



**NATIONAL CENTER FOR  
EDUCATIONAL QUALITY  
ENHANCEMENT**

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

**Informatics (Georgian) Master's  
Informatics (Georgia) Doctoral**

**LEPL Sokhumi State University**

**Evaluation Date(s): 23-24 October 2025**

**Report Submission Date: 18 December, 2025**

**Tbilisi**

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## Information on the Higher educational Institution

Name of Institution Indicating its Organizational Legal Form	LEPL Sokhumi State University
Identification Code of Institution	205224700
Type of the Institution	University

## Expert Panel Members

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## I. Information on the Cluster of Educational Programmes

	<b>Programme 1</b>	<b>Programme 2</b>
<b>Name of the educational programme In Georgia</b>	ინფორმის ტექნოლოგიები	ინფორმის ტექნოლოგიები
<b>Name of the educational programme In English</b>	<b>Informatics</b>	<b>Informatics</b>
<b>Level of higher education</b>	<b>Master's</b>	<b>Doctoral</b>
<b>Qualification to be awarded</b>	<b>VII</b>	<b>VIII</b>
<b>Name and code of the detailed field</b>	0613-Software and Applications Development and Analysis	0613-Software and Applications Development and Analysis
<b>Indication of the right to provide teaching of subject/subjects/group of subjects of the relevant level of general education<sup>1</sup></b>		
<b>Language of instruction</b>	<b>Georgian</b>	<b>Georgian</b>
<b>Number of ECTS credits</b>	120	60
<b>Programme Status (Accredited/Non-accredited/Conditionally Accredited/New/International Accreditation) Indicating Relevant Decision (number, date)</b>	Non Accredited Authorised Mode	Accredited

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

## II. Accreditation Report Executive Summary

### ▪ **General Information on the Cluster of Education Programmes**

The cluster includes two educational programs in Informatics at Sokhumi State University, launched in different years. The Master's Program in Informatics has been offered since 2015, originally accredited under the title "Computers and Networks Software" and has been operating in authorized mode since 2020. The Doctoral Program in Informatics began in 2018, evolving from an earlier doctoral program in "Mathematical Modeling and Computer Sciences" (accredited since 2013 and later divided into Applied Mathematics and Computer Sciences in 2018). The latest accreditation for the doctoral program was granted in January 2023.

Both programs fall within the field of software and applications development and analysis, focusing on the design and development of computer systems and computing environments. The qualifications awarded correspond to Bachelor, Master, and Doctor of Informatics levels. All program modifications are documented in self-evaluation materials and official records.

### ▪ **Overview of the Accreditation Site Visit**

The evaluation of the programs were conducted on October 23-24, 2025, by an expert panel approved by the order of the NCEQE. The evaluation format was physical, with Georgian experts and representatives from the institution attending on-site interviews, as well as the chair of the panel from abroad. Accreditation experts held a preliminary online meeting on October 20th, where they shared their initial findings based on the review of the programs, self-evaluation report, and relevant annexes, and outlined the details of the evaluation. The expert panel had the opportunity to meet all internal and external stakeholders of the programs and observe the material and technical resources. Namely, the expert panel conducted interviews with the university and faculty administration, the self-evaluation team, representatives from the quality assurance office, heads of programs grouped in clusters, academic and invited staff of the program, students and alumni of the program, and employers. The Accreditation visit was well-organized, and the working environment was collaborative and welcoming.

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

#### **Programme 1 (Informatics, Master)**

##### **Standard 1: Complies with Requirements**

- Substandard 1.1, 1.2,1.3, 1.5 Complies with Requirements
- Substandard 1.4 Substantially Complies with Requirements

##### **Standard 2: Complies with Requirements**

- Substandard 2.1, 2.3, 2.4 Complies with Requirements
- Substandard 2.2 Substantially Complies with Requirements

##### **Standard 3: Complies with Requirements**

- Substandard 3.1 Substantially Complies with Requirements
- Substandard 3.2 Complies with Requirements

**Standard 4: Substantially Complies with Requirements**

- Substandard 4.1, 4.4 Complies with Requirements
- Substandard 4.2, 4.3, 4.5 Substantially Complies with Requirements

**Standard 5: Complies with Requirements**

- Substandard 5.1 Substantially Complies with Requirements
- Substandard 5.2-5.3 Complies with Requirements

**Programme 2 (Informatics, PhD)**

**Standard 1: Complies with Requirements**

- Substandard 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5 Complies with Requirements
- Substandard 1.2 Substantially Complies with Requirements

**Standard 2: Substantially Complies with Requirements**

- Substandard 2.1, 2.2 Substantially Complies with Requirements
- Substandard 2.3, 2.4 Complies with Requirements

**Standard 3: Complies with Requirements**

- Substandard 3.1 Substantially Complies with Requirements
- Substandard 3.2 Complies with Requirements

**Standard 4: Substantially Complies with Requirements**

- Substandard 4.1, 4.4 Complies with Requirements
- Substandard 4.2, 4.3, 4.5 Substantially Complies with Requirements

