation. A Business Continuity Plan and Emergency Response Protocol (Order #11, April 10, 2024) are in place to mitigate risks and maintain operations. All processes are legally regulated and aligned with national standards.

The University comprises two schools, each led by a dean. Within each school, a School Council is engaged in governance, bringing together faculty and administrative staff to support strategic decision-making and ensure academic excellence. The council convenes periodically and participates in decision-making processes related to educational, research, and creative activities. It reviews matters concerning the effective conduct of the study process and the strategic development of the school. Decisions made by the School Council are submitted to the university Rector for further action.

The Student Self-Government is the representative body of students within the university. It is composed of delegates elected through a secret ballot by the student body. Functioning as an independent unit within the internal quality assurance structure, the Student Self-Government consists of 15 members.

One of the top priorities of the University's strategic development plan is the internationalization of teaching and research. To advance this objective, the University has developed an Internationalization Policy Document (2026-2032) emphasizing the need of establishing additional dual and joint master's programs in priority academic fields through partnerships with leading universities in Europe and the United States.

The University has signed MoUs and cooperates with several universities abroad: Northern Kentucky University (United States), The Higher School of Security and Economics – Plovdiv (Bulgaria), University of Oslo (Norway), Università Mercatorum (Italy), University of Brescia (Italy), Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale" (Italy), CERGE, Charles University (Czech Republic), University of Finance and Computer Science (Poland), University College of Professional Education. The students and staff benefit from exchange visit opportunities in the United States (Northern Kentucky University).

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

The evaluation process

The evaluation process for authorization was performed by an Expert Panel (EP) visiting the University between September 22 and 25, 2025. The EC used in the evaluation process the Self-evaluation Report (SER) compiled and provided by the Higher Education Institution (HEI), investigated all component evidences and indicators including the relevant documents provided or asked for in addition during the site visit. During the site visit three full working days were allocated to the interviews; the Plenipotentiary Representative, the Rector, the Head of Administration (Chancellor), the Deans, and other key personnel, academic and administrative staff, students, PhD candidates, alumni, stakeholders. Results of the interviews and comparison with the SER and other documents were summarized by the end of all three days of the visit. The Facility Observation took place in a Campus tour (archive, sports facilities, auditoriums, conference rooms, centers and non-medical labs, e introduction of e-services, etc).

A descriptive summary and comparative analysis of compliance with the requirements are summarized for all the standards in the report including expert-provided and panel-evaluated details with contribution and supervision of the international expert serving as the committee's chair responsible for a fair and transparent procedure.

All recommendations and suggestions provided by the EP are based on the SER and documents provided by the HEI before and during the committee's visit, the results of the interviews, as well as on a standard-driven comparison of all HEI documents and the on-site experiences of the interviewing experts. A compliance-based analysis grounded on evidences and indicators is given for all standards.

Explanation of the authorization proposal

Based on the self-evaluation report and documents provided by SANGU, as well on the results of interviews and facility observation during the site visit, it can be concluded that St Andrew University operates a university-wide quality assurance system. The quality assurance and development processes of the institution are planned, and its planning and monitoring, measurement and evaluation procedures are regular. The relationship between the management processes and quality assurance processes are strong enough in several aspects. While the management of education is adequate, that of research needs further improvement. The main directions of education and research fit into the institutional strategy. The supporting processes (e.g., financial, management, IT, facility management and infrastructure) provide a good background for educational and research activities.

On this basis, the institution can be authorized for a period of 5 years, with a midterm written follow-up report.

Key Evidence of the Accreditation Proposal

The University has a strategic understanding of its internal quality assurance system. The procedures and processes established by SAMNGU reflect implementation at a systemic level. The institution has recognized the importance of organizational self-assessment for unified operation and strategic-level renewal. The commitment of leadership to the continuous development of the organization is noteworthy. To further develop the quality management system, it is necessary to coordinate processes and manage documented information as well as to secure transparency in dedicated tasks and responsibilities.

Key Strengths

- A comprehensive quality management system that is present and interpreted at all operational levels of the organization.
- Leadership commitment to quality enhancement.
- Continuous strategic-level harmonization of organizational units and overall, the university .
- Involvement of stakeholders in the program development process (academic, invited, employers).
- IT infrastructure constantly and continuously available to students and staff. There are mechanisms for continuous development of IT infrastructure and services.
- The academic and administrative staff's engagement and motivation.
- Students' high level of satisfaction.
- Complementary evaluations conducted by external parties.

Main Areas for Development:

- The pre-requisites for admission to the Bachelor of Computer Science program is indicated as a foreign language - English, although students could pass another foreign language for enrollment in the program in Unified National Examinations.
- Training for young, invited staff on the mechanisms for achieving course outcomes and the methods of determining the target marks.
- Regulation documents to be available in English on the English version of the university's website.
- Students awareness on mobility.
- Students and alumni representation and involvement in the self-evaluation should be considered, so that their activity would be of high value.
- Task allocation and shared responsibility in internal QA between departments.
- Organization of the QA and strategy-related activities and responsibilities.
- Engagement of employees in the internal training system.
- Access to and transparency of public information.

- information about the Student's Union's activities and the system of allocation of scholarships.
- The institution's third mission, including societal impact.
- Internationalization in scientific presence, research outcome (publications) and student mobility.

Overview of SANGU's compliance with standards

In general,, SANGU complies with most of the standards as substantial except for some sub-standards. The recommendations and the non-binding suggestions of the visiting expert panel are binding in a general sense as the changes to introduce fall under the autonomy and responsibility of the HEI. Suggestions should be considered as expert advice given for developmental purposes and use them as goals set by a PDCA-based internal QA system.

A descriptive summary and comparative analysis of compliance with the requirements are given in detail, summarized and compliance-classified for all the standards. The report is based on expert-provided and panel-evaluated details with contribution and supervision of the international expert serving as the committee's chair and responsible for a fair and transparent procedure.

All recommendations and suggestions provided by the EP are based on the SER and documents provided by the HEI before and during the committee's visit, the results of the interviews, as well as on a standard-driven comparison of all HEI documents and the on-site experiences of the interviewing experts. A compliance-based analysis grounded on evidence and indicators is given for all standards.

General advice

- SANGU is advised to assure internal and external transparency about the quality of its procedures and work.
- The university is encouraged to improve its existing involvement of graduate and alumni and its quality assurance procedures.
- The university may consider a more structured exchange and involvement of/with the labor market.
- To better capitalize the impact of the structural change introduced and under development SANGU should increase the transparency about its unique features / value proposition.

Summary of Recommendations

Standard 1

Sub-standard 1.2

- The visiting panel recommends the use of the PDCA cycle approach to realize the strategic priorities (P as Plan) in the development (D as Do), evaluation and monitoring processes (C as Check) to implement and disseminate (A as Act).

Standard 2

Sub-standard 2.1.

- It is recommended to revise organizational chart of the HEI to better fit the scope and needs of a university.
- It is recommended to revise the regulatory documents and amend the procedures of nomination /appointment of governing body members to avoid the risk of academic freedom and institutional autonomy.
- It is highly recommended to amend the job descriptions of structural units.
- It is recommended to increase the role of Academic Council in institutional decision-making processes and improve student representation within the Academic Council to better serve their needs.
- It is recommended to extend the HEI's plans and implementation practice to secure activities aligned with the university's internationalization strategy more intensively, targeting both staff and students.
- It is highly recommended to improve the English language proficiency of staff holding administrative positions and introduce it as a mandatory requirement, especially if the university plans to initiate more academic programs in English.

Sub-standard 2.2

- It is recommended that the Institution effectively implements internal quality assurance in a sense that responsibilities are taken by the QA department and related tasks are shared with in and organized between the numerous departments focusing mainly on their primary mandate. It is highly recommended to re-assign the duties not shared and the tasks the suitable units not fully aware of to improve efficiency and focus.
- It is recommended that the University maintain a clear separation between Quality Assurance and Strategic Planning functions to ensure focused expertise, prevent staff overload, and enhance accountability in line with best practices.
- It is recommended that the University reviews and revises the Statute of the Department of Quality Assurance and Strategic Development to ensure that their listed functions accurately reflect the Department's actual scope of work.
- It is recommended to complete the document ('Quality Assurance Mechanisms') by including all evaluation instruments used across all evaluation areas specified, to ensure a comprehensive and transparent approach to institutional assessment.
- It is recommended that the HEI conduct more frequent internal reviews of its quality assurance mechanisms to establish a more agile quality culture.
- It is recommended that all survey forms include clear and concise explanatory information outlining the purpose of the survey, how and when the results will be used, and how respondents will be informed of the outcomes or follow-up actions.
- It is recommended to develop and implement a standardized rating scale in the surveys with clearly defined criteria to ensure more consistent interpretation of feedback and survey results and enable more accurate measurement of educational quality over time. The surveys the institution uses, lack a clear and well-defined rating scale.
- It is recommended to introduce a comparative framework in survey results that analyze trends across multiple reporting periods that support data-driven strategic planning based on longitudinal insights.
- It is recommended to establish a clear and documented follow-up process for survey results, including a specification of which structural units receive the findings and what information is shared with the Department of Quality Assurance and Strategic Development and for what purpose.
- It is recommended that all survey reports follow a standardized structure aligned with international best practices. This should include a clear statement of purpose, target

audience, methodology, data analysis approach, and a follow-up section detailing how and by whom the results will be used.

- It is recommended that the HEI strengthens the implementation of the full PDCA cycle by developing and applying clear, measurable, and systematic monitoring and evaluation criteria. Special attention should be given to enhancing the "Check" and "Act" phases to ensure that quality assurance processes are not only implemented but also effectively reviewed and improved, thereby fostering a more robust quality culture across the institution.
- It is recommended that the Department of Quality Assurance and Strategic Development systematically integrate qualitative data collection methods alongside quantitative surveys.
- It is recommended that all leadership decisions be based on the key outcomes of the quality assurance (QA) processes.
- It is recommended that the HEI to ensure the involvement of students and employers in the future institutional self-evaluation process.
- It is recommended to involve all subordinate units, such as the Examination Center, Language Center, and Higher School for Translation and Interpreting, in the quality assurance process, as they possess valuable data and insights that support informed decision-making.
- It is recommended to make the feed back process institutionally structured and standardized.

Sub-standard 2.3

- It is recommended to elaborate a formal institutional policy on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in governance, teaching, and research.

Standard 3

Sub-standard 3.1

(Programme-related recommendations of the visiting committee):

1. Computer Science Bachelor Program

For admission, the program specifies English as the required foreign language. However, according to the National Assessment and Examinations Center (NAEC) applicant guide for 2025 (<https://naec.ge/#/ge/post/3328>), the required foreign language for applicants to this program can be German, English, Russian, or French. It is recommended that the university ensure alignment between the mandatory subjects published by NAEC and the requirements of the accredited educational programs developed by the university.

2. Master's Programs in "Business Informatics" and "Cybersecurity"

The admission prerequisites specify that students must demonstrate knowledge in the relevant field through an entrance examination/interview. Moreover, the description of the "Cybersecurity" program on the university's website indicates that candidates are required to undergo an interview. However, according to the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia No. 227 of April 22, 2009, higher education institutions are required to administer a subject-specific examination for applicants wishing to continue studies at the Master's level in a particular program. Therefore, it is recommended that the university establish a subject-specific entrance examination

for the Master's programs in "Business Informatics" and "Cybersecurity" and ensure its proper administration.

Sub-standard 3.2

3. It is recommended that the Bachelor Program in "Computer Science" program's learning outcomes be revised to place a stronger emphasis on the national international requirements of this scientific area.

Standard 4.

Sub-standard 4.1

- It is recommended to process statistical data on employed personnel using indicators such as the distribution of academic, visiting and scientific personnel by age and gender.

Sub-standard 4.2

- It is recommended to control the workload chart of affiliated academic staff every semester and to adhere to the staff workload rule.

Standard 5.

Sub-standard 5.2

- It is recommended to intensify international mobility, increase student involvement in this area, and expand cooperation with foreign higher education institutions;
- It is also recommended that students and alumni participate directly in the self-evaluation working group so that their feedback and recommendations can be fully reflected in the development of educational programs and the university.

Standard 6.

Sub-standard 6.1

- It is recommended to introduce training sessions for doctoral students on the format and main characteristics of the qualification thesis be conducted regularly.
- It is recommended that all dissertations comply with the Standards for Academic Paper Preparation, especially with the general standards for preparing Theses and Dissertations.

Sub-standard 6.2

- The University should develop an effective strategy for supporting research promoting internationalization and establishing an incentive system.
- The University is recommended to facilitate the publication of academic and research staff's work in high-ranking journals.
- The University should apply the PDCA approach in promoting and supporting research activity and outcome.

Sub-standard 6.3

- It is recommended that the evaluation criteria for scientific productivity be clearly defined not only at the individual level, but also at the institutional and faculty levels.

- It is recommended that the institution review the current evaluation framework for scientific productivity to determine whether uniform criteria adequately reflect the diversity of research practices and outputs across different faculties and scientific centers.

Standard 7.

Substandard 7.2

- Strengthen the University's strategy for increasing engagement with electronic scientific databases.

Substandard 7.3

- It is recommended that the university translates and publishes all regulatory documents on the English website to enhance transparency and improve communication with international stakeholders.

Substandard 7.4

- It is recommended that the university ensure the completion of a financial audit by a duly authorized auditor or audit firm. Furthermore, the audit findings and the corresponding financial statements should be made publicly accessible to promote transparency and institutional accountability.

Summary of Suggestions

Substandard 1.2

- The visiting panel suggests further incentives as part of the strategy and action plan to encourage academic staff to excel in research and teaching.
- The institution is advised to consider the introduction of tenure track for the academic staff and hiring top academics, both national and international to support the realization of its ambitious plans.
- The HEI is advised to set concrete indicators and consider using them in evaluating the desired achievement listed in the action plan.

Substandard 2.1

- Increase the work in the direction of BA level students' involvement in International Projects, international moot courts, etc.
- Sign more goal-oriented MOUs that will be useful for both staff and students

Substandard 2.3

- Upgrade the plagiarism detection platform to a more advanced package.

- It is desirable that the university administration work on increasing the effectiveness of the mechanism for the participation of academic and scientific staff in decision-making processes related to educational, research and other important issues.
- It is suggested for the university to strengthen its work in the direction of professional development of affiliated academic and invited personnel.
- It is desirable for the university to hold events with the involvement of academic and visiting staff to improve collegial cooperation.
- It is desirable to develop a unified CV form for the university (with components such as education, work experience, publications, etc.), which will facilitate the collection and processing of personnel data.

Substandard 4.1

- It is desirable that the university administration work on increasing the effectiveness of the mechanism for the participation of academic and scientific staff in decision-making processes related to educational, research and other important issues.
- It is suggested for the university to strengthen its work in the direction of professional development of affiliated academic and invited personnel.
- It is desirable for the university to hold events with the involvement of academic and visiting staff to improve collegial cooperation.
- It is desirable to develop a unified CV form for the university (with components such as education, work experience, publications, etc.), which will facilitate the collection and processing of personnel data.

Substandard 4.2

- It is desirable to verify the workload of affiliated academic staff using the QMS system, evaluate the results, and develop a report and submit it to the program leaders.

Substandard 5.1

- To further enhance the protection mechanisms of students' rights and interests, it is suggested to establish the institution of a Student Ombudsman.

Substandard 5.2

- It is suggested to increase extracurricular scientific activities.
- It is suggested to allocate an appropriate budget to support individual student initiatives.

Substandard 6.1

- SANGU should promote the internationalization of Doctoral research;
- SANGU is advised establishing priority research directions.
- SANGU may consider conducting fundamental research that is visible by the national and international scientific community.
- Results of research carried out and performed by the academic and research staff at SANGU should be better, if possible fully integrated into the teaching process;
- Attention is suggested to pay beyond content to the dissertations' formal aspects, and publication outcome. Special attention should be paid to many aspects of the qualification theses, including the structure of introduction, clear presentation of the

theoretical framework, research methods and methodology, review of the related literature.

- It is expected that the qualification theses provide a clear view on the scientific novelty, as well as the theoretical and practical significance of the research performed. Moreover, it is suggested to follow the citation standards.
- The rights and responsibilities of the Scientific Supervisor should be more clearly defined and monitoring of the work performed should regularly be carried out.

Substandard 6.2

- To advance research, the University should focus on enhancing the effectiveness of its involvement (it is essential to provide supportive measures for academic and research staff, including translation of articles, identification of relevant journals and administration of the publication process).
- The University is advised to offer useful and skill developing training sessions for academic and research staff on a regular basis.
- To ensure international recognition, academic and research staff is expected to be more actively involved in international scientific activities.
- The University is strongly recommended to support human resources whose scientific output both contributes to the development of the field and enhances international recognition (this may also include the recruitment of new personnel).