**Standard 5: Complies with Requirements**

- Substandard 5.1 Substantial Complies with Requirements
- Substandard 5.2, 5.3 Complies with Requirements

- **Recommendations**

**Cluster**

**3.1. Cluster: Student Consulting and Support Services**

**It is further recommended to increase student participation in ongoing projects and exchange programs through the implementation of targeted informational and educational activities.**

**4.2. Cluster Qualification of Supervisors of Master's and Doctoral Students**

**Intensify supervisors' engagement in scientific publishing and collaborative research, including participation in international peer-reviewed journals, conferences, and joint projects.**

**4.3. Cluster Professional Development of Academic, Scientific and Invited Staff**

**Establish clear incentive and award mechanisms to encourage academic and scientific staff participation in research and publication activities, including financial rewards or recognition for papers published in international peer-reviewed journals.**

**4.5. Cluster: Programme/Faculty/School Budget and Programme Financial Sustainability**

**It is recommended that the university consider increasing budget allocations for laboratory equipment, student internships and publication costs in impact factor journals. This would enhance practical training opportunities, provide greater operational flexibility and strengthen the research output and international visibility of both the master's and doctoral programmes. It is recommended that staff actively seek additional funding from international partners and local businesses.**

**5.1. Cluster: Internal Quality Evaluation:**

**It is recommended that both programmes revise and align their learning outcomes with the National Qualifications Framework to ensure they correspond to the appropriate master's and doctoral levels. The Quality Assurance Service should actively support this process through consultations and methodological guidance to the programme staff.**

**Programme 1 (Informatics, Master)**

**1.4 Structure and Content of Educational Programme**

**It is recommended to add course pre-requisite and add Research method course.**

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

**It is recommended to strengthen the research component of the program.**

## Programme 2 (Informatics, PhD)

### 1.2 Programme Learning Outcomes

Change the verbs in outcome A and F to be aligned with level 8.

### 2.1. Programme Admission Preconditions

It is recommended that all necessary requirements be added to the program admission prerequisites and reflected on the website to make admission requirements more transparent for students.

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

It is recommended that the program include components that will further develop the student's research competencies for doctoral-level teaching.

## ▪ Suggestions

### 3.1. Cluster: Student Consulting and Support Services

It is suggested, university organize regular information sessions to raise student awareness of available financial support services and research funding opportunities, with particular attention to the needs of doctoral students.

### 4.1. Cluster: Human Resources

Increase the involvement of visiting professors from abroad, especially by engaging former university graduates currently working in foreign academic institutions.

### 4.4. Cluster: Material Resources

Continue upgrading and expanding the library's printed and electronic collections with up-to-date textbooks and references in Informatics to maintain alignment with international academic standards and strengthen the research base of both programmes.

- **Quantitative Data Analysis of the educational programme in accordance with the requirements of the accreditation standards, for example:**

- **Staff and Supervisors** - The Informatics Master's and Doctoral programmes at Sokhumi State University are implemented by qualified and experienced academic, scientific, and invited personnel.

For the Master's programme, 13 staff members are involved, including 10 affiliated academic personnel (1 Professor, 6 Associate Professors, 2 Assistant Professors, and 1 Assistant) and 3 invited lecturers holding doctoral degrees.

For the Doctoral programme, 9 staff members are engaged - 7 affiliated academic personnel (1 Professor, 4 Associate Professors, and 2 Assistant Professors) and 2 invited academic doctors.

Both programmes are adequately staffed to ensure sustainability, with a balanced ratio between affiliated and invited personnel. The number of supervisors - ten for each programme - is proportional to the number of enrolled students, allowing for effective mentoring and individual academic support.

All supervisors hold doctoral degrees in Informatics or closely related fields, meeting the sectoral and institutional requirements for postgraduate supervision. Workload schemes are updated each semester and include teaching, supervision, and consultation components, ensuring fair distribution of responsibilities and maintaining quality engagement with students.

Administrative and support staff are present in sufficient numbers and possess qualifications consistent with their duties, ensuring smooth academic and research processes.

- **Scientific/Research Indicators** - Academic and scientific staff involved in both programmes possess relevant professional experience and academic qualifications, yet their research output remains modest.

Only a limited number of peer-reviewed publications have been produced over the last five years, and participation in international conferences and collaborative research projects is occasional rather than systematic. While several staff members have contributed to institutional or applied projects, further integration into international academic networks is required to enhance visibility and scientific productivity.

In response, the University has initiated actions to strengthen research activity - including inviting external professors, supporting participation in conferences, and encouraging collaborative research.

A cluster-level recommendation has been issued: to intensify supervisors' engagement in scientific publishing and collaborative research, including participation in international peer-reviewed journals, conferences, and joint projects. Implementation of this recommendation is expected to positively impact both programmes' academic reputation and alignment with international standards.

- **Academic Staff Turnover Rate** - Over the past five years, the academic staff composition of the Informatics cluster has remained relatively stable.

No significant staff turnover has been observed among affiliated personnel, and the continuity of programme delivery has been maintained.

Occasional changes have occurred primarily due to retirement or temporary invited positions, but these have not affected programme sustainability.

The University continues to monitor staff workload and turnover indicators each academic year, ensuring that human resource planning supports consistent teaching quality and research supervision capacity.

- **Data on the Individuals Enrolled**

The programmes maintain a stable number of enrolled students - currently 12 Master's and 12 Doctoral students.

Admission procedures are transparent and consistent with Georgian legislation, ensuring fair access for applicants with relevant qualifications.

The ratio of students to supervisors remains optimal, allowing for close academic interaction and individualized research guidance.

Progression rates indicate that students successfully complete coursework and research milestones within the expected timeframe.

At the doctoral level, periodic formative assessments and thesis defense procedures ensure compliance with national and institutional standards.

- **Analysis of other quantitative data provided in the self-assessment and annexes.**

- **Brief Overview of the Best Practices (if applicable)<sup>2</sup>**

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

The University shares all our findings.

- **In case of re-accreditation, a brief overview of significant achievements and/or progress (if applicable) during the accreditation period, as well as a review of the fulfillment of the recommendations received during the previous evaluation process**

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<sup>2</sup> A practice that is exceptionally effective and that can serve as a benchmark or example for other educational programme/programmes.

Requirements set by the [Framework of Doctoral Education](#) are used during the accreditation evaluation of the doctoral educational programme together with the [accreditation standards](#) of higher educational programmes.

[Guidelines and Standards \(See link\)](#)

[Accreditation Standards for Higher Education Programmes](#)

[Guideline for Assessment of Accreditation Standards of Higher Education Programmes](#)

[Framework for Doctoral Education](#)

[Alignment of the Accreditation Standards and Framework for Doctoral Education](#)

[Assessment criteria](#)

**Definitions:**

**Recommendations** - should be considered by the HEI in order to comply the programme with the requirements of the standard

**Suggestions** - non-binding suggestions for the programme development

**Evaluation approaches for the accreditation experts:**

The components of the accreditation standards are evaluated using the following two approaches: cluster and if necessary individual evaluation.

**Evaluation Approaches:**

**Cluster evaluation:** Describe, analyse, and evaluate the compliance of educational programmes grouped in the cluster with the requirements of the corresponding component of the standard taking into account the general characteristics of the cluster.

**Individual evaluation:** If necessary, also you can indicate the information on each individual education programme, distinguished from the general and major characteristics of the education programmes in a cluster. Conducting an individual evaluation of the program is essential for doctoral-level educational programs, as well as for any other educational program that is subject to a recommendation and/or suggestion.

### III. Summary Table of Compliance of the programmes with the standards

№	Contents/ Standard	Programme 1 Informatics (Master)	Programme 2 Informatics (Doctoral)
1.	<b>Educational Programme Objectives, Learning Outcomes and their Compliance with the Programme</b>	<b>Complies</b>	<b>Complies</b>
1.1	<a href="#">Programme Objectives</a>	Complies	Complies
1.2	<a href="#">Programme Learning Outcomes</a>	Complies	Substantial Complies
1.3	<a href="#">Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes</a>	Complies	Complies
1.4	<a href="#">Structure and Content of Educational Programme</a>	Substantial Complies	Complies
1.5	<a href="#">Academic Course/Subject</a>	Complies	Complies
2.	<b>Methodology and Organization of Teaching, Adequacy of Evaluation of Programme Mastering</b>	<b>Complies</b>	<b>Substantial Complies</b>
2.1	<a href="#">Programme Admission Preconditions</a>	Complies	Substantial Complies

2.2	<a href="#">The Development of Practical, Scientific/Research/ Creative/ Performance and Transferable Skills</a>	Substantial Complies	Substantial Complies
2.3	<a href="#">Teaching and Learning Methods</a>	Complies	Complies
2.4	<a href="#">Student Evaluation</a>	Complies	Complies
3.	<b>Student Achievements and Individual Work with Them</b>	<b>Complies</b>	<b>Complies</b>
3.1	<a href="#">Student Consulting and Support Services</a>	Substantial Complies	Substantial Complies
3.2	<a href="#">Master's and Doctoral Student Supervision</a>	Complies	Complies
4	<b>Providing Teaching Resources</b>	<b>Substantially Complies</b>	<b>Substantially Complies</b>
4.1	<a href="#">Human Resources</a>	Complies	Complies
4.2	<a href="#">Qualification of Supervisors of Master's and Doctoral Student</a>	Substantially Complies	Substantially Complies
4.3	<a href="#">Professional Development of Academic, Scientific and Invited Staff</a>	Substantially Complies	Substantially Complies
4.4	<a href="#">Material Resources</a>	Complies	Complies
4.5	<a href="#">Programme/Faculty/School Budget and</a>	Substantial Complies	Substantial Complies