Substandard 6.3

- It is advisable that the descriptions of current or completed scientific research projects conducted by the Higher Education Institution (HEI) or its academic staff be made publicly available. Public access to such information promotes transparency, showcases the institution's research engagement, and enhances its academic reputation.

Summary of the Best Practices

Summary Table of Compliance of HEI with Standards and Standard Components

	Standard	Co mp lies wit h Re qui re me nts	Sub sta ntia lly com plie s wit h req uire me nts	Part ially Co mpl ies wit h Req uire me nts	Does not Comp ly with Requi rements
1.	Mission and strategic development of HEI	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.1	Mission of HEI	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2	Strategic development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Organisational structure and management of HEI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.1	Organisational structure and management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2	Internal quality assurance mechanisms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3	Observing principles of ethics and integrity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Educational Programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.1	Design and development of educational programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2	Structure and content of educational programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3	Assessment of learning outcomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Staff of the HEI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.1	Staff management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.2	Academic/Scientific and invited Staff workload	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Students and their support services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.1	The Rule for obtaining and changing student status, the recognition of education, and student rights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2	Student support services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Research, development and/or other creative work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.1	Research activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.2	Research support and internationalisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.3	Evaluation of research activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Material, information and financial resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.1	Material resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.2	Library resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.3	Information resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.4	Financial resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signature of expert panel members



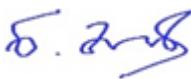
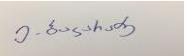
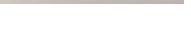
- Valéria, CSÉPE (Chair)



- Eka, LEKASHVILI (Member)



- Tinatin DVALISHVILI (Member)

- Nani ARABULI (Member) 
- Nino MINDIASHVILI (Member) 
- Davit MAKHVILADZE (Member) 
- Ekaterine BAKARADZE (Member) 
- Soso GAZDELIANI (Member) 



Compliance of the Applicant HEI with the Authorisation Standard Components

1. Mission and strategic development of HEI

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

1.1 Mission of HEI

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

SANGU has a clear mission, its' education profile meets the institution's main aspirations. The Mission Statement defines the HEI's role locally and/or internationally in creating knowledge-based education, promoting innovation, as well promoting and protecting the values academic standards, practical skills, and research-oriented activities. The access to these values is also seen as contribution to the preservation and popularization of Georgian spiritual and cultural heritage.

One of SANGU's main aspirations is to become one of the leading universities in Georgia, where high level teaching and learning as well as broadly recognized scientific work is performed. For this SANGU aims at combining tradition, practical experience, teaching, innovation and research-based education and providing the best opportunities for students. Several goals are listed in the Mission Statement including the proper training of future leaders, competitive professionals who act as responsible citizens contributing to the country's development through their knowledge and skills.

The Mission Statement defines the University's characteristics and the main directions of its activities to values including student-centered approach, academic freedom and critical thinking, ethical and professional responsibility; inclusivity, equity, equal opportunities.

The vision and mission are realized through the HEI's strategy and action plan provided and discussion during the site-visit in several interviews. The Mission Statement is shared by the community of the institution.

Evidences/indicators

- Mission Statement of the institution;
- Interview results.

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions:

N/A

Best Practices (if applicable):

N/A

Evaluation

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

1.2 Strategic Development

HEI has a strategic development (7-year) and an action plans 3-year) in place. HEI contributes to the development of the society, shares with the society the knowledge gathered in the institution, and facilitates lifelong learning. HEI evaluates implementation of strategic and action plans and duly acts on evaluation results.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The quality assurance policy of SANGU is the result and reflection of some fundamental institutional changes. The HEI describes that the implementation of its' internal quality assurance strategy is jointly supervised by the rector, the chancellor and several key persons of the academic and administrative staff, while several documents outline the different areas covered by the policy.

Particularly the institutional development plan, the performance and development regulations, and the academic career model come out together with the quality manual, that forms the quality policy framework are described to follow the same logic to complement and reinforce each other.

The current Strategic Development Plan sets the main goals and expected achievement for the period of 2026-2032. The site visit team found confirmation that different stakeholders were involved at different levels in the design of this document. The site visit team found confirmation for the annual follow up of the progress achieved during these years. However, it became obvious to the members of the site-visit committee that the current strategic is still very much shaped as change process. The priority areas identified are the educational and research activities, internationalization, international cooperation, institutional capacity building, and social responsibility. internationalization, and successful implementation of the strategic planning process, the institution emphasized the importance of continuous monitoring and evaluation to be carried out by the relevant structural units, and the periodic analysis of the implementation of strategic goals will be carried out annually, using quantitative and qualitative indicators. However, it seems the various departments' engagement is different, and action plans (short and longer term) are not adequately linked to the strategy, so that the Active Performance Indicators to be used for enabling objective, quantitative

analysis does not fully meet a proper PDCA approach. An action-plan-based synchronization of the strategic priorities with classified indicators may contribute to a measurable achievement.

The institution is engaged in several third mission actions, although this is not fully elaborated in the strategic and action plan. Several activities of the HEI contribute to the social development of the country, including knowledge share with the society, job-market to facilitate lifelong learning.

The site visit team found proper though not fully elaborated reflection on the institutional achievement expectations as well as on the prioritization practice of relevant issues for teaching and learning, skills, problem solving, critical thinking and communication.

Interviews with the different stakeholders including programme leaders and students confirmed the relevance of these competencies not only in realizing the planned actions but also for its feasible introduction and monitoring processes.

Evidences/indicators

- Strategic development (7-year) and action (3-year) plans;
- Strategic planning methodology;
- Planned and implemented activities;
- HEI Survey results;
- Mechanisms for monitoring strategic and action plans;
- Annual reports of HEI
- Responding to the results of monitoring;
- Interview results.

Recommendations:

- The visiting panel recommends the use the PDCA cycle approach to realize the strategic priorities (P as Plan) in the development (D as Do) evaluation and monitoring processes (C as Check) to implement and disseminate (A as Act).

Suggestions:

1. The visiting panel suggests further incentives as part of the strategy and action plan to encourage academic staff to excel in research and teaching.
2. The institution is advised to consider the introduction of tenure track for the academic staff and hiring top academics, both national and international to support the realization of its ambitious plans.
3. The HEI is advised to set concrete indicators and consider using them in evaluating the desired achievement listed in the action plan.

Best Practices (if applicable):

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

N/A

Evaluation

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

Complies with requirements
 Substantially complies with requirements
 Partially complies with requirements
 Does not comply with requirements

2. Organizational Structure and Management of HEI

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

2.1 Organisational Structure and Management

Organisational structure of HEI ensures implementation of goals and activities described in its strategic plan

Procedures for election/appointment of the management bodies of HEI are transparent, equitable, and in line with legislation

HEI's Leadership/Management body ensures effective management of the activities of the institution

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The University was established on December 3, 2007, as a non-entrepreneurial (non-commercial) legal entity under the Civil Code of Georgia. The founding body is the Georgian Apostolic Autocephalous Orthodox Church, represented by the Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia, Ilia II.

The Charter of the HEI established the fundamental governance structure in January 2018, replacing the previous one from July 11, 2013. The Management Provision is a subsequent document that delegated specific operational authorities within the framework established by the 2018 Charter. Additionally, Personnel Management Policy document (updated and approved on February 25, 2021, by Order №06-K) defines the principles, procedures, and criteria for hiring, appointing, evaluating, and developing staff within the university.

Based on the university regulatory documents the founder appoints a Plenipotentiary Representative, who serves as the university's director and spiritual leader. The representative holds executive powers, including the authority to appoint and dismiss the Rector, the Head of Administration (Chancellor), and other key personnel. The representative also approves the university's budget, strategic plans, internal regulations, staffing policies, and educational programs.

The Founder retains the power to make fundamental institutional changes, including reorganization or liquidation of the university. All decisions require his written authorization to become official.

The Plenipotentiary Representative is the university's operational chief executive, possessing what the documents describe as "full power and authority assigned to the founder." His authority spans budget approval, structural organization, and strategic planning, making him the central figure in day-to-day university operations. He controls all major personnel decisions, including the appointment and dismissal of both the Rector and Chancellor, and maintains override authority to dismiss any employee "notwithstanding any other rule." His financial powers include budget approval and supervision, though he acts on recommendations from the Chancellor. The position combines educational program oversight with administrative control.

The Rector is the university's academic leader, responsible for the educational-scientific sphere. His primary authority includes educational program approval, based on recommendations from schools. He manages academic personnel, including the appointment and dismissal of staff. The Rector's authority extends to student certification, academic process orders, and the establishment of academic committees and working groups. During the interview, the Rector mentioned that he prepares annual reports and represents the university in academic and scientific contexts both domestically and internationally. The rector leads the Academic Council which functions as an advisory

body. The council's composition and activities are determined by the Plenipotentiary Representative.

The procedure for appointing members of the Academic Council is defined by 'Regulation of the Academic Council' (approved by Order #12, on April 10, 2025). It is composed of academic staff (two members from each school, serving for a term of two years), administrative representatives, and one student representative from the Student Self-Government. The Student Self-Government operates independently in selecting its representative, acts according to its own charter, and has the authority to elect or recall its representative at any time. The final composition and operational rules of the council are approved by the Plenipotentiary Representative, who retains the authority to initiate changes. The council meets at least once per semester, discusses ongoing changes in the higher education system, current issues, and the challenges and needs facing the university. Although interviews confirmed that the decision-making process is effective and timely, the university should further strengthen participatory governance by enhancing the Council's involvement in academic planning, quality assurance, and policy development. Expanding the Council's role will promote shared responsibility, and more transparent institutional practices. Additionally, student representation within the Council should be enhanced more to ensure that student interests are adequately reflected in decision-making processes.

The Chancellor serves as the university's operational manager, controlling financial, material, and administrative resources. His financial authority includes developing budget proposals, managing approved expenditures, and concluding contracts, all major financial decisions require approval from the Plenipotentiary Representative. He manages administrative personnel, including appointment and dismissal authority, and handles procurement and service contracts in accordance with Georgian legislation. The Chancellor prepares internal regulations and document management procedures for approval. His responsibilities include ensuring legal compliance and efficiency in financial operations.

Since the previous authorization, the University initiated a reorganization aimed at optimizing human resources and structural units. As part of this process the position of Vice-Rector was introduced to strengthen international integration, academic partnerships, mobility support, and the development and management of international grant programs and academic events. A Finance Office was also established to enhance the execution of financial tasks. Additionally, a Strategic Relations and Communications Manager was appointed to oversee the planning and implementation of key local and international partnership policies.

The organizational chart, last updated in 2024, included a wide range of functional units and newly introduced roles. During the site visit, the expert panel requested a clarified version of the chart, which was submitted during the visit. However, the chart does not reflect the Academic Council - a mandatory collegial body under Article 32 of the Law of Georgia on Higher Education. Its absence from the visual structure should be addressed to ensure compliance with legal requirements.

While the university's organizational chart demonstrates a functionally diverse framework, it is recommended that the HEI revise the chart to explicitly include all legally mandated collegial bodies, particularly the Academic Council, whose omission may compromise transparency and participatory governance. It should be noted that the HEI regulatory documents include the regulation of Academic Council. To ensure the efficient and transparent distribution of roles and responsibilities, it is recommended that the HEI conduct a thorough review of its organizational chart and the regulatory documents of its structural units.

The Quality Assurance and Strategic Development Office, responsible before the Rector, plays a central role in enhancing institutional effectiveness by overseeing evaluation systems, monitoring academic and administrative performance, and aligning operations

with national and international standards. It ensures continuous improvement through evidence-based planning, policy refinement, and strategic support for accreditation and governance processes.

The university comprises two schools, each led by a dean. Within each school, a School Council is engaged in governance, bringing together faculty and administrative staff to support strategic decision-making and ensure academic excellence. The council convenes periodically and participates in decision-making processes related to educational, research, and creative activities. It reviews matters concerning the effective conduct of the study process and the strategic development of the school. Decisions made by the School Council are submitted to the university Rector for further action.

The Student Self-Government is the representative body of students within the university. It is composed of delegates elected through a secret ballot by the student body. Functioning as an independent unit within the internal quality assurance structure, the Student Self-Government consists of 15 members.

Appointments for leadership positions follow a procedure outlined in the Personnel Management Policy. Candidates are selected based on predefined qualifications and, when necessary, through open competition. Based on the Personnel Management Policy Document and interviews with HEI management, it was evident the University aims to attract and retain qualified staff who contribute to the university's strategic goals. To achieve this, the university ensures competency-based recruitment, professional development, a safe and inclusive work environment, staff motivation and evaluation, and prohibits employment of individuals convicted of crimes against sexual freedom and inviolability as defined by Georgian law. To avoid risks to academic freedom and institutional autonomy, particularly in the nomination and appointment procedures of key governing bodies, the regulatory documents should be revised.

The functions of each structural unit are defined by corresponding regulatory acts and operate under own job description. During the visit, the expert panel held meetings with the heads or representatives of all units. Considering the scale and complexity of the institution, it would be recommended to revise the university's organizational structure and functional distribution to enhance the efficiency of internal quality assurance management. A more efficient and strategically aligned structure would support better coordination, reduce functional overlaps, and improve institutional responsiveness to quality standards.

To strengthen the efficiency of its management system, the HEI has established monitoring mechanisms and an evaluation framework to assess the effectiveness of institutional governance. These systems are in place and form the foundation for continuous improvement. The university also plans to further enhance their implementation, ensuring that management practices remain transparent, result-oriented, and aligned with strategic objectives.

The HEI operates under a document management regulation (approved by Order #16 on May 14, 2021). The university uses digital systems such as UMS for academic and administrative automation, Uniman for financial data management, and electronic platforms like Dropbox and Google Drive for internal coordination. The Exams Center manages the national education registry, ensuring accurate and timely updates on students, staff, and programs in full compliance with legislation. A Business Continuity Plan and Emergency Response Protocol (Order #11, April 10, 2024) are in place to mitigate risks and maintain operations. All processes are legally regulated and aligned with national standards.

The university has established a comprehensive IT infrastructure, management policy, and procedures that address potential risks, mitigation strategies, and impact-reduction measures. These frameworks ensure secure, stable, and legally compliant digital environments across academic and administrative processes.

During the visit, representatives of the University's Information Technologies and Electronic Resources Regulation Office delivered an impressive presentation demonstrating how digital infrastructure is managed and protected. They showcased the integrated use of platforms such as UMS and Uniman for academic (including exam process management), financial, and administrative processes, emphasizing automation, data security, and user accessibility. The presentation highlighted the university's commitment to risk management through established IT policies and procedures, which include threat assessment, mitigation strategies, and continuity planning.

One of the top priorities of the University strategic development plan is the internationalization of teaching and research. To advance this objective, the University has developed an Internationalization Policy Document (2026-2032). The interviews revealed that the HEI strives to establish additional dual and joint master's programs in priority academic fields through partnerships with leading universities in Europe and the United States. HEI has successfully developed collaborations with American and European higher education institutions. Notably, the university has achieved significant progress with Northern Kentucky University (NKU) in launching its first joint master's programs in cybersecurity and as was mentioned during the interviews, currently working on MA program in Business Informatics, which is a significant step forward in terms of Internationalization.

The HEI has signed MOUs and cooperates with the following international universities: Northern Kentucky University (United States), The Higher School of Security and Economics – Plovdiv (Bulgaria), University of Oslo (Norway), Università Mercatorum (Italy), University of Brescia (Italy), Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale" (Italy), CERGE, Charles University (Czech Republic), University of Finance and Computer Science (Poland), University College of Professional Education. The students and staff benefit from exchange visit opportunities in the United States. Professors from Northern Kentucky University (NKU) are regularly involved in the HEI's academic process, delivering lectures and conducting laboratory-based courses. Within the previous authorization period, over 30 BA level students participated in international activities planned with the support of the university, 7 administrative and academic personnel participated in international mobility programs in Northern Kentucky University.

Some unit representatives, particularly those engaged in internationalization, quality assurance, academic coordination, and student services, and IT, demonstrated high level of English language proficiency, this was not consistent across all administrative roles. Given the university's strategic objective to expand English-language academic programs, and to ensure the successful implementation of the initiatives outlined in its Internationalization Policy document, it is essential that the institution provide targeted language training and professional development opportunities for existing administrative staff.

Accordingly, it is recommended that English proficiency be established as a mandatory requirement for all administrative personnel. This measure will enhance both internal and external communication, facilitate international collaboration, and reinforce the university's commitment to global integration, as mentioned in the strategic development goals. Given that the HEI has operated the Higher School of Translators and Interpreters since its establishment with the support of the British Council and provides a dedicated auditorium for simultaneous interpretation equipped with specialized and advanced technology, the university is well-positioned to mobilize internal resources to support this initiative.

The Offices of Public and International Relations, and Strategic Relations and Communications are engaged in advancing the university's internationalization agenda. They work quite actively to expand the scope and number of international activities, benefiting both students and academic-administrative personnel through enhanced mobility, collaboration, and global engagement opportunities. Though, based on the

internationalization results, it can be recommended to plan and implement activities aligned with the university's internationalization strategy more intensively, targeting both staff and students.