	<a href="#">Programme Financial Sustainability</a>		
5	<b>5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities</b>	<b>Complies</b>	<b>Complies</b>
5.1	<a href="#">Internal Quality Evaluation</a>	Substantial Complies	Substantial Complies
5.2	<a href="#">External Quality Evaluation</a>	Complies	Complies
5.3	<a href="#">Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review</a>	Complies	Complies

## IV. Compliance of the Programme with Accreditation Standards

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

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

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

#### 1.1 Programme Objectives

##### Accreditation standards indicators

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

##### PhD programme indicators

- The goals of the PhD educational programme are focused on the creation of new knowledge and/or development of existing one, promotion of knowledge realization and dissemination through the implementation of original, modern and innovative researches;
- The artistic-creative doctoral educational programme is a doctoral educational programme based on performing and/or creative practice, the goal of which is to create an original project of international level with a research component, which clearly shows the independent creative vision of the doctoral student, demonstrates his/her professional field competences and new knowledge obtained as a result of creative research;
- The goal of the doctoral program is to promote the preparation of doctoral students for independent research and scientific activities by enhancing research skills, as well as cooperation using interdisciplinary approaches, taking into account the research topic;
- The goals of the doctoral educational programme are in line with the implementation strategy of the scientific-research/creative research activities of the HEI/basic educational.

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

##### Cluster evaluation

##### Description and Analysis of Cluster

The Master's and Doctoral programs in Informatics are designed in alignment with the national Qualifications Framework and corresponding level benchmarks. Their objectives reflect the knowledge, skills, and competencies graduates need to contribute to both the field of Informatics and society. The programs aim to develop professionals capable of adapting quickly to dynamic, multicultural environments while fostering appropriate professional attitudes. Their goals are realistic and consistent with the institutional mission, supported by the use of

modern teaching methods, internationalization, and a focus on preparing competitive specialists who meet both local and international labor market demands and uphold national and universal values.

**Individual evaluation** – An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

### **Description and Analysis – Programme 1 (Master in Informatics, VII)<sup>3</sup>**

The Master’s Program in Informatics at Sokhumi State University demonstrates a level of compliance with the established criteria for program objectives. The program’s goals are clearly articulated, realistic, and achievable, presenting a coherent vision that aligns with the overall mission and goals of the university. They are directed toward preparing qualified and competitive specialists who possess the intellectual and professional capacities required to meet the evolving demands of the informatics field. The objectives emphasize not only technical proficiency but also continuous professional growth, which reflects a forward-looking and sustainable approach to graduate education.

In terms of alignment with the field and level of study, the program objectives are appropriately designed for the Master’s level, emphasizing deep and systematic knowledge in key areas of informatics such as data analysis, modern algorithms, programming, deep learning, databases, and cybersecurity. This focus demonstrates a clear understanding of the specialization and analytical depth expected at the second cycle of higher education. The goals also promote the development of independent decision-making, problem-solving, and research abilities, which are central to graduate-level education and advanced professional practice.

The program’s objectives effectively describe the knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of its graduates. Students are prepared to conduct independent research, apply modern technological methods, and generate innovative products or services. Additionally, the objectives highlight the importance of ethical practice and teamwork, reflecting a balanced emphasis on both technical excellence and professional responsibility. This alignment with competency-based education ensures that graduates possess the intellectual, methodological, and social capabilities necessary for success in a dynamic and interdisciplinary environment.

Moreover, the program’s goals contribute meaningfully to the development of the informatics field and society at large. By fostering innovation and the capacity to create or improve technological processes, the program supports the broader objectives of advancing digital transformation, technological innovation, and ethical professionalism. The emphasis on managing processes in both sectoral and interdisciplinary contexts further illustrates the program’s contribution to social and economic development.

The consistency between the program’s objectives and the university’s mission is also evident. The program implicitly acknowledges the relevance of labor market trends. The current formulation suggests awareness of global trends in informatics—particularly in areas like data

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<sup>3</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

science and cybersecurity. Similarly, the dimension of internationalization is indirectly addressed.

Finally, the objectives appear transparent and accessible, ensuring that faculty, students, and external partners understand the intended outcomes of the program.

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (PhD in Informatics, VIII)<sup>4</sup>**

The Doctoral Program in Informatics at Sokhumi State University demonstrates alignment with the general PhD programme objective indicators, showing coherence between its goals, the institution's mission, and national doctoral-level expectations.

The program's objectives are clearly formulated and realistic, emphasizing both the advancement and dissemination of new knowledge through innovative research. They are consistent with the overarching aim of doctoral education—to cultivate independent researchers capable of contributing original insights and advancing their academic field. By focusing on the expansion of knowledge in computer science and the application of analytical and innovative research methods, the program aligns directly with the core indicator that doctoral studies must generate or extend knowledge within a defined area. The stated focus on computer-based solutions to interdisciplinary scientific problems further underscores this commitment to innovation and societal relevance.