The regulatory documents of the university are publicly accessible in Georgian on the institution's official website (sangu.edu.ge), ensuring transparency for interested parties.

Evidences/indicators

- University Charter
- Structure of the University (updated on September 19, 2024, (Order #09))
- Personnel Management Policy Document (updated on February 25, 2021)
- Functions of the Structural Units of the University
- Rules and Procedures for Election/Appointment to the University's Management Bodies
- Rule for Maintaining the Registry of Educational Institutions
- Mechanisms and System for Monitoring Management Effectiveness
- Business Continuity Plan
- Internationalization Policy and Mechanisms
- Internationalization results
- University Document Management Rule

Recommendations:

1. It is recommended to revise organizational chart of the HEI to better fit the scope and needs of a university.
2. It is recommended to revise your regulatory documents and amend the procedures of nomination /appointment of governing body members to avoid the risk of academic freedom and institutional autonomy.
3. It is highly recommended to amend job descriptions of structural units.
4. It is recommended to increase the role of Academic Council in institutional decision-making processes and student representation within the Academic Council to better serve their needs
5. It is recommended to extend the HEI's plans and implementation practice to secure activities aligned with the university's internationalization strategy more intensively, targeting both staff and students.
6. It is highly recommended to improve the English language proficiency of staff holding administrative positions and introduce it as a mandatory requirement, especially if the university plans to initiate more academic programs in English.

Suggestions:

- Increase the work in the direction of BA level students' involvement in International Projects, international moot courts, etc.
- Sign more goal-oriented MOUs that will be useful for both staff and students

Best Practices (if applicable):

Evaluation

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

Complies with requirements
 Substantially complies with requirements
 Partially complies with requirements
 Does not comply with requirements

2.2 Internal Quality Assurance Mechanisms

Institution effectively implements internal quality assurance mechanisms. Leadership of the institution constantly works to strengthen quality assurance function and promotes establishment of quality culture in the institution.

HEI has a mechanism for planning student body, which will give each student an opportunity to get a high-quality education.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

SANGU has a Department of Quality Assurance and Strategic Development. This Department is accountable to the Fully Authorized Representative of the Higher Education Institution (HEI) Founder and the Rector. Reflecting the Department's title, its statute outlines a broad range of functions and responsibilities encompassing quality assurance, strategic planning, and general institutional issues. For better understanding and demonstration, the expert group sorted the functions, resulting in the following classification:

Towards the quality assurance, the Department is responsible for:

- Coordination of the development of the University's quality assurance policy;
- Study of the achievements and best practices in the field of the QA;
- Development and coordination of the implementation of the University QA and its evaluation mechanisms;
- Development of questionnaires for the various surveys, analysis of the survey results and development of the corresponding recommendations; Preparation of the Self-Evaluation Report (SER);
- Development of the methodology for planning, development and improvement of educational programmes; Participation in the process of the elaboration of new educational programmes, and preparation of the relevant reports; Organization of the development-oriented activities for academic, invited and administrative staff to develop the educational programmes; Preparation of the catalog of the educational programmes;
- Preparation all documents for the university authorization and educational programme accreditation, in line with the national legal requirements; Monitoring of the institutional and programme compliance with the authorization and accreditation standards and development of the relevant recommendations;
- Management the ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credit recognition procedures;
- Participation in the training, seminars and conferences related to the QA, authorization and accreditation.

Towards the strategic development, the Department is responsible for:

- Study of the achievements and best practices in the field of strategic planning;
- Development of the strategic planning methodology and monitoring mechanisms for the implementation of the Strategic Development Plan;
- Development of long and medium-term strategic development plans, their further coordination, monitoring and feedbacking (elaboration of the recommendations whereas necessary);
- Participation in the training, seminars and conferences related to strategic development.

More general institutional issues include:

- Preparation and/or participation in the preparation of various types of documentation related to issues within its competence.
- Coordination of the preparation of the university's annual activity report;
- Fulfillment of functions and tasks assigned by internal regulations/policies and other internal documents governing the university's activities.

- Submission of proposals and recommendations to the fully authorized representative of the founder regarding the development of a methodology for student enrollment planning;
- Organization of information meetings and events for students;
- Monitoring of the University's website to comply it with the university's mission, goals, and the requirements defined by the applicable legislation of Georgia in the field of higher education, and developing relevant recommendations;
- Ensuring the publication of the catalog of educational programmes on the HEI webpage;
- Preparation of the draft legal acts within the scope of its competence;
- Establishment of cooperation with relevant organizations and other interested parties, essential to achieve the defined goals.

The site-visit interview with the Department of Quality Assurance (QA) and Strategic Development clarified that the Department has four employees (head plus three coordinators). The expert panel, identifying the complexity of tasks and the extensive range of responsibilities assigned to this Department **considers the staffing level insufficient**. Moreover, in addition to its three main areas of focus, as identified by the expert panel above, the University operates as a dynamic and constantly evolving institution, requiring the Department to address various operational tasks daily. This means, confirmed by the interviews and documents available, an increasing risk in a sense that the current staff will not be able on a longer run to effectively manage all responsibilities outlined in the Department's Statute. Therefore, there is an urgent need to review, re-organize, and appropriately delegate and share some of the functions listed above to and with other relevant Departments. For instance, monitoring the University's website to ensure that all documents are current and publicly accessible should not fall directly under the responsibility of the Department of QA and Strategic Development. Assigning such unrelated tasks to this Department risks diverting attention from its core functions and may lead to significant gaps in quality assurance activities. Accordingly, the functions that are unrelated to quality assurance should be re-assigned to more appropriate structural units (**See the recommendation #1 below**). Moreover, the Strategic Planning is an overarching task and exercise of a university, so that it is suggested to consider in the re-organization procedure.

During the site-visit interview, the Head of the Department expressed no concern about combining Quality Assurance and Strategic Planning under a single departmental structure—citing the small size of the University and noting that no such recommendation was made during the previous authorization process. However, the expert panel is convinced, and the international practice of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) provides evidence that QA and Strategic Planning do not depend on the HEI's size. This means that these two areas should remain distinct in terms of function and oversight. Regardless of the institution's size, Quality Assurance and Strategic Planning require different approaches, specialized expertise, and operate on different cycles. Quality Assurance focuses on maintaining and improving academic standards, monitoring program effectiveness, ensuring compliance with accreditation and regulatory requirements, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement, e.g. the do-check-act cycle of PDCA. Strategic Planning, on the other hand, is concerned with long-term goal setting, institutional development, resource allocation, and policy implementation in line with the University's vision and mission. Combining these two areas within a single unit risk overburdening staff, blurring functional boundaries, and ultimately diminishing the effectiveness of both processes. A clear separation of responsibilities would support more focused execution, increased accountability, and alignment with international best practices in higher education governance—even within a small institution (**See the recommendation #2 below**).

The Statute of this Department (Paragraph 2, Item 2) also states that the Department is responsible for administering professional development programmes for public servants. However, during an interview with the Department of Quality Assurance and Strategic Development, it was clarified that the University does not implement any such programmes. The reason for this inconsistency in the official Statute could not be explained by the Department's head or coordinators (**See the recommendation #3 below**).

The University submitted the document on 'Quality Assurance Mechanisms'. The document clarifies that the QA is based on the PDCA cycle. As indicated, for QA purposes, the University does:

- Evaluation of the performance of staff;
- Evaluation of the student academic achievements;
- Evaluation of the educational programmes, with involvement of all internal and external stakeholders;
- Evaluation of the quality of the University's resources and services;
- Development of mechanism and methodology for student body planning;
- Other targeted studies.

Regarding the specific instruments/tools used in the evaluation process, the document outlines a range of them employed in the assessment of educational programmes, including programme quantitative indicators, student survey results, alumni and employer survey results, surveys of the University staff and other targeted groups, as well as local and international reference documents. Moreover, the accreditation and authorization processes are also regarded as key instruments for the improvement of educational programmes. However, this document is incomplete, as it lacks a description of the specific evaluation instruments/tools used for other types of evaluations beyond educational programmes (See the recommendation #4 below). In paragraph 8 of this document (page 5), it is stated that at least once in every fifth year, the University establishes a group to evaluate the effectiveness of its quality assurance mechanisms and, where necessary, to develop corresponding recommendations. The University should conduct more frequent internal reviews of its quality assurance mechanisms to enhance the institutional ability to respond proactively to emerging issues (See the recommendation #5 below). The expert panel considers that relying solely on a five-year review cycle presents significant risks. If a QA mechanism is not functioning effectively, the delay in revision could prolong institutional weaknesses. Continuous improvement is a core principle of effective QA, which requires mechanisms to be not only cyclical but also feedback-driven and responsive. Therefore, the university should establish flexible internal procedures leading to immediate and periodic adjustments to QA mechanisms whenever problems are identified. However, the Head of QA noted that since taking the position in 2023, no such revisions have been required.

In the supporting documents, the HEI submitted a wide range of survey forms (Folder 2.7, Survey Forms). However, some of these forms lack brief explanatory information clarifying the survey's purpose for respondents, e.g. how and when the evaluation results will be used, and how they will be informed of the outcomes or any follow-up actions. Including such information is essential to ensure accurate responses and to help respondents to understand the importance of their participation and the contribution of their input to the overall institutional improvement. This transparency will enhance respondent engagement, improve the accuracy of the data collected, and support the institution's efforts toward continuous improvement. (**See the recommendation #6 below**)

Moreover, the HEI submitted the analyses of the **survey results** (Folder 2.8, Analysis of Survey Results). After examining the submitted analyses, the following deficiencies were identified:

- The alumni survey reports covering the period 2020–2023, concluding key findings; however, the outcomes presented are not always measurable in a meaningful way. For instance, in the 2022 report, alumni evaluated the quality of education and study courses they received. According to the results, 70% of respondents rated the overall education as "considerably high quality," 11% as "medium quality," and 19% as "very high quality." Similarly, 16% considered the study courses to be of medium quality, 73% rated them as "considerably high," and 11% as "very high." While these responses indicate a generally positive perception, the categories used—such as "considerably high" or "very high"—are subjective and not clearly defined, making it ambiguous from a measurable or evaluative standpoint. Without standardized metrics or criteria for each quality level, it is challenging to assess actual performance or make data-driven improvements. **(See the recommendation #7 below)**
- **The HR survey reports** covered the 2020–2024 reporting period and included two components: (1) satisfaction surveys of administrative, invited, and academic staff, and (2) staff evaluation reports. While the satisfaction survey reports summarize key findings, there is no indication of follow-up actions—specifically, it is unclear which structural units receive the findings for further response or what is specifically sent to the Department of QA and Strategic Development. Additionally, there is no information on how positive or negative feedback (e.g., full satisfaction with a particular Department) is communicated to the relevant units. The 2024 evaluation report clarifies that the Higher Education Institution (HEI) employed a 90-degree evaluation method. According to the report, heads of structural units were evaluated by the Rector and Chancellor, while employees in non-managerial positions were assessed by their direct supervisors. There are several concerns that should be addressed: the report does not provide definitions or criteria for the evaluation ratings such as "excellent," "very good," and "good." Moreover, it lacks information on the follow-up actions associated with each rating—whether for recognition, development, or improvement—making the evaluation outcomes less actionable and transparent. Moreover, the 90-degree staff evaluation system is currently in use, though this approach is now considered outdated. The same document also refers to the future introduction of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Management by Objectives (MBO). However, during the interviews, the University representatives claimed that these systems had already been launched, revealing a lack of consistency between the documentation and the interview responses. As both KPIs and MBO are quantitative methods, the HR department was asked how the University evaluates the quality and the evaluation process itself. They responded that an open-ended section in the questionnaire is used for this purpose, and that this is currently the only approach applied. Furthermore, in the Satisfaction Survey 2024, the key findings indicated that most staff expressed a desire for increased remuneration, specifically through the introduction of a bonus and motivation system at the University. Since this survey was conducted in 2024, and the site visit took place mid-year, the expert group inquired whether the University had already started working in this direction. The University emphasized that a bonus system does exist and is detailed in employment contracts. However, it remains unclear why this issue continues to be raised in the 2024 evaluation report, if the system was already in place in 2022. **(See the recommendation #7 below)**
- In the direction of **internationalization** – two survey results are presented. Survey of academic and scientific staff on internationalization (1), and survey of students on internationalization (2). In the case of the survey of academic and scientific staff, the document includes recommendations directed at various structural units to enhance internationalization in line with the University's strategic

plan. However, no direct recommendation is addressed to the Department of Quality Assurance and Strategic Development, even though internationalization intersects with the core functions of this Department. The second student survey on internationalization presents the findings but does not outline any follow-up actions or proposed next steps in response to the results.

- **Labour market surveys** are relatively complete, as they include concluding sections, and in some cases, there is documented explanation of how the survey results have been used—particularly in relation to specific aspects of the educational process.
- **Library Survey** – Surveys from 2022 to 2024 are presented; however, the report lacks an analysis of the collected data, as well as follow-up information on how the results were used and what improvements were made based on the findings.
- **QA Surveys** – the QA surveys like the Subject Assessments by the Students, Students' General Satisfaction, Evaluation of Lecturers by Students, Cafeteria Service Evaluation by Students are structured well, including the details on the aims of the surveys, the target audience, the methodology, and the key findings. However, there is no indication how these findings are then delivered to the respective units or interested stakeholders and what are the follow-up expectations.
- **Evaluation of MA and PhD Supervision** – The presented surveys on MA and PhD supervision are well-structured; however, they lack specificity regarding which structural units or individuals the key recommendations are addressed to for further consideration and action.

Referencing all survey results submitted: the HEI has submitted the evaluation reports by years, however, it is also recommended to adopt a comparative approach to the data analysis—examining results across multiple years—to identify trends and better understand the dynamics of satisfaction of different internal and external stakeholders over time. This would provide a clearer picture of progress, stagnation, or decline, and support more informed decision-making. (**See the recommendation #8 below**). Not all survey reports align with international standards in terms of structure and content. A complete and well-structured survey report should include the purpose of the survey, the target audience, the methodology, specific data collection methods, an analysis of the results (including the analytical approach and tools used), and a follow-up section that clearly states to whom the results are sent and for what purpose. (**See the recommendations #9-#10 below**). It is not essential which specific structural units are responsible for conducting the surveys, as the results of all surveys ultimately contribute to the overall quality assurance (QA) system. Therefore, the related recommendations are presented within this section accordingly, in the context of institutional QA.

Considering that all these surveys serve as part of the internal quality assurance (QA) mechanisms, there is a lack of clear connection between the survey findings and tangible improvements in various aspects of education. The main purpose of each survey and its expected outcomes—particularly in relation to QA—are not explicitly stated, which makes it difficult to evaluate their actual impact on educational quality. As a result, it remains unclear to what extent all phases of the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle are effectively implemented. Considering the analysis of institutional documents and the outcomes of the site-visit interviews, the panel concludes that the Higher Education Institution (HEI) is primarily operating within the first two phases of the PDCA cycle—Planning (planning for quality) and Doing (implementing planned actions). However, the latter phases—Check (monitoring and evaluation) and Act (taking informed actions based on evaluation results)—are not yet fully developed or systematically implemented. This indicates a need for the HEI to place greater emphasis on developing and applying effective monitoring and evaluation criteria to ensure that its quality assurance procedures become fully

operational. At its current stage, the institution remains distant from establishing a fully embedded quality culture. This observation was further confirmed during the site-visit interviews with representatives of the Department of Quality Assurance and Strategic Development. The head of the department acknowledged existing procedural challenges in implementing the PDCA cycle, specifically highlighting weaknesses at the "Check" stage (**See the recommendation #11 below**).

It should also be noted that the Department of Quality Assurance and Strategic Development primarily collects quantitative data through surveys. However, for meaningful and comprehensive analysis, both quantitative and qualitative data are essential. During the site-visit interview, the Department noted that they 'additionally' use focus groups as a tool to gather qualitative data, although this approach appears to be supplementary rather than systematically integrated into the overall quality assurance framework (**See the recommendation #12 below**).

According to the evaluation criteria, HEI leadership is expected to use quality assurance (QA) results to guide their decisions and help the institution grow. During the interviews, the HEI Founder's fully authorized representative (the archbishop) talked about his role in strategic decisions, especially around internationalization and making sure programmes meet labor market needs. The Rector, Chancellor, and Vice Rector also shared that they work closely with the QA department—whether it's developing policies, dealing with student evaluation issues, or staying in regular contact. While it's clear that leadership is involved in QA activities, it's not very clear how they use the QA data to make decisions. This suggests there's a need for a more organized and consistent way of using QA information in their decision-making process. Other key functional units of the HEI reported receiving support from the Department of QA and Strategic Development. For example, deans mentioned that they received legally compliant advice on the revision of educational programs, while heads of departments noted that they were provided with guidelines to ensure the programs align with Georgian legislation and Subject Benchmark Statements. (**See the recommendation #13 below**).

During the interviews, university staff described the self-evaluation process as participatory, involving all departments with a balanced distribution of tasks. However, it was later clarified that neither students nor employers were included in the evaluation process. Institutional self-evaluation is a systematic, evidence-based exercise in which an institution critically reflects on its performance, policies, practices, and outcomes. The Self-Assessment Report (SAR), as a key product of the quality assurance process, should reflect the perspectives of all major stakeholders. The lack of involvement from students and employers is therefore concerning—particularly considering the university's stated commitment to fostering a student-centered learning environment (**See the recommendation #14 below**).

During the interviews, representatives from the Examination Center, Language Center, and Higher School for Translation and Interpreting clarified their roles and highlighted their contributions to the University's third mission. While these units consider themselves independent, they are, in fact, subordinate structures within the University's governance and report to the Vice-Rector and Rector. As such, and in line with a shared quality culture, they are key actors in the quality assurance process. Despite holding valuable data—particularly for academic planning—they rarely participate in internal surveys, and there are no formal mechanisms to incorporate their findings into academic or administrative planning. Their insights must be systematically integrated to strengthen institutional quality and coherence. (**See the recommendation #15 below**)

During the interview, academic staff confirmed that they fill the self-evaluation forms and receive the evaluations of students and if necessary, they consider their suggestions.

During the interview, the invited staff confirmed that they completed self-evaluation forms. However, they noted that they do not receive any feedback from the University regarding how students evaluated their courses. Additionally, although they complete

evaluation forms related to administrative support and infrastructure, they do not receive an overall analysis or summary of the key findings from these surveys. This lack of feedback and communication directly impacts the effectiveness of the PDCA cycle and overall quality management. (**See the recommendation #16 below**)

During the interview with employers, some employers reported receiving evaluation forms through formal channels, while others mentioned informal email correspondence. To enhance consistency and effectiveness, this feedback process should be institutionally structured and standardized. Many employer respondents explained their contribution to the development of the educational programme in line with the market needs.

During the interview with students, they confirmed the evaluations of the quality of education, services and infrastructure, and named the examples when their voice was heard.

The HEI submitted the 'Procedure for Using the QA Results' and respective appendices. Mainly, the document underlines the evaluations the HEI makes in different core functional directions. There is no doubt that the SANGU does the evaluations. This document must be focused on the ways of using the evaluation/survey outcomes.

During the interview, the Department of QA and Strategic Development clarified that they are doing the assessment of management effectiveness (Folder 2.5.) at the institutional level, structural unit level, and individual level. At the institutional level, indicators are outlined in the Strategic Development Plan. At the individual level, management effectiveness is assessed through an employee satisfaction survey (survey form is attached to the document). At the structural level, Annex 1 has been approved; however, it lacks a defined evaluation scale. Specifically, the criteria for what constitutes "fully done," "partially done," and "not done" are not clearly established.

Monitoring at the institutional level involves analyzing information about the implementation or non-implementation of the objectives/activities defined by the strategic development/action plan, according to performance indicators. As part of the monitoring process, the effectiveness of the objectives is evaluated; however, the criteria for this evaluation are not specified.

Monitoring at the structural unit level involves each unit head evaluating the activities of their structural unit at the end of each calendar year, in accordance with the form approved by Annex N1 of this regulation. However, the criteria for the evaluation are not indicated in this document, nor is the assessment scale.

Monitoring at the individual level involves conducting an employee satisfaction survey. The formulation of the questions needs to be revised.

SANGU has a **mechanism for planning student body** (Folder 2.10), which is carried out according to the methodology defined by the HEI; Student body planning methodology takes into consideration HEI's resources, and relevant indicators and benchmarks approved by the institution. Now, considering the HEI student body planning methodology, HEI has 1047 students with actual status, 941 with suspended status; study space 3 119.8 sq.m., 44 affiliated staff. Considering the benchmarks defined in the planning document, 50 students must have 1 affiliated staff, and 1 student must have 2.5 sq.m. For the students with actual status, these resources are adequate.

Evidences/indicators

Component evidence/indicators including the relevant documents, interview results, etc.

- Site-Visit Interviews Results;
- Statute of the Department of Quality Assurance and Strategic Development;
- SANGU QA Mechanisms;
- Survey Forms and Survey Results;
- Student Body Planning Mechanism;
- Procedure for Using the QA Results and Appendices;

- Assessment of Management Effectiveness.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that the Institution effectively implements internal quality assurance in a sense that responsibilities are taken by the QA department and related tasks are shared with in and organized between the numerous departments focusing mainly on their primary mandate. It is highly recommended to re-assign the duties not shared and the tasks the suitable units not fully aware of to improve efficiency and focus.
2. It is recommended that the University maintain a clear separation between Quality Assurance and Strategic Planning functions to ensure focused expertise, prevent staff overload, and enhance accountability in line with best practices.
3. It is recommended that the University reviews and revises the Statute of the Department of Quality Assurance and Strategic Development to ensure that their listed functions accurately reflect the Department's actual scope of work.
4. It is recommended to complete the document ('Quality Assurance Mechanisms') by including all evaluation instruments used across all evaluation areas specified, to ensure a comprehensive and transparent approach to institutional assessment.
5. It is recommended that the HEI conduct more frequent internal reviews of its quality assurance mechanisms to establish a more agile quality culture.
6. It is recommended that all survey forms include clear and concise explanatory information outlining the purpose of the survey, how and when the results will be used, and how respondents will be informed of the outcomes or follow-up actions.
7. It is recommended to develop and implement a standardized rating scale in the surveys with clearly defined criteria to ensure more consistent interpretation of feedback and survey results and enable more accurate measurement of educational quality over time. The surveys the institution uses, lack a clear and well-defined rating scale.
8. It is recommended to introduce a comparative framework in survey results that analyze trends across multiple reporting periods that support data-driven strategic planning based on longitudinal insights.
9. It is recommended to establish a clear and documented follow-up process for survey results, including a specification of which structural units receive the findings and what information is shared with the Department of Quality Assurance and Strategic Development and for what purpose.
10. It is recommended that all survey reports follow a standardized structure aligned with international best practices. This should include a clear statement of purpose, target audience, methodology, data analysis approach, and a follow-up section detailing how and by whom the results will be used.
11. It is recommended that the HEI strengthens the implementation of the full PDCA cycle by developing and applying clear, measurable, and systematic monitoring and evaluation criteria. Special attention should be given to enhancing the "Check" and "Act" phases to ensure that quality assurance processes are not only implemented but also effectively reviewed and improved, thereby fostering a more robust quality culture across the institution.
12. It is recommended that the Department of Quality Assurance and Strategic Development systematically integrate qualitative data collection methods alongside quantitative surveys.
13. It is recommended that all leadership decisions be based on the key outcomes of the quality assurance (QA) processes.
14. It is recommended that the HEI to ensure the involvement of students and employers in the future institutional self-evaluation process.

15. It is recommended to involve all subordinate units, such as the Examination Center, Language Center, and Higher School for Translation and Interpreting, in the quality assurance process, as they possess valuable data and insights that support informed decision-making.

16. It is recommended to make the feedback process institutionally structured and standardized.

Suggestions:

N/A

Best Practices (if applicable):

N/A

Evaluation

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

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

2.3. Observing Principles of Ethics and Integrity

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The HEI has established a legal framework to uphold the principles of ethics, integrity, and academic freedom. The institution operates under two core regulatory documents: the Code of Ethics (approved by Order N14, 7 May 2019) and the Internal Labor Regulations (approved by Order N13-K, 29 October 2024). These documents are publicly accessible on the university's website, ensuring transparency for all stakeholders.

The Code of Ethics defines behavioral norms for both students and staff, outlines disciplinary procedures, and specifies proportional sanctions for violations. It serves as a binding guide for ethical conduct in both academic and administrative contexts. The disciplinary process is clearly regulated: students may face measures ranging from warnings to termination of student status, while staff may be subject to sanctions including reprimands, demotion, or dismissal. In both cases, the process is governed by a designated commission, which ensures procedural fairness and the right to present evidence and appeal decisions.

The Internal Labor Regulations are closely aligned with the university's ethical framework, providing detailed provisions for employment relationships and organizational procedures. Grounds for disciplinary accountability and criteria for determining sanctions are clearly defined. At the same time, the university recognizes and rewards exemplary performance through formal incentives such as letters of appreciation, certificates, monetary gifts, and one-time financial awards.

In terms of academic integrity, the university has implemented a system for detecting and preventing plagiarism. Plagiarism Detection, Prevention, and Response Procedure rules apply to students and staff. This regulation defines various forms of plagiarism, outlines preventive measures, and establishes response mechanisms. To operationalize this policy, the university has adopted the StrikePlagiarism electronic detection platform, following a pilot phase in 2019. MA and PhD level student final theses are subject to electronic

screening, and relevant staff members are responsible for informing students about plagiarism risks, ethical standards, and potential sanctions. The contract, allowing verification of up to 300 documents annually, remains valid until November 2025. It is suggested to upgrade the plagiarism detection platform to a more advanced package.

To further support academic integrity, the university organizes informational sessions and has developed supplementary documents such as "Plagiarism and Ways to Avoid It" and "Instruction on the Nature and Avoidance of Plagiarism." These resources help students and staff understand how to properly plan and complete academic work, reducing the risk of unintentional misconduct.

The university also demonstrates a clear commitment to academic freedom. According to the Code of Ethics, academic and invited staff enjoy full autonomy in the classroom. If academic freedom is understood as the ability to independently determine course content, teaching methods, and evaluation components within the scope of the educational program syllabus, it can be said that academic freedom is recognized. During the interviews both academic and invited staff confirmed that they are entitled to express their views freely during teaching and could not recall any cases of violation, provided their actions align with legal and institutional standards.

All ethics-related documents, including the Code of Ethics, Internal Labor Regulations, and the Plagiarism Detection and Response Procedure, are publicly accessible on the university's official website in Georgian (see recommendation from substandard 2.1). It can be concluded that by ensuring open access to these regulatory frameworks, the university enables students, staff, and external stakeholders to familiarize themselves with the principles, responsibilities, and procedural safeguards that reinforce ethical conduct and academic integrity within the institution.

In addition to the existing mechanisms, it is recommended that the university elaborates a formal institutional policy on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in governance, teaching, and research. As AI tools become increasingly integrated into academic and administrative workflows, clear guidelines are essential to ensure ethical use, protect intellectual property, and uphold academic standards. The policy should address transparency, human oversight, data protection, and the boundaries of AI-assisted decision-making.

Evidences/indicators

Component evidences/indicators including the relevant documents, interview results, etc.

Recommendations:

1. It is recommended to elaborate a formal institutional policy on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in governance, teaching, and research.

Suggestions:

- Upgrade the plagiarism detection platform to a more advanced package.
- It is desirable that the university administration work on increasing the effectiveness of the mechanism for the participation of academic and scientific staff in decision-making processes related to educational, research and other important issues.
- It is suggested for the university to strengthen its work in the direction of professional development of affiliated academic and invited personnel.
- It is desirable for the university to hold events with the involvement of academic and visiting staff to improve collegial cooperation.
- It is desirable to develop a unified CV form for the university (with components such as education, work experience, publications, etc.), which will facilitate the collection and processing of personnel data.

Best Practices (if applicable):

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

Evaluation

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

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

3. Educational Programmes

HEI has procedures for planning, designing, approving, developing and annulling educational programmes. Programme learning outcomes are clearly defined and are in line with the National Qualifications Framework. A programme ensures achievement of its objectives and intended learning outcomes

3.1 Design and Development of Educational Programmes

HEI has a policy for planning, designing, implementing and developing educational programmes.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

HEI has a methodology for planning, developing, and improving educational programs, which is based on the document "Methodology for Planning, Developing, and Improving Educational Programs."

The planning of educational programs is carried out in line with the mission and objectives of the university. The initiation of a new program is the responsibility of the School Dean, based on the university's defined priorities, labor market analysis, employer requirements analysis, and other relevant factors.

The development and improvement of programs involve all relevant stakeholders who participate in the Educational Program Sectoral Council. The School Council is composed of program directors, academic/invited staff, students, alumni, employers, and other stakeholders.

Changes to programs are implemented by program directors, academic and invited staff. The administrative, organizational, and informational support for program development, evaluation, and modification is provided by the School Dean and program directors, who also oversee and periodically monitor these processes. The Quality Assurance Office evaluates the compliance of programs with legislative requirements, standards, and regulations.

Stakeholders, including program implementers, students, alumni, and potential employers, are actively involved in the processes of program development, evaluation, and modification. Surveys, interviews, and other communication mechanisms (e-mails, meetings) are used for this purpose.

HEI analyzes the data obtained from surveys and works towards the renewal and development of programs in accordance with the constantly changing environment.

Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral programs, as well as their modifications and possible cancellations, are first discussed and approved at the School Council with the involvement of the Quality Assurance Office and then confirmed by the Rector. The School Council is composed of all academic staff and three students from each faculty. The Dean of the Faculty serves as the Chair of the Council. During interviews, it was noted that the School Council meets at least twice per semester. In the case of program cancellation, university considers the interests of students and ensures their ability to complete their studies without interruption.

HEI delivers educational programs at all three levels of higher education, which are aligned with the mission, goals, and vision of the university. At present, the university offers 7 Bachelor's, 9 Master's, 1 Doctoral program, an integrated Bachelor-Master program in teacher education, as well as teacher education programs, including a 60-credit program for special education teacher preparation.

Students are actively involved in the program evaluation process by completing surveys and expressing their needs.

The learning outcomes of the programs are defined in accordance with both the National Qualifications Framework of Georgia and universities internal requirements. Program goals and learning outcomes are clearly defined, and the assessment system is transparent to students, who are also provided with the opportunity to appeal their results.

Employers are actively involved in the process of program development and improvement, as well as in external evaluation. The university presented labor market research documents aimed at analyzing employer requirements and based on the results, developing and improving educational programs. The research also examined the professional skills necessary for employment in the field. Interviews with employers revealed that they are actively engaged in program creation as well as in the ongoing development, implementation and external evaluations. The university considers the employers' recommendations.

The Employment and Career Development Department updates the employment rates of graduates annually. During the interview, it was established that survey forms are regularly sent to graduates.

The documentation submitted by the HEI shows that the employment rate with qualifications is quite high during the reporting period (out of 85% of employees, 90% are employed with qualifications).

It should be noted that the mentioned service actively involves students and graduates in various projects and events, employment forums, etc.

In addition, the university itself provides support for the employment of graduates. During the interview, it was found out that two employees were initially hired as interns and then started working at the university.

Evidences/indicators

- Education Programs
- Methodology for Planning, Developing, and Improving Educational Programs
- Order of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia No. 227, April 22, 2009
- National Assessment and Examinations Center, 2025 Applicant Guide (<https://naec.ge/#/ge/post/3328>)
- University Website
- Labor Market Research
- Interview Results
- Labor Market Research Document

Recommendations:

1. Computer Science

Bachelor

Program

For admission, the program specifies English as the required foreign language. However, according to the National Assessment and Examinations Center (NAEC) applicant guide for 2025 (<https://naec.ge/#/ge/post/3328>), the required foreign language for applicants to this program can be German, English, Russian, or French. It is recommended that the university ensure alignment between the mandatory subjects published by NAEC and the requirements of the accredited educational programs developed by the university.

2. Master's Programs in "Business Informatics" and "Cybersecurity"

The admission prerequisites specify that students must demonstrate knowledge in the relevant field through an entrance examination/interview. Moreover, the

description of the "Cybersecurity" program on the university's website indicates that candidates are required to undergo an interview. However, according to the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia No. 227 of April 22, 2009, higher education institutions are required to administer a subject-specific examination for applicants wishing to continue studies at the Master's level in a particular program. Therefore, it is recommended that the university establish a subject-specific entrance examination for the Master's programs in "Business Informatics" and "Cybersecurity" and ensure its proper administration.

Suggestions:

N/A

Best Practices (if applicable):

N/A

Evaluation

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

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

3.2 Structure and Content of Educational Programmes

- Programme learning outcomes are clearly stated and are in line with higher education level and qualification to be granted
- With the help of individualized education programmes, HEI takes into consideration various requirements, needs and academic readiness of students, and ensures their unhindered involvement into the educational process.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

During program development, the St. Andrew the First-Called Georgian University of the Patriarchate of Georgia (a non-profit legal entity) adheres to the core principles of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), as well as Georgian legislation and HEI regulations.

The learning outcomes of programs are defined and aligned with the qualifications awarded at the relevant level of higher education. The learning outcomes cover knowledge, skills, responsibility, and autonomy. Specific field-related learning outcomes are based on the sectoral descriptors developed by NCEQE and comply with the National Qualifications Framework.