The program also adheres to the doctoral-level expectation of preparing candidates for independent research and scholarly activity. It highlights the development of research skills, analytical capacity, and familiarity with modern technologies and interdisciplinary methods. This reflects a clear understanding of the requirement that PhD programs foster autonomy in research, intellectual maturity, and the ability to formulate and investigate complex scientific questions. The program's commitment to "high responsibility and principles of academic integrity" also indicates attention to ethical and professional standards, a key element of doctoral-level formation.

Furthermore, the goal of training highly qualified specialists, including future academic staff and researchers, fits the broader mission of doctoral education as a driver of human capital development and knowledge transfer. By preparing graduates who can both conduct and supervise scientific research, the program contributes to the university's mission and the national objective of strengthening academic and research capacity. The inclusion of educational outcomes for future high school teachers extends the program's societal impact, linking advanced research training with the development of science education and knowledge dissemination.

Through the preparation of qualified researchers and educators, the program supports publication, participation in international conferences, or collaborative research dissemination.

In summary, the Doctoral Program in Informatics at Sokhumi State University is compliant with the established indicators for PhD program objectives. Its goals are clear, achievable, and

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<sup>4</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

well-aligned with the mission of the institution and the strategic purpose of doctoral education—to produce researchers who can create, apply, and disseminate new knowledge.

### Evidences/Indicators

- Master's and Doctoral Programs in Informatics and Syllabus;
- University Mission;
- University Charter;
- Self-Evaluation Report of the Cluster of Higher Education Programmes | 11
- Regulations of the Faculty of Natural Sciences, Mathematics, Technology and Pharmacy
- Benchmarks conducted, foreign analogues, feedback, peer reviews;
- Analysis of the labor market and employer requirements;
- Survey results.
- Website (sou.edu.ge)
- Interview

<b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	<b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
<b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b>		
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>		
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>		

### Evaluation <sup>5</sup>

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

<b>Component</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>1.1 - Programme Objectives</b>	

<sup>5</sup> Evaluation is performed for each programme separately.

Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)	Complies
Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)	Complies

## 1.2 Programme Learning Outcomes

### Accreditation standards indicators

➤The learning outcomes of the programme are logically related to the programme objectives and the specificity of the field of study.

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

### PHD Programme indicators

- The learning outcomes of the doctoral educational programme are logically related to the goals of the educational programme and correspond to the classifier of the 8th level of qualification;
- The results of the doctoral thesis, creative/performing project at the local and/or international level have scientific-research/creative-research significance, are innovative and have practical/theoretical value.

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

### Cluster evaluation

#### Description and Analysis of Cluster

The learning outcomes of the Master's and Doctoral Programs in Informatics are coherently aligned with the goals of each program, the field's characteristics, and the qualifications awarded. They clearly define the knowledge, skills, and autonomy/responsibility expected at each study level, some changes is required for the PhD program (see below), and are formulated to be measurable, attainable, and realistic. Moreover, they correspond to the professional employment requirements of program graduates. The outcomes were developed through a collaborative process involving all key stakeholders, including academic and invited staff, students, graduates, and employers.

**Individual evaluation** - An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

#### Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Master in Informatics, VII)<sup>6</sup>

The learning outcomes of the Master's Program in Informatics demonstrate a compliance with the standard. Overall, they reflect a coherent structure that integrates knowledge, skills, and responsibility/autonomy in a way consistent with the aims, level, and field of the program. The outcomes (A–K) collectively express the graduate's ability to master advanced theoretical

<sup>6</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

knowledge, apply research and innovation in informatics, and demonstrate leadership and ethical responsibility in complex ICT environments.

First, the learning outcomes clearly correspond to the aims and content of the program. They encompass the full scope of knowledge, practical skills, and autonomous professional competencies expected from a Master's graduate. Outcomes A through F focus on mastery of informatics concepts, problem-solving, research methods, and technological innovation. Outcomes G through K emphasize applied research, ethical communication, coordination in multidisciplinary settings, and self-directed professional development. Collectively, they reflect the program's aim to produce graduates capable of contributing both to academic research and to the practical development of the ICT sector. The alignment between outcomes and program objective is aligned and comprehensive.

In terms of measurability, achievability, and realism, the outcomes are largely expressed using clear and observable verbs such as describes, develops, implements, researches, creates, and presents. These formulations enable objective assessment of student achievement through coursework, projects, and the master's thesis. As currently written, the outcomes are realistic and achievable within the program duration and resource structure.

Regarding consistency with the appropriate qualification level, the outcomes correspond well to the Georgian National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 7 descriptors. They demonstrate the expected depth of theoretical understanding, the capacity for independent research, and the ability to solve complex, unfamiliar problems—hallmarks of master's-level education. Outcomes such as E, G, and K particularly illustrate autonomy in research and innovation, while outcomes I and J show advanced professional responsibility and leadership within a team or organization. The program therefore is in compliance with the qualification-level expectations.

The outcomes are also aligned with the sectoral benchmarks of Informatics. They incorporate key components found in ICT sectoral descriptors: integration of research, interdisciplinarity, ethical responsibility, and technological innovation.