However, it should be noted that the learning outcomes of the Bachelor Program in "Computer Science" are general and primarily focused on the field of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

The structure and content of the programs ensure a logical connection between their components and consider the specific characteristics and requirements of each component. Planned learning outcomes and student workload are adjusted to reasonable timelines. Programs offer students elective courses as well as free credits. In the proposed electives, the total number of credits exceeds the number allocated for the elective part of the program. The teaching and learning methods described in different programs consider sectoral characteristics and ensure the achievement of the program's learning outcomes.

Based on the teaching system, students could have the opportunity to create an individual study plan.

The catalog of educational programs is accessible on the university's website (<https://sangu.edu.ge/>). The university has significant capabilities and resources to offer students an individual study plan tailored to their unique needs and goals. It provides a flexible and adaptive educational environment.

Evidences/indicators

- Educational Programs and Syllabi
- University Regulations
- University Website
- University Academic Process Regulation
- Interview Results

Recommendations:

1. It is recommended that the Bachelor Program in "Computer Science" program's learning outcomes be revised to place a stronger emphasis on the national international requirements of this scientific area.

Suggestions:

N/A

Best Practices (if applicable):

N/A

Evaluation

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

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

3.3 Assessment of Learning Outcomes

HEI has law-compliant, transparent and fair system of learning outcomes assessment, which promotes the improvement of students' academic performance.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

To achieve the learning outcomes of an educational program, the curriculum includes individual courses. Learning outcomes are specified in each course syllabus, and appropriate assessment methods are selected for each outcome to ensure the achievement of program-defined learning outcomes. Student assessment is conducted in accordance with the "Academic Process Regulation", which aligns with the "Credit Calculation Rules for Higher Education Programs approved by the Order No. 3" of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia. Students are evaluated using a 100-point grading system.

The assessment system is multi-component and includes both interim and final evaluations. Minimum competency thresholds are established for both interim and final assessments, including presentations, essays, term papers, and practical assignments. The final exam is mandatory, and a student may take it only if they have earned at least 20 points in interim assessments.

Various assessment methods are employed, such as written exams, oral exams, tests, essays, term papers, practical work, and projects. Each assessment component has a defined points distribution. The university maintains a system for grade appeals, and

students are informed about it. At the start of each course, the course facilitator explains the assessment system, methods, criteria, and requirements.

The University Examination Center has developed regulations on the issues of appeal of results, which are available to all interested parties, it is built into the UMS system. To appeal of the results of midterm and final exams, an appeal commission is established, which is guided by the rules approved by the Rector's act. This mechanism is effectively used at the university.

Knowledge evaluation is carried out through multiple approaches, including written and oral exams, project presentations, and practical or laboratory work. Most exams are conducted at the examination center. Transparent criteria are used to assess student performance. The university informs students about achieved learning goals, identified deficiencies, and areas for improvement. Students are introduced to the grading system used at the institution and related regulations.

Evidences/indicators

- University Educational Process Regulatory Rules;
- Educational Programs and Syllabuses;
- Analysis of Survey Results of Students, Graduates, and Employers for the Purpose of Program Development;
- Examination Center Regulations;
- Interview Results

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions:

N/A

Best Practices (if applicable):

N/A

Evaluation

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

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

4. Staff of the HEI

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

4.1. Staff Management

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The University has developed the Personnel Management Policy of the SANGU.

This is a document that establishes the basic rules for the recruitment, selection, professional development and other labor relations of any person employed at the University, including academic/visiting personnel. It also defines the internship procedure. Based on this document, the University a) selects personnel in compliance with the competency-based principle; b) provides opportunities for professional development; c) creates a safe working environment; d) makes transparent decisions in the university management process; e) ensures the rapid integration of new employees into the working environment; f) Conducts appropriate measures to retain staff; g) Encourages and motivates staff; h) Conducts staff performance evaluation and satisfaction surveys; i) Informs staff about ongoing processes at the university. j) Uses anti-discriminatory approaches in pre-contractual and labor relations.

The personnel management policy document of the SANGU defines transparent and objective procedures for hiring (selection/appointment) personnel, which ensures the attraction and employment of qualified personnel for academic, scientific, invited, administrative and support staff positions.

Academic Personnel selection is carried out in accordance with the rules established by the legislation of Georgia and the internal regulatory documents of the university. Academic personnel are selected in accordance with the rules for selecting academic personnel, which provide for the announcement of a competition by order of the rector. The information about competition is public. After receiving the documents, the applicant must go through two selection stages: studying the competition documents and interviewing. If necessary, the applicant is required to give a lecture. The commission is authorized to give a lecture to the applicant. The applicant is evaluated by points. The winning candidates are submitted to the rector for approval by order.

During the interviews with the founder's authorized representative and the administration, it was confirmed that academic personnel are selected for the appropriate position and in the case of administrative personnel, preference is given to the appointment mechanism. In case, if a person with the appropriate qualifications cannot be appointed to the administrative positions specified in the personnel management policy document, a competition will be announced. For example, the employment of successful graduates at the university is actively used. During the interviews with the heads of the Human Resources Management and Law Departments, it was noted that 10-15 graduates were employed at the university.

There are several options for selecting support administrative staff: 1. Preference is given to staff employed at the university. 2. Staff selection is carried out because of recommendations; 3. A two-stage competition is announced if the required candidate cannot be found through the above methods. The competition is carried out since documents and interviews. The university has defined specific criteria, which are determined by scoring and the winner is identified.

During the interview with the deans of the schools, it was noted that initially they were selected for an academic position based on a competition, then they were appointed as program heads and then, upon the recommendation of the rector, they were appointed as deans for life by order of the rector.

During the interview with representatives of the academic staff, it was noted that they were selected based on a competition, they had competitors and the commission made the selection based on the data.

The expert group requested additional documents, including:

1. Academic competition documents, protocols, decisions (several)
2. Administrative personnel selection documentation, protocols, decisions

3. Semester workload samples, completed workload scheme forms
4. Employees statistical data.

The University has submitted all required additional documentation. The materials of the competition for academic and invited personnel confirm the fairness and transparency of the process.

To attract and retain qualified personnel, the University offers its employees appropriate incentives and benefits, which ensure the improvement of their working and living conditions.

The rules for the affiliation of academic personnel of the SANGU determine the rules and conditions of affiliation with the University. The issue of affiliation is an integral part of the agreement concluded since a bilateral agreement. Academic personnel carry out scientific activities on behalf of the University, actively participate in the research, educational and decision-making processes; provide consultations; organize conferences; invite students to scientific guidance. The agreement determines the job description, workload, scheme, remuneration and other issues of the affiliated person. An affiliated person is obliged to provide the University with information about his/her teaching load at another higher education institution before the beginning of each semester. The University, in turn, contributes to the financing of the affiliated personnel's activities in full or in part.

According to the Rules for the Load and Remuneration of Academic and Visiting Personnel of the SANGU, affiliated academic personnel, considering the requirements of the Georgian Labor Legislation, are entitled to have at least 6 hours of teaching load at another higher education institution.

The University has developed principles for the participation of academic and scientific personnel in decision-making processes regarding educational, research/creative/performing and other important issues. The above-mentioned issue is regulated by the University Charter, by the Statute of the Academic Council of the SANGU, by the Statute SANGU, by the Statute of the School of Humanities and Law of the SANGU, and by the Statute of the School of Business, Computing and Social Sciences of the SANGU.

The Statute of the Academic Council of SANGU determines the procedure for the formation of the Academic Council. It includes the Rector of the University; Vice-Rector of the University; Head of the Quality Assurance and Strategic Development Service; Deans of Schools; Head of the Scientific Research and Development Service; Two academic staff from each school of the university; one representative of the student self-government. Decisions are made in accordance with democratic principles.

The school regulations determine the status, structure, authority of the structural unit and regulate other issues related to its activities. The School Council is a representative body of the school, which includes all academic staff of the school, the dean of the school and the deputy dean. The chairman of the School Council is the dean of the school, who is appointed and dismissed by the plenipotentiary representative of the founder upon the proposal of the rector.

During the interview process with representatives of the Human Resources Management Department, it was noted that in addition to participation in the councils, both academic and invited staff can participate in the management decision-making process indirectly: their survey is conducted annually. Last year, the following problems were identified during the survey: remuneration, internationalization, close coordination between departments, team building activities, etc. The department assesses the needs and provides information to the university administration. After analyzing and assessing the needs, the activities are reflected in short-term and three-year action plans.

In addition, the staff has the right to receive certain assistance from the university administration upon application - for example, funding for a conference, training, publication, and other needs.

During the interviews with academic staff, the expert group could not create a convincing impression that they were familiar with the activities of the representative of the Academic Council in the functioning of the Academic Council. They found it difficult to name the members of the Academic Council and the decisions made by the Academic Council.

The university has defined approaches and a strategy for the professional development of staff. The university has developed an action plan for the professional development of staff for 2024-2025, which determined the retraining of academic and administrative staff in the English language; financing of scientific events; ensuring the participation of affiliated academic staff in international scientific projects and events; Organization of various events based on personnel needs, etc.

The university annually conducts employee evaluations and satisfaction surveys. The Office of Records and Human Resources ensure the processing of relevant information and the preparation of a report, which is submitted to the Chancellor and Rector. Evaluations are used for employee incentives, professional development, promotion, disciplinary liability or dismissal.

During the interview, the official representative of the founder noted that within the framework of the development of new joint programs, they are negotiating with the representative of the American side - the program developer, to train academic staff in both Georgia and the USA. At the initial stage, they jointly conduct the educational process and are oriented towards the selection and employment of university graduates.

When foreign professors visit Georgia, the university provides for accommodation, transportation, daily and other expenses.

During the interview with the university administration, it was noted that an internal grant for academic staff is in effect; constant information work is being carried out in relation to scientific websites, conferences, and journals. Workshops were held regarding the new remuneration rules, which were related to the publication of scientific publications. To measure/determine scientific representativeness, such criteria and tools are used as: publication of publications in international databases and participation in rated international conferences; through internal peer review of the work; the scientific department, dean's office, and scientific councils of schools ensure the quality of scientific works. Trainings are conducted on the creation and publication of scientific products. The institution provided information on professional development activities for employees in 2013-2024. During the interview process with academic staff, only one staff member noted that they had participated in the qualification improvement training offered by the university. It was noted that they had received training in information technology during the Covid-19 period. While some staff members noted that they individually take care of improving their qualifications.

During the interview with the invited staff, it was noted that they had received training on teaching methods, field topics, international academic competitions, which were presented by the embassies of the USA, Great Britain and other countries. They also participate in public lectures.

The university has developed pre-established principles of remuneration and incentives, which consider the results of employee performance evaluation.

The personnel management policy document of the SANGU defines the principles of professional development and incentives for personnel. Also, the rules for the workload and remuneration of academic and invited personnel have been developed, which determine the types of activities of affiliated academic personnel, their workload in other higher education institutions, as well as the teaching workload and the rules for remuneration of labor, the practical component, supervision of bachelor's, master's, doctoral theses, etc. The university operates a staffing schedule and salary scale approved by the order of the founder's plenipotentiary representative, according to

which the remuneration of both academic and administrative personnel is determined. In the case of academic personnel, there may be different remuneration depending on the educational programs. When drawing up the budget, the university considers the amount to increase the remuneration of employees. The basis for increasing remuneration may be a) the best results of the employee's evaluation for two consecutive years; b) a substantiated petition of the employee's immediate supervisor for an increase in remuneration; c) competitive conditions in the labor market, considering which the university may decide on a salary increase to retain staff.

A personnel incentive mechanism operates in the scientific direction. After publication, the scientific value of the work is assessed, which is carried out by scientific, citation figures in the field. The School Council discusses the issue and is authorized to have a third evaluator evaluate it in case of doubt. The 3rd reviewer can only evaluate the scientific value of the work. The work does not need the evaluation if it is published in international electronic databases. There may also be a case of co-financing. The Dean named examples of funding incentives for publishing the work.

According to the assessment of the self-evaluation form, a salary supplement was added to the heads of all programs of the School of Humanities and Law. In the direction of business - selectively.

Translations and monographs were also financed. This was confirmed by academic and invited staff. During the interview process of the invited staff, it was noted that based on the results of the self-evaluation questionnaire, they proposed developing a new course for a specific program and publishing a collection, which the university will provide. Also, financing the study of master's and doctoral programs of this university's personnel at another university is one of the mechanisms of encouragement.

Also, based on the Dean's address, a statement of gratitude is made to academic and administrative personnel.

The university has developed a procedure that ensures the integration of new employees into the work environment and their effective involvement in the work process.

The university promotes the integration of new employees into the work environment and their effective involvement in the work process. To achieve this goal, the Office of Records and Human Resources Management implements the following measures: a) ensures the introduction of a new employee to the leadership and structural units of the university; b) provides the new employee with the regulatory documentation of the university's activities; c) with the help of the relevant structural units, ensures the allocation of an appropriate desk and inventory for him, as well as opening an e-mail; d) gives him a tour of the infrastructure; e) Provides consultations on any issue within its competence, and also ensures the involvement of other structural units if necessary. During the interview process, it was noted that several excellent graduates were employed in auxiliary administrative positions. At the initial stage, they were introduced to the needs of the departments, then - to the orientation documents, the principles of coordination with other services, they were allocated their own desks and created working conditions. In terms of professional development, internal trainings were conducted in the form of career growth, Service Plus trainings, and the JPA social management course.

During the interview process, it was noted that the university creates conditions for career growth for auxiliary administrative personnel.

During the interview process with the incoming staff, it was noted that "teambuilding" events are necessary for new staff, as they want to get to know the staff involved in the program in addition to the administrative staff.

The university produces statistical data (number of academic, scientific, visiting, administrative and support personnel, ratio of academic and scientific personnel to administrative and support personnel, ratio of academic and scientific personnel to

students; ratio of administrative personnel to students; staff retention rate) on employed personnel, which is presented in the self-assessment report and accompanying documents. The expert group requested statistical indicators on employed personnel in various aspects. The presented data does not include the distribution of academic and scientific personnel by age and gender.

The personal files of academic, administrative and visiting personnel were checked by the expert group. CVs are presented in different formats and make it difficult to effectively search for information for sorting purposes.

The university actively uses the results of personnel evaluation and satisfaction surveys in the process of personnel management.

To effectively conduct its activities, the university sets target indicators for personnel and the activities performed by them and takes care of their improvement.

During the interview with academic and visiting staff, it was noted that they fill out a satisfaction questionnaire and indicate the needs that they consider appropriate to increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning. As for current problems, the administration responds to them immediately. For example, if there is a malfunctioning computer, or if the need for other learning materials arises during classroom lessons. The self-assessment document, as well as the Strategic Development Plan (2026-2023), presents the target benchmarks and indicators set for the staff and the activities performed by them. For example: the number of memorandums of understanding/agreements with international and local partners (target benchmark: 10 agreements/memorandums during the strategy period); New partnership - number of information days, presentations, trainings and workshops (target: at least 5 events per year); - number of project applications submitted on behalf of the university or in partnership; the university is committed to improving them.

The University of Georgia ensures the employment of appropriately qualified personnel for academic/scientific/visiting/administrative/support staff positions.

The following necessary legislative requirements have been established for holding an academic position: a) for the position of Professor - a Doctoral degree or equivalent and at least 6 years of experience in scientific and pedagogical work; b) for the academic position of Associate Professor - a Doctoral degree or equivalent and at least 3 years of experience in scientific and pedagogical work; c) for the academic position of Assistant Professor - a Doctoral degree or equivalent; d) for the academic position of Assistant - a doctoral candidate.

When considering candidates for each academic position, the candidate's achievements in the educational and scientific-research direction are taken into account, which can be assessed and confirmed by the following: a) scientific papers, scientific scholarships and grants received over the last 5 years and other scientific activities; b) participation in scientific conferences and professional development events over the last 5 years; c) international cooperation and activities in the academic and scientific-research direction; d) in the case of a professor and associate professor, a vision for the development of the relevant program direction at the university; in the case of an assistant professor and assistant - a motivation letter submitted by the candidate; e) syllabus/syllabi; f) scientific paper/project/research, which, in the opinion of the candidate, best demonstrates his/her scientific potential. During the interview process with academic staff, it was noted that they had no contenders in the competition.

The following mandatory requirements are defined for holding the academic position of a professor at the university on a professional basis: a) must have at least a master's degree or an equivalent academic degree and at least 6 years of experience in a higher educational institution; According to the qualification requirements for invited personnel of pedagogical activity. The person is required to have a) higher education (doctorate or an equivalent academic degree, master's degree or an equivalent academic degree,

in special cases, a bachelor's degree based on the specifics of the field, if at the same time the person has relevant practical experience in a specific direction); b) publications/papers published in the relevant field over the last 5 years or at least 3 years of practical experience;

The head of the program and the dean of the school participate in the selection of invited personnel. The above-mentioned procedure determines the requirements and evaluation criteria for the selection of invited personnel, language center teachers, and scientific personnel of scientific centers. The SANGU Personnel Management Policy document defines the requirements for internships and probationary periods.