The program demonstrates clear consistency with employment demands and opportunities for further study. Many of the outcomes—particularly D, F, and G—address innovation, software development, and technology transfer, which are highly valued in both academic and industrial settings. Moreover, outcomes H, I, and J emphasize communication, teamwork, and lifelong learning, ensuring that graduates are prepared not only for immediate employment but also for continued professional and academic development, including doctoral studies. In this sense, the learning outcomes support both employability and academic progression, as required by the standard.

The outcomes are further consistent with the peculiarities of the field of Informatics and labor market needs. They focus on current ICT priorities such as interdisciplinary collaboration, ethical regulation of software processes, and the development of novel technological solutions. These competencies directly correspond to the skills sought in Georgia's growing ICT labor market and align with international digital transformation trends. The field relevance of the outcomes is therefore appropriately contextualized.

Concerning stakeholder involvement, the interview showed evidence that their development involved diverse stakeholders—academic staff, students, graduates, and employers.

In terms of coherence within the educational cluster, the Master's outcomes represent a clear progression from the expected competencies of a Bachelor's program and a preparatory stage for PhD-level research. They display a higher degree of complexity, autonomy, and originality in problem-solving, consistent with the second cycle of higher education..

Finally, the learning outcomes is communicated to stakeholders. In summary, the Master's Program in Informatics demonstrates compliance with the criteria for program learning outcomes.

### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (PhD in Informatics, VIII)<sup>7</sup>**

The Doctoral Program in Informatics demonstrates a coherent alignment with the standards for the formulation and implementation of learning outcomes. The program's outcomes (A–G) articulate the expected competencies of a doctoral graduate in terms of advanced knowledge, research autonomy, critical analysis, and contribution to scientific advancement. Overall, they reflect a mature structure consistent with the 8th level of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and with the specific expectations for doctoral programs, including the generation of new knowledge and international-level research significance, except for outcome A and F, where "Possesses...." is passive and more suited to Level 7, we recommend to change it to "creates or extends or integrates", and "Participates..." to be changed to "supervises or mentors or contributes to development", because "Participates" signals engagement, not leadership. At Level 8, candidates should lead or defend discussions.

The doctoral learning outcomes are clearly and logically related to the overarching goals of the program, which aim to prepare highly qualified researchers and innovators capable of expanding the frontiers of informatics. Outcomes A, B, and C demonstrate this logical linkage by emphasizing mastery of cutting-edge knowledge, rethinking existing paradigms, and conducting independent research using advanced analytical approaches. These outcomes express the essence of doctoral education—moving beyond knowledge application to knowledge creation. The outcomes align directly with the mission of cultivating independent researchers and contributors to the scientific field. Collectively, these outcomes align fully with Level 8, except what we mentioned previously, establishing both intellectual independence and international research capability.

The outcomes employ clear, measurable, achievable, and observable verbs such as *possesses*, *recognizes*, *plans*, *implements*, *analyzes*, *presents*, and *adheres*, which facilitate measurable assessment through research milestones, dissertation defense, publication records, and teaching activities. Moreover, the inclusion of phrases like "*reflected in internationally referenced publications*" (Outcome C) ensures that the expected achievements are concrete and verifiable. While doctoral outcomes are inherently broad, they remain realistic and attainable within a structured doctoral framework that includes research supervision, publication requirements, and academic engagement.

The EQE standard specifies that the results of a doctoral thesis or creative project must demonstrate scientific significance, innovation, and theoretical/practical value at the local or international level. The Informatics program explicitly integrates this requirement in Outcome

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<sup>7</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

C, which requires that research outcomes be “reflected in internationally referenced publications.” This directly addresses the expectation of international scholarly recognition. Outcomes A and G also reinforce innovation and new knowledge creation, ensuring that the thesis embodies both theoretical advancement and practical applicability. Hence, the program satisfies this doctoral-specific requirement, emphasizing the global and innovative character of research output.

The outcomes are rooted in the epistemology and methodology of the Informatics discipline. These aspects align with the professional and academic labor market for PhD graduates, who are expected to lead research, teach in universities, and direct innovation in the ICT sector. The outcomes thus exhibit high field relevance and ensure employability within both academia and advanced research-intensive industries. Outcome G explicitly emphasizes unwavering adherence to the principles of academic integrity, which is central to EQE’s expectation for doctoral education. This inclusion not only fulfills a formal compliance requirement but also demonstrates an ethical and professional orientation consistent with international research standards. By embedding integrity, transparency, and responsibility within the outcomes, the program affirms its alignment with EQE’s emphasis on ethical research practice.

The doctoral outcomes represent a clear progression from the Master’s level outcomes within the same cluster. While the Master’s program emphasizes research application and innovation, the Doctoral program advances toward independent knowledge creation. The interviews showed a clear involvement of different stakeholders of the program in this process.

**Evidences/Indicators**

- Master's degree program in "Informatics", Doctoral degree program in "Informatics" and syllabi;
- Map of program goals and learning outcomes;
- Documentation (minutes) confirming the participation of interested parties involved in the
- development of program learning outcomes;
- Report on the assessment of learning outcomes of the Quality Assurance Service of the Faculty of
- Natural Sciences, Mathematics, Technology and Pharmacy;
- Benchmarks, foreign analogues, reviews, peer reviews;
- Analysis of labor market and employer requirements;
- Interviews

<b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster.	<b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster.
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	Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
<b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b>		
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>		
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>	Change the verbs in outcome A and F to be aligned with level 8.	

### Evaluation <sup>8</sup>

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component <b>1.2 - Programme Learning Outcomes</b>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)	Complies
Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)	Substantial Complies

### 1.3 Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes

#### Accreditation standards indicators

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

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

##### Cluster evaluation

##### Description and Analysis of Cluster

The university's mechanism demonstrates strong alignment with the criterion requiring consistent and transparent evaluation of PLOs with appropriate periodicity. It explicitly defines the timing of evaluations:

- Direct methods at the end of each course (same semester), and
- Indirect methods one year after completion of the program (3rd year for Master's; 4th year for Doctoral).

<sup>8</sup> Evaluation is performed for each programme separately.

This cyclical and structured approach ensures periodic review, reflecting transparency and consistency in the evaluation process. Thus, full compliance is evident for this criterion.

The mechanism accounts for educational level differences between Master's and Doctoral programs, acknowledging the distinct timing and methodological requirements for each. It further integrates field-specific methods through a combination of course-based assessments, research outputs, and thesis evaluations. This indicates compliance with the requirement that periodicity and evaluation systems consider field and level characteristics.

The mechanism outlines a balanced use of direct (projects, exams, essays, presentations, qualification papers) and indirect (surveys of graduates, employers, self-assessments) evaluation methods. This demonstrates compliance with the EQE requirement for a multi-method approach to determine student achievement of PLOs. The mechanism also links these methods to specific program stages, ensuring methodological validity and reliability.

The university's mechanism clearly includes the active involvement of employers, alumni, and other external stakeholders through indirect evaluation tools such as surveys. This engagement occurs primarily at post-completion stages, ensuring the authenticity of feedback on employability and professional preparedness. This practice fully satisfies the stakeholder engagement criterion.

Each PLO is associated with defined target indicators (percentages, score limits, deviation thresholds) and responsible persons for monitoring and comparison with benchmarks. The mechanism also provides for annual comparisons and analysis of performance trends. These structured indicators and control mechanisms signify clear compliance with the requirement for benchmark-based monitoring and periodic comparison.

The document highlights that academic and invited staff are familiar with the evaluation methods and that trainings and informational meetings are conducted to develop staff capacity in designing, assessing, and analyzing PLOs. The mechanism thus fulfills the criterion requiring both staff competence and institutional support for skill development in learning outcomes assessment.

The evaluation process is described as public and accessible to all interested parties, and students receive feedback on the extent to which they have achieved PLOs. The Quality Assurance Service periodically organizes open meetings and methodological consultations. These practices demonstrate compliance with the transparency requirement, ensuring stakeholder awareness of evaluation analyses and results.

The mechanism comprehensively describes the feedback loop linking assessment results to program improvement. It lists multiple improvement dimensions:

- Updating learning outcomes and course content,
- Adjusting credits or prerequisites,
- Modifying assessment systems or teaching methods,

- Conducting benchmarking and peer reviews, and
- Analyzing labor market trends and graduate employment rates.

This iterative improvement model reflects compliance with the final criterion, ensuring that PLO evaluation outcomes are effectively used to enhance program quality and relevance.

The mechanism specifies electronic tools (STUDLAB database), assessment plans, and monitoring reports as instruments for data collection and analysis. These tools strengthen traceability and reliability of evidence, supporting accreditation and internal quality audits. The inclusion of quantitative indicators such as program completion rates and graduate employment further reinforces the robustness of the evaluation framework.

**Individual evaluation** – An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

#### **Description and Analysis – Programme 1 (Master in Informatics, VII)<sup>9</sup>**

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the doctoral level educational programme, or the educational program for which a recommendation and/or **suggestion** is issued, with the requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

#### **Description and Analysis – Programme 1 (PhD in Informatics, VIII)<sup>10</sup>**

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the doctoral level educational programme, or the educational program for which a recommendation and/or **suggestion** is issued, with the requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

#### **Evidences/Indicators**

- University learning outcomes assessment mechanism;
- Educational programs grouped in clusters and their learning outcomes assessment plans;

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<sup>9</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

<sup>10</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

- Results and analysis of learning outcomes assessment of the faculties of natural sciences, mathematics, technology and pharmacy;
- Curriculum maps;
- Interviews

<b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	<b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
<b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b>		
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>		
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>		

#### Evaluation <sup>11</sup>

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

<b>Component</b> <b>1.3- Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>	Complies
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>	Complies

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

##### Accreditation standards indicators

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

##### PHD Programme indicators

- The basis for the development of the doctoral educational programme is the research potential of the higher education institution, the existence of previous scientific - research activity experience in the relevant direction, successful practice and research results;

<sup>11</sup> Evaluation is performed for each programme separately.