The university has submitted additional requested documents in the form of announcements of academic and administrative competitions, creation of commissions, protocols of commission work, and orders for approval of positions.

The University has determined the relevant qualification requirements for academic/scientific/visited/administrative/support staff positions, considering job descriptions, functions and applicable legislation;

The University has the relevant qualification requirements for academic/scientific/visited/administrative/support staff positions, considering job descriptions, functions and applicable legislation. The self-assessment report is accompanied by the reports of the departments of Accounting, Human Resources Management, Information Technology and Electronic Resources Management, Logistics and Infrastructure Management, Sports and Student Life Management, Educational Process Regulation and Student Services, Examination Center, Higher School of Translators and Interpreters, Center for Kartvelology, Language Center, Law Department, Library, Scientific Supervisors of Master's and Doctoral Theses, National Exam Preparation Center, Public and International Affairs Department, Quality Assurance and Strategic Development, Schools, Department of Scientific Research and Development, Center for Scientific Research of Georgian Folklore, Doctor, Financial Department, Head of Administration, Program Managers, Managers of Educational and Scientific Centers, Functions and responsibilities of the positions of Monitoring Manager, Assistant Rector, Rector, Security Manager, Strategic Relations and Communication Manager, Vice Rector, Departments and Schools Support Staff.

During the interview process with representatives of the Scientific Research and Development Service, Scientific Research Center and Educational and Scientific Career Center, a question was asked regarding functions and responsibilities, to which we received a vague answer. The representatives could not specifically explain the functions of these structural units, as well as the directions of coordination between them. (The issue is discussed in the second standard).

The qualifications of the personnel are in accordance with the qualification requirements determined by the University, which was confirmed by the expert group's review of the personal files of affiliated, invited, administrative and support administrative staff.

Evidences/indicators

- o University Management Regulation;
- o Rules for conducting a competition for an academic position;
- o Rules for affiliation of academic personnel;
- o Rules for evaluating administrative personnel;
- o Personnel management policy;
- o University labor regulations;
- o Personal files of personnel;
- o Results of personnel performance evaluation and satisfaction surveys and their use in personnel management and development;
- o Job descriptions of personnel;
- o Sample contracts signed with personnel;

- o Additional requested documents;
- o Interview results.

Recommendations:

1. It is recommended to process statistical data on employed personnel using indicators such as the distribution of academic, visiting and scientific personnel by age and gender.

Suggestions:

- It is desirable that the university administration work on increasing the effectiveness of the mechanism for the participation of academic and scientific staff in decision-making processes related to educational, research and other important issues.
- It is suggested for the university to strengthen its work in the direction of professional development of affiliated academic and invited personnel.
- It is desirable for the university to hold events with the involvement of academic and visiting staff to improve collegial cooperation.
- It is desirable to develop a unified CV form for the university (with components such as education, work experience, publications, etc.), which will facilitate the collection and processing of personnel data.

Best Practices (if applicable):

N/A

Evaluation

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

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

4.2. Academic/Scientific and Invited Staff Workload

Number and workload of academic/scientific and invited staff is adequate to HEI's educational programmes and scientific-research activities, and other functions assigned to them

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The University has a semester-renewable workload scheme for academic and visiting staff, which includes teaching and/or scientific research/creative/executive and other workloads based on their functional duties;

The start and end times of work of academic/visiting staff are related to their classroom workload, consulting hours and proper fulfillment of other obligations stipulated in the employment contract.

The semester-renewable workload scheme for academic and visiting staff is determined according to the workload and remuneration rules of the St. Andrew's University of Georgia. The weekly workload for academic staff is 40 academic hours; however, the rule does not exclude different workloads and/or remuneration amounts for individual educational programs and/or specific affiliated academic staff, which is reflected in internal legal acts.

The activities of affiliated academic/academic staff include teaching workloads and scientific research activities. The rule determines the forms of academic staff activities that are not remunerated. The volume of the non-teaching component and the remuneration rules for unaffiliated academic staff are determined individually, based on a contract. The teaching workload, along with contact hours, includes student consulting, preparation of exam questions and evaluation of papers, supervision of the practical component and supervision of bachelor's theses (supervision of 2, maximum 6 theses is mandatory). Affiliated academic/academic staff are authorized to supervise no more than 3 master's theses and 2 doctoral theses. The workload is determined on a semester basis.

Scientific workload varies depending on the academic position and is assessed by points. The rule also determines the conditions for holding an administrative position by academic staff and the maximum workload.

Affiliated academic staff is obliged to provide the university with information about their estimated workload at another university at the beginning of each semester.

The university has presented a semester-updated workload scheme for academic and visiting staff in the form of samples.

The number and workload of academic/scientific personnel ensure the proper performance of educational programs, research/creative/executive and other functions and duties assigned to them (when assessing the above standard, the workload of academic personnel in all higher education institutions where they hold an academic or scientific position should be considered);

During the interview process with representatives of the Human Resources Management and Law Department, it was noted that at the beginning of each semester, the workload of university affiliated personnel is verified using the QMS system. The expert group asked whether there is a report of the results and a document after the verification of the QMS system, which confirms that the semester-by-semester updated workload scheme of academic and invited personnel, which includes teaching and/or scientific research/creative/executive and other workloads based on the functions and duties assigned to them, complies with the internal rules of the university's personnel workload.

In addition, the expert group requested a semester workload chart for affiliated academic staff. The information provided in the submitted file does not indicate the semester, however, information on the work and hours to be performed at other universities is often not provided. We have encountered cases when staff invited from another university have 7, 11 and 23 hours of academic and/or scientific workload.

During the interview process with academic staff, it was noted that they are affiliated with the mentioned university, to which they declare their agreement in the contract. However, when asked by the expert group how many hours of workload they have at another university, which is usually set at 6 hours, several cases were noted that they have 8-10 hours at other universities.

To ensure program sustainability, when planning the number of academic, scientific, and visiting staff for each program, the HEI considers the existing and acceptable contingent of students, the specifics of the program, and best international practices;

The number of human resources implementing the educational program at the SANGU shall be determined by the rule for determining the number of student contingents, academic and invited personnel: a) for every 50 students of the educational program, at least one person holding an affiliated academic position shall be provided; b) at least 51% of the total number of credits of the compulsory study courses of the specialty provided for by the educational program shall be provided by the academic personnel of the university; c) If the educational program is planned according to any direction of the "National Qualifications Framework" approved by Order No. 120/n of the Minister

of Education and Science of Georgia, combines fields/specialties and grants qualification/qualifications accordingly, at least one person holding an affiliated academic position must be represented in each field/specialty defined by the program. The expert group asked a question regarding the fact that the general data correspond to this methodology (2000 students, 44 academic affiliated personnel are defined by the authorization), however, the situation varies depending on the schools. During the interview process with the program leaders, as well as representatives of the Human Resources Management and Law Departments, it was noted that they are trying to maintain a balance, however, considering the specifics of the programs, the situation is different and is regulated according to needs. The law program was cited as an example. During the interview process with the school deans, the answer to the above question that affiliated academic staff are employed as much as possible in the mandatory courses of the specialty.

Each academic position holder, in agreement with the university, determines his affiliation with only one university. According to the rules for affiliation of academic staff of the SANGU, on the basis of a signed agreement, an affiliated professor participates in the process of community development and knowledge sharing only on behalf of this university and carries out the main educational, research/scientific activities at the university, and the results of his research will be considered the property of the university; he will be actively involved in the decision-making process regarding educational, research and other important issues of the university, in the processes of providing consultations to students and academic/scientific guidance, in planning conferences, etc.

To effectively conduct its educational and research/creative/performing activities, the HEI sets target indicators for its personnel and takes care of their improvement.

The self-assessment document, as well as the Strategic Development Plan (2026-2023), presents the objectives of the HEI to effectively conduct its educational and research/creative/performing activities, sets target indicators and takes care of their improvement. For example, among the indicators are the volume of funding allocated to support the scientific activities of academic and scientific personnel (internal and external sources); - the number of internal scientific grant projects and activities; - the number of publications, papers/reports published by academic/scientific personnel/young researchers and students; and the number of scientific events and participants of local and international, including those organized by Sangu, scientific activities of academic, scientific personnel/young researchers and students; - the number of personnel involved in scientific-research activities and implemented/ongoing research projects; - annual reports on the evaluation of scientific and research activities.

Evidences/indicators

- o University management regulations;
- o Rules for affiliation of academic personnel;
- o Personnel management policy;
- o University labor regulations;
- o Personal files of personnel;
- o Results of personnel performance evaluation and satisfaction surveys and their use in personnel management and development;
- o Sample contracts signed with personnel;
- o Additional requested documents;
- o Rules for the workload and remuneration of academic and invited personnel;
- o Rules for determining the number of student contingents, academic and invited personnel;
- o Interview results.

<p>Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is recommended to control the workload chart of affiliated academic staff every semester and to adhere to the staff workload rule.
<p>Suggestions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is desirable to verify the workload of affiliated academic staff using the QMS system, evaluate the results, and develop a report and submit it to the program leaders.
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <p>Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective, and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education institutions.</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements </p>

5. Students and Their Support Services

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

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

- The HEI F has developed or each educational level transparent regulations; assignment, suspension and termination of student status, mobility, qualification granting, issuing educational documents as well as recognition of education received during the learning period.
- The HEI ensures the protection of student rights and lawful interests.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

At St. Andrew the First-Called Georgian University, specific regulations have been developed for each level of higher education, defining issues related to the acquisition, suspension, and termination of student status; mobility; conferral of qualifications; issuance of educational documents; and recognition of prior education. These procedures are detailed in the Regulation of the Educational Process, which encompasses matters concerning student status, mobility, the conferral of academic degrees, and the recognition of education.

The Rule for the Recognition of Credits determines the conditions under which the education obtained by individuals who are already students or who seek admission through mobility is recognized. The Rule for the Issuance and Production of Diplomas regulate the preparation and issuance of the diploma—a document certifying higher education.

All the above-mentioned regulations are transparent, fair, and fully consistent with current legislation. These normative documents are publicly accessible to all interested parties. As noted during the sessions and confirmed by our review, the information is publicly available on the university's official website.

As for the acquisition of student status, this is possible under the procedures established by Georgian legislation—through the successful completion of the Unified National Examinations or via mobility.

At the undergraduate level, the right to study is granted to applicants who possess a certificate of complete general education, have passed the Unified National Examinations, and, according to their score ranking, have earned admission to a specific educational program. The conditions for admission of persons exempt from national examinations are regulated by the "Rule for the Submission and Review of Documents by Applicants/Graduate Candidates/Students Entitled to Study at Higher Education Institutions Without Passing the Unified National/General Graduate Examinations."

Enrollment in master's programs is available to individuals who hold a bachelor's degree or an equivalent qualification, have successfully passed the General Graduate Examination, and met any additional requirements defined by the specific program. If one of these requirements concerns foreign language proficiency, proof of knowledge may be demonstrated either through an internal examination or by submitting an international certificate, which exempts the student from the internal test.

Applicants wishing to pursue doctoral studies must hold a master's degree or its equivalent and must fulfill the requirements defined by the respective program. In addition, applicants are required to demonstrate foreign language proficiency appropriate to their field—English at a level not lower than B2. The procedures for implementing doctoral education are defined in the Regulation on Doctoral Studies.

Upon successful completion of an educational program, the student is awarded the corresponding academic qualification. The decision to confer bachelor's and master's degrees is made by the respective School Council of the university, while the doctoral degree is conferred by the Dissertation Council. Following the conferral of a qualification, a diploma and supplement are issued. The format of these documents is approved by an order of the Rector and agreed upon with the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Finance of Georgia. Issues related to the preparation, issuance, and destruction of diplomas are regulated by the Rule for the Production and Issuance of Diplomas.

To safeguard the rights and interests of students, the university ensures the timely and efficient conduct of administrative and academic processes, including consultations on academic matters, registration of new students, procedures for mobility and restoration of student status. Upon registration, students are assigned a university e-mail address, receive a student ID card, and sign a contract (in the case of a minor, the agreement is signed with their legal representative). When necessary, a payment distribution agreement may also be concluded.

The university operates an electronic system for educational process management and recordkeeping (UMS), which allows students to submit applications online, monitor their processing status, and review administrative comments. All relevant structural units connected to the system receive applications simultaneously, ensuring effective communication and transparent procedures. Moreover, as noted during the site visit, the administration responds promptly and efficiently to all requests for certificates or confirmations. It was also observed that the electronic system contains templates that simplify the process of requesting various certificates for students.

It can be reasonably stated that the contract signed between the student and the university clearly defines the rights and obligations of both parties, their financial responsibilities, and the terms of termination. Student rights and obligations are also described in the Code of Ethics, the Student Handbook, and the Rules for the Prevention and Response to Plagiarism, the Examination Instructions, and other internal documents.

The university ensures that students are informed about their rights and responsibilities both during registration and throughout their studies. Students receive printed and electronic versions of the handbook, which are available on the website and in the UMS system.

The Code of Ethics defines standards of conduct for both students and staff, disciplinary measures, and relevant procedures. Students are required to respect all members of the university community and to protect the institution's property and reputation.

During disciplinary proceedings, students have the right to receive a written decision, attend the hearing, exercise the right to defense, present evidence, and request a public hearing. Possible sanctions include a warning, remark, reprimand, or termination of student status. The complaint mechanism allows students to file grievances against both academic and administrative staff. Two forms are available in the UMS system for this purpose—a free-form application to the Rector and an appeal of examination results.

In conclusion, it can be stated that the university has fully established the legal and administrative framework governing the educational process—from obtaining student status to diploma issuance and recognition of education. All procedures are transparent, compliant with Georgian legislation, and ensure that students are well informed about their rights and responsibilities. Any amendments to normative documents are promptly reflected on the website, and students are informed in detail through appropriate meetings.

To further strengthen mechanisms for protecting students' rights and interests, it is advisable to establish the position of a Student Ombudsman. Such an office would independently review student complaints and conflict situations, thereby increasing accountability, trust, and fairness within the educational environment. Although the President of the Student Self-Government currently serves as an intermediary between students and the administrative/academic staff—voicing student concerns—it would be desirable for a dedicated Student Ombudsman to assume this role.

Evidences/indicators

- Code of Ethics
- University Internal Regulations
- Regulation of the Educational Process
- Samples of Student–University Agreements
- Rule for Diploma Production
- Rule for Credit Recognition
- Rule for Detecting and Responding to Plagiarism
- Regulation on Master's Studies
- Regulation on Doctoral Studies
- Student Handbook
- Educational Process Management System
- University Website
- Interview Results

Recommendations:

N/A

Suggestions:

1. To further enhance the protection mechanisms of students' rights and interests, it is suggested to establish the institution of a Student Ombudsman.

Best Practices (if applicable):

N/A

Evaluation

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

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

5.2 Student Support Services

- The HEI has student consulting services to plan educational process and improve academic performance;
- The HEI has career support service, which provides students with appropriate counselling and support regarding employment and career development;
- The HEI ensures students awareness and involvement in various university-level, local and international projects and events, and supports student initiatives ;
- The HEI has mechanisms, including financial mechanisms to support low SES students.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

At St. Andrew the First-Called Georgian University, the student consultation and information support system is well organized and closely integrated with both academic and administrative units. Information dissemination occurs through multiple channels—via the university website, e-mail, dedicated social media groups, interpersonal communication, and more.

In terms of information provision and consultation, it can be stated that there is a general sense of satisfaction among students and alumni.

The relevant university department is actively engaged in supporting the career development of students and graduates. It is noteworthy that the department organizes an annual employment forum, the number of participating employers in which has been increasing each year. The university not only focuses on organizing such events but also evaluates their effectiveness by conducting post-event surveys. Based on the analysis of these results, appropriate steps are taken to further improve the process.

The Career Development Service maintains multidimensional communication with students and graduates: job vacancies, internship opportunities, and project announcements are regularly distributed via e-mail. It is also significant that the department maintains a database of employers.

Alumni surveys are conducted in two directions: first, employment statistics in general; and second, the rate of employment in the relevant field of study.

Relations with alumni represent a strategic direction for the university. The institution regularly collects feedback from graduates working in their respective professional fields concerning the enhancement of sectoral competencies, confirmed through surveys and their results. This is important for the continuous development of educational programs. The university also periodically offers alumni various events, trainings, and conferences, encouraging their continued engagement in university life. From the standpoint of internationalization, it is notable that the Patriarchate of Georgia's St. Andrew the First-Called Georgian University, in partnership with Northern Kentucky University (NKU), implements a joint English-language master's program in Cybersecurity. This partnership has yielded significant results in the field of international mobility, as reflected in the growing number of short-term exchange visits. Nevertheless, it remains important to further promote such activities within other educational programs and to increase student participation in both short- and

long-term exchange programs. To achieve this, the university needs to further expand its collaboration with foreign higher education institutions, thereby enhancing student international mobility. As noted during the site visit, students are regularly informed about international projects, yet their level of engagement remains low. The internationalization survey revealed that only 19% of students have participated in international projects, while 81% have not.

A positive trend is that, recently, St. Andrew the First-Called Georgian University has become actively involved in Erasmus+ exchange programs, with four short-term programs already launched. Nonetheless, strengthening this area further would represent a significant step toward deeper internationalization.

The Student Self-Government of St. Andrew the First-Called Georgian University organizes educational, cognitive, sports, and recreational activities. The experience and range of activities in this direction appear sufficient to ensure a full and vibrant student life.

However, the results of the authorization visit indicated that extracurricular activities of a scientific and educational nature are relatively limited, suggesting a need to stimulate and expand student participation in these areas.

The university actively implements a policy of encouraging students through scholarships and financial benefits. Scholarships are awarded based on both high academic achievement and social vulnerability. The university considers students' socio-economic circumstances and applies flexible tuition payment schemes, supporting the principle of accessibility to education.

There are three types of scholarships available at the university: those defined by educational programs implemented in schools; university-designated scholarships; and non-university (named) scholarships.

The university has established transparent and objective mechanisms for supporting socially vulnerable students. Examples include exemption from semester tuition fees; installment payment schedules for annual or semester tuition; individualized payment plans; cancellation of debts for students whose status was suspended due to financial reasons; preferential financial terms for those seeking admission to master's programs (partial funding with the condition of maintaining academic performance in subsequent semesters); 50% tuition coverage per semester for military personnel and their family members (conditional on high academic performance); 20%, 30%, and 50% tuition funding or scholarships for bachelor's students who obtained state grants under their first, second, or third program choice; 20% tuition funding for students who graduated from Patriarchate schools during their undergraduate studies; financial support for applicants from the occupied territories of Georgia; and full funding for tuition and travel/accommodation costs in the United States for students of the strategically significant joint English-language Cybersecurity master's program.

According to the university's self-evaluation report, one of the areas identified for improvement is "increasing student engagement in management and decision-making processes." To address this challenge, it is recommended that students and alumni be directly involved in the self-evaluation working group, allowing them to participate in decision-making processes and to share their opinions and recommendations—thus contributing to the advancement of educational programs and the overall development of the higher education institution.

Evidences/indicators

- Rule for Granting Scholarships;
- Activities Implemented by the Employment and Career Development Department;
- Results of Alumni Research;

- Data on Students/Graduates Participating in the State Internship Program;
- Lists of Companies Participating in Employment Forums;
- Employer Database;
- Regulations of the Employment and Career Development Department;
- Regulations of the Educational Process Management and Student Services Department;
- Order on Awarding Medals to Distinguished Students;
- Events Organized by the Student Self-Government.

Recommendations:

1. It is recommended to intensify international mobility, increase student involvement in this area, and expand cooperation with foreign higher education institutions;
2. It is also recommended that students and alumni participate directly in the self-evaluation working group so that their feedback and recommendations can be fully reflected in the development of educational programs and the university.

Suggestions:

1. It is suggested to increase extracurricular scientific activities;
2. It is suggested to allocate an appropriate budget to support individual student initiatives.

Best Practices (if applicable):

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

Evaluation

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

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

6. Research, development and/or other creative work

Higher Education Institution, considering its type and specifics of field(s), works on the strengthening of its research function, ensures proper conditions to support research activities and improve the quality of research activities

6.1 Research Activities

- HEI, based on its type and specifics of its fields, carries out research/creative activities.
- Ensuring the effectiveness of doctoral research supervision
- HEI has public, transparent and fair procedures for the assessment and defense of dissertations which are relevant to the specifics of the field

Descriptive review and analysis of compliance with the component requirements of the standard:

Saint Andrew the First-Called Georgian University is a higher education institution oriented toward national values and plays an important role in the country's development. Its profile and specialization are represented by two schools - the **School of Humanities and Law** and the **School of Computing and Social Sciences** - as well as two research centers: the **Center for Kartvelology** and the **Scientific Research Center of Georgian Folklore**.

It is noteworthy that the activities of these research centers are of great importance, as they contribute to the study and promotion of Georgian traditions, history, culture, language and intangible cultural heritage. The research carried out by these Centers contributes to the advancement of science and culture both on a national and international level.

Based on the normative documents presented by the university, its self-evaluation and the interviews conducted during the authorization visit, it is confirmed that:

- The University has developed a research activity strategy;
- The University conducts research activities.

According to the interview results and the submitted documentation, it is confirmed that during the reporting period, the university has strengthened its activity in several research fields:

- A Scientific Research Department was established;
- An impressive set of normative documents was developed and disseminated;
- Numerous scientific events were planned and organized;
- Mechanisms, including evaluation tools for the quantitative and qualitative assessment of research were developed.

According to the HEI's self-evaluation report, the interview results and the documentation submitted, it is convincingly grounded that the academic staff as well as the doctoral students are engaged in research activities, including the expected outcome e.g. publications in international and national journals, participation in international scientific conferences and the creation of monographs and textbooks. The scientific and creative activities carried out by the university are described in detail, among which the following are particularly important:

- A targeted grant competition for the promotion of science — the project "**I Am an Experimenter**", which aims to popularize natural sciences, particularly physics, in schools;
- A state scientific grant for fundamental research — "**Khada Valley: An Interdisciplinary Study of Unknown Monuments of Spiritual and Material Cultural Heritage.**"

It is also noteworthy that the scientific output of research carried out by the institution's academic and research staff is integrated in the teaching practice representing one of the priority objectives of the University. The University encourages this approach and expects the academic and research staff to focus and create new textbooks - a trend that should undoubtedly be regarded as positive, especially given the shortage of textbooks in Georgian language considering disciplinary specificity. However, the textbooks developed within various disciplines represent educational and scientific products that serve the study of specific subjects. It would be beneficial if, alongside this important work, the University academic and research staff further intensified their research activities, particularly on international level.

At **Saint Andrew the First-Called Georgian University**, the **School of Humanities and Law** offers one Doctoral program - **History of Georgia**. It should be noted that the existence of this program is very important, as it not only contributes to the creation

of new knowledge in the field but also serves to promote **the history of Georgia** as a **state priority area**.

The University has a **clearly defined vision** regarding the operation of Doctoral Programs and actively supports Doctoral research. The HEI introduced a valuable and commendable practice providing for its graduates to pursue Doctoral studies free of charge.

The HEI has significant human resources, which makes it capable of offering more than one Doctoral Program. It would be beneficial if the University began developing additional Doctoral Programs — for example, in the field of Georgian Philology.

Based on the documentation submitted by the University, the self-evaluation report, and the results of the interviews, there is an urgent need to **strengthen the HEI's efforts to ensure more effective and visible Doctoral research**. Although the documentation presented by the institution (in this area and of this specificity) leaves a good impression, the interview results and the review of defended dissertations reveal that **additional training sessions for Doctoral students are necessary to ensure a higher quality of research**.

It is especially important that during the process of working on the qualification thesis, the **Standard for Academic Paper Preparation** developed by the University is considered to a higher extent. This means that the Doctoral students should periodically receive **training on the format and main characteristics of the qualification thesis**, including **citation and bibliography practices, research methods and methodology, theoretical framework design** and other essential topics related to academic skills - all of which would contribute to achieving even higher-quality qualification papers, especially in international scientific journals.

It is also important to **improve the quality and intensity of the supervision** of research activity and publication outcome-based performance of the Doctoral students by **strengthening the role of supervisors during the dissertation submission process as well**. Moreover, special and continuous attention should be paid to meet, and effective support should be provided in fulfilling the goals and criteria on formal aspects of the dissertation as well as the compliance **with the established standards**. According to the documentation presented by **Saint Andrew the First-Called Georgian University (SANGU)** and the results of the interviews performed during the reporting period, the University developed public, transparent and fair procedures for the evaluation and defense of dissertations, aligned with the, which are clearly defined in the Regulations of the Dissertation Board.

During the interviews, both graduates and current Doctoral students noted that they have never experienced any sense of unfairness in the evaluation process of any component and believe that their assessments have always been public, transparent and fair.

Evidences/indicators

- Self-evaluation report;
- Interview results;
- Institutional vision for research development;
- Annual scientific reports of academic staff;
- Ongoing and completed research projects;
- Research quality assessment mechanism and evaluation results;
- Rules for workload and remuneration of academic and invited staff;
- Regulations for the doctoral program and the Dissertation Board;
- Functions of the Doctoral Supervisor;
- Evaluation questionnaire for the Doctoral thesis Supervisor;
- Citation rules.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended to introduce training sessions for doctoral students on the format and main characteristics of the qualification thesis be conducted regularly.
2. It is recommended that all dissertations comply with the Standards for Academic Paper Preparation, especially with the general standards for preparing Theses and Dissertations.

Suggestions

1. SANGU should promote the internationalization of Doctoral research;
2. SANGU should establish priority research directions;
3. SANGU should conduct fundamental research that contributes to and visible on both the national and international levels;-
4. Results of research carried out and performed by the academic and research staff at SANGU should be better, if possible fully integrated into the teaching process;
5. Attention should be paid to the dissertations' formal aspects, content and publication outcome. Special attention should be paid to many aspects of the qualification theses, including the structure of introduction, clear presentation of the theoretical framework, research methods and methodology, review of the related literature.
6. It is expected that the qualification theses provide a clear view on the scientific novelty, as well as the theoretical and practical significance of the research performed. Moreover, it is suggested to follow the citation standards.
7. The rights and responsibilities of the Scientific Supervisor should be more clearly defined and monitoring of the work performed should regularly be carried out.

Best Practices (if applicable):

N/A

Evaluation

Complies with requirements
 Substantially complies with requirements
 Partially complies with requirements
 Does not comply with requirements

6.2. Research Support and Internationalization

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

Descriptive review and analysis of compliance with the component requirements of the standard

Based on the documentation submitted by SANGU, the self-evaluation report and the interview sessions, the overall performance of the University in the reported period is convincing by the data provided on creating an effective system for the development and support of research. Furthermore, the HEI's practice on strengthening the related actions is regulated by the relevant documentation.

Affiliated, academic, and invited staff, as well as Doctoral and Master's students, are **engaged in research activities, funded by the university** in certain cases. It should also be noted that the university assists researchers in obtaining significant research grants. Two projects funded by the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation were granted and performed successfully during the reporting period.

The SANGU's approach to **training its' own personnel with aiming at involving them in the University's activities** should be regarded as a **positive trend**. Furthermore, it is important to note that SANGU graduates are also employed as members of the University staff. The staff replacement policy is a priority, and this view is shared by the professors and administrative representatives interviewed emphasizing the importance of **recruiting new personnel and involving them in the University's life** to continue the traditions established.

During the reporting period, the University took significant steps toward the internationalization of research activities. Particularly noteworthy is the initiative to establish connections and future collaboration with the national office of the European Union's Horizon Europe program. In 2024, SANGU became an official member of the network.

The information reflected in the self-evaluation report was confirmed during the interview process, namely:

1. The University supports the research initiatives of academic staff and students.
2. The University budget allocates annually increasing financial resources to the development of scientific and research activities.

Although the existence of a research development strategy is well documented the implementation needs further actions. Although the academic and research staff, advanced level students (Master's and Doctoral), are engaged in research activities, **a higher effort is needed to enhance the effectiveness of the system developed by the University**. To strengthen research activities and achieve international recognition, the University should **implement a flexible system for conducting more effective initiatives**. For example, a specific structural unit should be tasked with identifying discipline-specific journals of high recognition indexed in Scopus, Web of Science and other major scientific databases. Additionally, more effective incentives should be introduced and further developed for academic and research staff and Doctoral students. The University should have clear plans, actions and monitoring tools for promoting a balanced quantity and quality in research performance. Moreover, more effective tools to encourage, and indicators to evaluate high-quality scientific outputs are needed, and these should include the corresponding service to handle translation, journal compliance, and financial aspects, gradually yielding significant results. Furthermore, it is strongly suggested to encourage **joint research performed by Doctoral students and their Supervisors**. This paradigm change may have a particular impact on the visibility on scientific results to be published in highly ranked international journals. To strengthen this line would be beneficial both for **internationalization** and for promotion of the research field. **Through the** recruitment of new personnel, special attention should be paid to get researchers **whose scientific** output may contributes to the development of the field, and to an enhanced international recognition. The University should also implement measures

providing data on areas with expected contribution to increasing faculty participation in international scientific activities. These steps (application of PDCA on research activities) would certainly lead to greater results in terms of **internationalization**.

Evidences/indicators

- Self-evaluation report
- Interview results
- Scientific reports
- Institutional vision for research development
- Research funding procedures
- Regulations of the Scientific Research and Development Service
- Research quality assessment mechanism and evaluation results
- Vision for attracting young personnel and involving them in university research activities
- International collaboration
- Procedures for submitting project proposals

Recommendations

1. The University should develop an effective strategy for supporting research promoting internationalization and establishing an incentive system;
2. The University is recommended to facilitate the publication of academic and research staff's work in high-ranking journals;
3. The University should apply the PDCA approach in promoting and supporting research activity and outcome.

Suggestions

1. To advance research, the University should focus on enhancing the effectiveness of its involvement (it is essential to provide supportive measures for academic and research staff, including translation of articles, identification of relevant journals and administration of the publication process).
2. The University is advised to offer useful and skill developing training sessions for academic and research staff on a regular basis.
3. To ensure international recognition, academic and research staff should be more actively involved in international scientific activities.
4. The University is strongly recommended to support human resources whose scientific output both contributes to the development of the field and enhances international recognition (this may also include the recruitment of new personnel).

Best Practices (if applicable):

N/A

Evaluation

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

6.3. Evaluation of Research Activities

HEI has a system for evaluating and analyzing the quality of research/creative-arts activities, and the productivity of scientific-research units and academic/scientific staff.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The University has a Rule for Evaluation of the Scientific Productivity of Staff and Research Quality (Folder 6.11). For the affiliated staff, the evaluation of the scientific productivity is done by the administration of the Schools and the Department of Scientific Research and Development, once in a year. In case of non-affiliated, the academic and invited staff are evaluated in line with the contract, by the programme head, the school administration and the Department of Scientific Research and Development. The evaluation of scientific productivity is carried out in two ways:

- Self-evaluation by staff, conducted every three weeks. The form is attached to the Rule.
- Analysis of self-evaluation forms conducted every six weeks.

The criteria for evaluating scientific productivity—both qualitative and quantitative indicators—are defined in the relevant Rule. Each indicator is assigned a specific point value.

Regarding this document, this Rule does not address the following:

- The point value assigned to scientific activities categorized as "Other Activities".
- The evaluation scale used when the staff conducts self-evaluations and assigns points
- The method translation of individual scientific productivity evaluations into structural and institutional outcomes. Given that the university includes two faculties and two distinct scientific centers, clear rationale is needed for applying the same or similar evaluation criteria across all units.

These questions are also related to evaluate the effectiveness of scientific-research units that are required by the standard. It is recommended that the evaluation criteria for scientific productivity be clearly defined not only at the individual level, but also at the institutional and faculty levels. If the institutional or faculty-level assessment is based solely on the sum of individual scientific productivity, this approach should be explicitly stated and justified within the relevant policy or evaluation framework.

Moreover, if the school administration /deans are involved in the evaluation of the staff scientific productivity, who evaluates the deans in their capacity as academic staff.

The Higher Education Institution (HEI) maintains a report detailing the implemented and ongoing research activities for the period 2020–2025 (Folder 6.1). This document, which includes descriptions of the research initiatives undertaken, should be made publicly available to ensure transparency and to communicate the institution's scientific engagement to external stakeholders.

In contrast, the analysis of scientific-research activities—which may include evaluations, performance trends, and strategic assessments—can remain internal. These documents are intended to serve as a basis for decision-making at the institutional level, supporting the planning, development, and enhancement of research capacity and direction.

During the interviews, the Rector emphasized that where an academic staff member has no scientific output over an extended period, the university provides support through training sessions, helping them become familiar with the key scientific databases in their field.

Furthermore, there is no faculty-based differentiation in the evaluation criteria of the scientific-activities. For example, the scientific productivity of academic staff from both the Folklore Scientific Center and the School of Business, Computing and Social Sciences is assessed using the exact same framework, regardless of the differences in disciplinary focus or research outputs.

Evidences/indicators

- Self-evaluation report
- Interview results
- Scientific reports
- Institutional vision for research development
- Research funding procedures

- Regulations of the Scientific Research and Development Service
- Research quality assessment mechanism and evaluation results
- Vision for attracting young personnel and involving them in university research activities
- International collaboration
- Procedures for submitting project proposals

Recommendations:

1. It is recommended that the evaluation criteria for scientific productivity be clearly defined not only at the individual level, but also at the institutional and faculty levels.
2. It is recommended that the institution review the current evaluation framework for scientific productivity to determine whether uniform criteria adequately reflect the diversity of research practices and outputs across different faculties and scientific centers.

Suggestions:

1. It is advisable that the descriptions of current or completed scientific research projects conducted by the Higher Education Institution (HEI) or its academic staff be made publicly available. Public access to such information promotes transparency, showcases the institution's research engagement, and enhances its academic reputation.

Best Practices (if applicable):

N/A

Evaluation

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

7. Material, Information and Financial Resources

Material, information and financial resources of HEI ensure sustainable, stable, effective and efficient functioning of the institution, and the achievement of goals defined through strategic development plan.

7.1 Material Resources

- The institution possesses or owns material resources (fixed and current assets) that are used for achieving goals stated in the mission statement, adequately responds to the requirements of educational programmes and research activities, and corresponds to the existing number of students and planned enrolment.
- HEI offers environment necessary for implementing educational activities: sanitary units, natural light possibilities, and central heating system.
- Health and safety of students and staff is protected within the institution.
- HEI has adapted environment for people with special needs

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The university's infrastructure is fully conducive to the effective implementation of all educational programs and ensures the delivery of high-quality instruction.

Academic activities are conducted within modern, renovated facilities. The classrooms are comprehensively upgraded and outfitted with state-of-the-art technologies, including computer systems, projectors, and interactive whiteboards. The number of available classrooms adequately meets the current demands of the student population.

The university is equipped with a well-resourced library, technologically advanced conference halls, and dedicated areas designed specifically for student use. The University owns two academic buildings situated at 53a Chavchavadze Street, Tbilisi, encompassing a total area of 5,953 square meters (Building I: 3,969.1 square meter Building II: 1,983.9 square meter). These immovable properties are officially registered with the Legal Entity of Public Law – National Agency of Public Registry, and each has been assigned an official cadastral code. According to the measured floor plans, the facilities are designated for both academic and auxiliary functions. In addition to its instructional facilities, the university's infrastructure includes two conference halls, a library, preparatory and examination centers for prospective students, and sports areas. For scientific and research purposes, the university maintains fully equipped physics and chemistry laboratories. Furthermore, it operates several specialized centers, including the Scientific-Research Center of Georgian Folklore, the School for Translators and Interpreters, a Foreign Language Center, computer laboratories. The university's infrastructure includes a modern cafeteria. Classrooms benefit from dual lighting systems—natural lighting through windows and artificial lighting, ensuring optimal conditions for learning throughout the day. To guarantee an uninterrupted power supply, the university is registered as an independent consumer with JSC Telasi and is equipped with a backup diesel generator, which ensures a continuous energy supply in case of outages. The facility is serviced by a modern central heating system, which operates via two parallel boiler units to enhance reliability. Furthermore, all rooms are equipped with individual heating and air conditioning systems. The university's safety infrastructure fully adheres to contemporary standards. The academic buildings are equipped with: Fire safety stands; Fire extinguishers and hydrants; An audible fire alarm system; An emergency lighting system. Officially approved evacuation plans are prominently displayed on each floor of both buildings. The Evacuation exits are maintained in strict accordance with safety protocols. A qualified medical specialist is employed by the university to oversee the health and well-being of students and staff. Contractually engaged, the physician provides medical assistance as needed and maintains a detailed medical logbook in accordance with institutional protocols. Campus security and order are maintained by a dedicated security service. Security personnel are employed under contract and report directly to the Chancellor. Their responsibilities and working conditions are clearly defined in advance. They are tasked with responding promptly and effectively to any breaches of order and with protecting the university's physical and material assets. All university buildings and surrounding areas are under continuous 24/7 surveillance. To enhance campus safety, modern security cameras with recording capabilities are installed both internally and externally and are integrated into a unified security network. Special provisions are made to accommodate individuals with disabilities. The main entrance is equipped with a wheelchair-accessible ramp, and elevators provide access to all floors. Sanitary facilities on the first floor are adapted to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. Students with special educational needs have full access to university resources, including the library, computer laboratories, administrative offices, and other essential services. Designated parking spaces for persons with disabilities are located adjacent to the building, ensuring uninterrupted access. Security personnel are instructed to assist individuals with special needs, thereby facilitating smooth and comfortable navigation throughout the university premises.

<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation confirming ownership of immovable property, extract from the Public Registry • Documentation confirming ownership of movable property / inventory records • Mechanisms for fire safety, medical assistance, and maintenance of public order • Occupational health and safety management plan • Site-Visit Results
<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>Suggestions:</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Please mark the checkbox, which best describes the HEI's compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements </p>

7.2. Library Resources

Library environment, resources and service support effective implementation of educational and research activities, and HEI constantly works for its improvement.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The University has made substantial progress in developing its library infrastructure, resources, and services since the previous authorization cycle. The library now functions as a modern academic space aligned with the university's educational and research goals.

The library environment is well-structured and inclusive. It comprises a physically separated book archive and reading hall, a separate office for library staff, and a newly established area for meetings and group work - addressing key infrastructural gaps identified during the previous evaluation. The reading hall is equipped with 24 internet-connected computers, and students have access to Wi-Fi, scanning, and photocopying services directly within the library. It was evident the upgrades were made to enhance user experience and operational efficiency.

The library operates a minimum of 60 hours per week, meeting the standard's requirement and resolving the prior shortfall in working hours. The space is designed to support both individual and collaborative learning, with natural lighting and thematic shelving that facilitate a comfortable and navigable study environment.

The library keeps a collection of printed and electronic materials; all catalogued according to international classification standards. A custom-built electronic catalog is publicly accessible via the university website and does not require registration, it is easily accessible for students and staff. The library also provides free access to

the paid services of the Legislative Herald of Georgia through one institutional account, mostly used by the Law students and staff.

The interviews with the academic and invited staff, also Accounting office revealed that the university periodically purchases most recent literature and teaching materials to update course syllabi. The current annual budget for literature acquisitions is 36,236.56 GEL, showing the university's commitment to invest in improving library resources.

The library staff make sure the required literature is available for the students. Additionally, HEI has introduced an initiative - students can request new acquisitions through a formal online submission process 'Which book would you like to see in the library?' via library page (<https://sangu.edu.ge/geo/article/biblioteka>). This directly addresses the students' needs. During the interview the students evaluated this as a good initiative.

It should be noted that the library maintains a digital repository of master's and doctoral dissertations completed at the university. These theses are fully integrated into the electronic catalog and are available to all users.

The university offers access to international scientific databases and journals, including those indexed by Scopus and Web of Science. These resources are available both on campus and remotely. However, usage statistics remain low. To address this, the library organizes informational sessions each semester and has integrated database literacy into academic writing course syllabi, where students are assessed on their ability to use scientific databases. It is recommended that the university continues to strengthen its strategy for increasing engagement with electronic scientific databases.

Library staff periodically undergo specialized training to be in line with legislative requirements. The library actively supports informal education by hosting meetings with authors, translators, and public figures, to enrich academic culture and foster student engagement in extracurricular activities.

To ensure responsiveness to user needs, the library conducts anonymous reader surveys multiple times per academic year. These surveys are based on sociological research principles and inform decisions on service improvements. For example, recent feedback led to the allocation of additional student workspaces. Overall, students report satisfaction with the library's services and accessibility.

Evidences/indicators

- Documentation confirming ownership of the book collection
- Documentation confirming participation in the international electronic library network
- Electronic catalog:
https://library.sangu.edu.ge/biblio_full_list.php?language=Georgian&page=list
Guide to using the catalog:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ny_3osWuwwOmhbP-0gY-QcwR0AsYFdzJ/view
- International databases: <https://sangu.edu.ge/content/monacemta-bazebi>
Guide to using the databases:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OuKuosq3INNYVtj02hD_LDmQUZhfoS9v/view
- Library usage regulations
- Mechanisms for the development and renewal of library resources and services
- Membership in IATUL: <https://www.iatul.org/membership/members-list.html#g>
- Memorandum of understanding with Tbilisi State University

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online training – Using scientific databases: https://sangu.edu.ge/?m=374&news_id=1348 • Results of the library survey • Usage statistics of electronic library databases
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Recommendations:

1. Strengthen the University's strategy for increasing engagement with electronic scientific databases

Suggestions:

N/A

Best Practices (if applicable):

N/A

Evaluation

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

<input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements
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7.3 Information Resources

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

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

HEI has an "Information Technology Infrastructure, Management Policy, and Procedures" document, which establishes the rules and standards for the safe, efficient, and transparent use of the university's IT resources. This document regulates access to and use of the university's information and communication systems by all members and groups within the institution. It also defines procedures for data protection and confidentiality, ensuring compliance with legislation and relevant standards.

The university has implemented electronic management systems that ensure efficiency, effectiveness, and accessibility in service delivery and administrative processes.

The university's management system coordinates academic, administrative, and internal communication processes (ums.sangu.edu.ge). The interface is available in both Georgian and English. The UMS allows course registration, management of syllabi, schedules, assessments, and academic results, document circulation, notifications (email, system messages, SMS), financial data management, surveys, and other functions.

The university's Learning Management System (LMS) is based on the Moodle platform and is used for both hybrid and remote learning. The platform is tailored to the university's course structure and the specifics of its academic processes. It supports the management of course materials, assignments, tests, forums, and other educational activities. According to interviews, there are plans to integrate plagiarism detection and artificial intelligence tools into the LMS soon.

Moodle is also used for examination organization; however, grades must currently be manually transferred from the examination system to the UMS. **It would be desirable that this process be automated to improve efficiency and reduce potential errors.**

The university's internet connectivity is provided through two service providers (Magti and Silknet) to ensure uninterrupted access. A firewall is used to maintain network security. Wireless internet is available throughout the campus for all stakeholders, with Wi-Fi names and passwords posted in the hallways.

For data storage, local and cloud-based repositories (DigitalOcean) are used, including backups. Access to servers is restricted to certified technical personnel only.

USD's official website (www.sangu.edu.ge) is available in both Georgian and English. It provides information about the university's mission and vision, organizational structure, catalog of educational programs, all key regulatory documents, and more. The website serves as a primary communication tool for both internal and external stakeholders, reflecting the university's commitment to transparency and accessibility. **However, it should be noted that on the English version of the site, regulatory documents are still presented only in Georgian.**

Evidences/indicators

- Information Technology Infrastructure, Management Policies and Procedures";
- University Website;
- University Management System (UMS);
- Learning Management System (LMS);
- Browsing Results;
- Interview Results.

Recommendations:

1. It is recommended that the university translates and publishes all regulatory documents on the English website to enhance transparency and improve communication with international stakeholders.

Suggestions:

N/A

Best Practices (if applicable):

N/A

Evaluation

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

7.4 Financial Resources

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

HEI has an effective system of accountability, financial management and control

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with the standard component requirements

The management of financial resources at the university is guided by the principles of efficiency and economic prudence. Budget formulation and expenditure allocation are strategically aligned with the institution's overarching goals and priorities, thereby ensuring the optimal utilization of available resources.

The financial resources outlined in the Georgian University's budget are derived from a range of diversified funding sources, reflecting a robust and sustainable financial model. These sources include: An annual subsidy (grant) allocated by the Patriarchate of Georgia; Revenue generated from tuition fees across undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs; State funding—including educational grants, graduate-level grants, and social program subsidies; Local and international research grants; Revenue from the 60-credit Teacher Training Program; Revenue from the Higher School of Translation and Interpreting; Revenue from the Preparatory Center for University Applicants; Revenue from the Human Resources Management Certificate Program; Revenue from the accredited Occupational Health and Safety Certificate Program; Income from other economic activities; Additional income generated through two limited liability companies—"First Georgian" LLC and "Bodbe Marani" LLC—both of which are wholly owned by the university and function as supplementary sources of institutional revenue.

The university's diversified funding model enables effective and responsible financial risk management. Stable and consistent income streams support the implementation of various initiatives and academic programs as outlined in the institutional budget, thereby ensuring the sustainable and uninterrupted fulfillment of the university's strategic objectives.

Over the past five years, the university has demonstrated consistent revenue growth. In 2020, total revenue amounted to 4,324,004 GEL. A slight decline was observed in 2021, with revenue decreasing to 4,268,355 GEL. However, beginning in 2022, a sustained upward trajectory emerged: revenue increased to 5,090,171 GEL in 2022, followed by further growth in 2023 to 5,854,511 GEL. In 2024, revenue reached 7,279,098 GEL.

The university ensures the timely fulfillment of essential expenditures and the strategic management of human resources, serving as a clear indicator of its financial sustainability. Salaries for academic and administrative staff are disbursed punctually, and student scholarships, as well as honoraria for invited faculty members, are allocated on a regular basis in accordance with institutional obligations.

A notable aspect of the university's commitment to employee well-being is its participation in the co-financing of health insurance. Specifically, the institution assumes responsibility for covering 50% of each employee's health insurance premium. The annual cost of this initiative is approximately 78,000 GEL.

A comprehensive analysis of the university's financial statements confirms that the institution possesses sufficient and appropriately allocated financial resources, which are fully aligned with the objectives set forth in its strategic development and action plans. These strategic priorities include the introduction of new academic programs, professional development of academic staff, advancement of scientific research, internationalization, technological modernization, the enhancement of teaching and working environments, and the creation of a more inclusive educational setting. Through the allocation of appropriate financial support, the university effectively fosters development in each of these domains.

During the expert group's visit, the university was unable to present documentation confirming the completion of the external audit. The university clarified that the audit process was still in progress and had not yet been finalized.

The 2025 budget allocates sufficient financial resources to ensure the sustainability and continued advancement of the university's core functions, including teaching, research, creative and artistic activities, human resource development, and infrastructure enhancement.

The projected total revenue for the 2025 fiscal year is estimated at 8,606,725 GEL. This revenue is distributed across the following funding sources: Public grants: 63.8%; Tuition fees: 34.9%; Research grants: 0.7%; Other income: 0.6%

The total budget expenditures are allocated in accordance with the categories defined by the official budget classifier as follows: compensation for administrative, academic, and support personnel constitutes 47.88% of the overall budget; expenditures related to goods and services account for 50.17%; and investments in machinery and equipment represent 1.95%.

The university's budget allocates designated financial resources specifically to support scientific research and to ensure the effective operation and development of the library.

The funding of research projects is strategically aligned with the university's overarching priorities and objectives. Academic and research personnel are awarded internal research grants, while undergraduate, master's, and doctoral students receive support through young researcher grants. Additionally, the university finances research-related expenses, including participation in academic conferences and the publication of articles in international scientific journals.

The budget allocates funding for the acquisition of printed and digital books, periodicals, scientific journals, and specialized literature. The library provides comprehensive access to a broad spectrum of electronic resources, including prominent international scientific databases, thereby significantly supporting the research activities of both students and academic staff.

The university's budget planning process is a systematic and sequential mechanism designed to facilitate the effective allocation of financial resources in support of its strategic objectives. Oversight of the budget development process rests with the Chancellor, who is responsible for coordinating activities and ensuring proper implementation at every stage.

Budget planning commences in the second quarter of the calendar year with the preparation of budget request forms. Concurrently, in collaboration with the Logistics and Infrastructure Services, the university develops a detailed nomenclature of required material-technical resources and services, determines pricing, and drafts cost estimates related to infrastructure maintenance and development.

During the third quarter, the budget request forms are distributed to the university's structural units, which complete them by providing the necessary data and requirements. Approximately two months prior to the conclusion of the academic year, the Chancellor, in consultation with the Rector, Deans, and the Office of Quality Assurance and Strategic Development, determines the projected total revenue and operational expenditures for the forthcoming fiscal year.

Based on the completed forms submitted by the structural units, the Chancellor prepares the university's draft budget. This draft undergoes a thorough review in collaboration with the Rector, Deans of the university's schools, and heads of structural units to ensure an integrated and coordinated management process. The finalized budget draft is then submitted to the Director—Plenipotentiary Representative of the Founder—who formally approves the budget no later than December of the preceding year.

The budget planning process facilitates the targeted allocation of financial resources, enhances operational transparency, and supports the university's sustainable strategic development.

Overall, the university's established financial management and control framework ensures the execution of a lawful, transparent, and strategically aligned financial policy. This framework integrates efficient internal governance with mechanisms for independent external oversight.

○

Evidences/indicators

- University Budget
- Dynamics of the University Funding
- Financial Reports
- Rule for the Implementation of the Financial Management and Control System
- Procedures for Research Funding
- Rule on Workload and Remuneration for Affiliated, Academic, and Invited Staff
- Site-Visit Results

Recommendations:

1. It is recommended that the university ensure the completion of a financial audit by a duly authorized auditor or audit firm. Furthermore, the audit findings and the corresponding financial statements should be made publicly accessible to promote transparency and institutional accountability.

Suggestions:

N/A

Best Practices (if applicable):

N/A

Evaluation

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