- The doctoral educational programme contributes to the development of scientific-research activities at the HEI and the formation of field-related, scientific collaboration and professional connections;
- The contents of the doctoral educational programme, depending on the peculiarities of the study area, ensures the intellectual, social, cultural, economic, technological, industrial and/or other types development of science/field, state and/or society;
- The teaching component of the doctoral educational programme contributes to the implementation of the scientific-research component of the doctoral student in an appropriate degree through the development of transferable skills and/or by deepening the knowledge of the doctoral student on current issues/trends in the field. It also provides methodological guidelines for the proper planning and implementation of the research component;
- The content of the doctoral educational programme leads to the formation of important innovative approaches, that will contribute to the development of cooperation between scientific fields using interdisciplinary approaches, taking into account the specifics of the research field;
- The doctoral education programme promotes the development of such competences and transferable skills for doctoral students as: planning and implementation of research-scientific activities, finding and administering grants, project management, planning and implementation of creative/performing projects, engaging into the technological transfer through implementation of the research outcomes, leadership, supervision, career development planning, critical analysis of scientific literature, data analysis, teaching (pedagogical skills), expressing opinions in popular scientific language, etc.;
- To effectively implement the research component of the doctoral education programme, the HEI has developed: the mechanism for selecting and changing the research topic and implementing/presenting the scientific-research component, which, following the research field/fields of the educational programme and taking into account the interests of the doctoral students, ensures that the scientific-research component is performed by the doctoral student at an appropriate level, taking into account the adherence of academic integrity mechanisms;
- The individual research plan of the doctoral student takes into account - research aim, the structure of the doctoral thesis and the estimated schedule/timetable of the research implementation, research methodology and so on. The research plan supports the doctoral student to conduct his/her activities in accordance with the research topic and to complete the doctoral thesis within the time limit established by the law;
- The ethical norms of scientific-research activity are adhered to in the HEI, which take into account the local and international standards of research ethics in the relevant field.

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

#### **Cluster evaluation**

##### **Description and Analysis of Cluster**

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

**Individual evaluation** – An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Master in Informatics, VII)<sup>12</sup>**

The program demonstrates compliance with the EQE requirement that it be designed in accordance with the HEI's internal methodology and national legislation. The program comprises 120 ECTS credits over 4 semesters (2 years), which is consistent with the second cycle (Master's level) of higher education in Georgia and the European Higher Education Area. The courses are advanced in nature (e.g., *Deep Learning*, *Applied Cybersecurity*, *Advanced Database Management*), demonstrating appropriate complexity and depth for graduate study. The program links content and structure to the intended qualification (Master's in Informatics). It aims to develop graduates capable of using, implementing, building, developing, and managing computer-based systems, software, and hardware. This is consistent with sectoral benchmarks for Informatics and ensures that the structure supports the attainment of the program learning outcomes (PLOs) through compulsory and elective components. The course listing shows a logical and sequential organization, beginning with foundational advanced courses (Comparative Analysis of Object-Oriented Languages, Randomized Algorithms) and progressing toward specialized and integrative courses (Applied Cybersecurity, Deep Learning, Master's Thesis). But the curriculum doesn't have course pre-requisite except for the course "COMP M205-1". We recommend to add pre-requisite, for example COMP M201-1 must have pre-requisite COMP M201, and COMP M214 must have pre-requisite COMP M203. The inclusion of courses such as Applied Cybersecurity, Latest Technologies in Software Systems Development, and Mobile-based Programming highlights the program's individual profile, integrating both classical informatics foundations and emerging ICT areas. The program's emphasis on the informatization of society and national information resource development reflects contextual relevance and distinct institutional focus.

The program description indicates the inclusion of modern teaching/learning methods and new research findings in its design. Advanced-level courses (e.g., Deep Learning, Randomized Algorithms) inherently require engagement with current research trends. The Master's Thesis (30 ECTS) further ensures a structured research component consistent with EQE expectations for scientific-research integration. But the curriculum doesn't have a "Research method" course. We recommend that program add this course to prepare student for the thesis and other courses as well. The structure ensures coherence between the program-level learning outcomes and the learning outcomes of individual courses. It specifies that general and sectoral outcomes are determined by the combination of learning outcomes reflected in individual course syllabi, confirming horizontal and vertical alignment across components.

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (PhD in Informatics, VIII)<sup>13</sup>**

The program clearly states that it is grounded in the research potential of the Faculty of Natural Sciences, Mathematics, Technology, and Pharmacy and implemented through the Informatics

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<sup>12</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

<sup>13</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

Department. It relies on experienced academic staff actively engaged in research and possessing extensive publication records. Moreover, the scientific-research component includes diverse thematic directions — AI, NLP, software systems, ICT in business and education, and information security — demonstrating existing institutional capacity and experience in informatics research. The program fosters scientific collaboration through seminars, assistantships, and doctoral supervision where PhD students assist professors and participate in seminars with interdisciplinary topics. The inclusion of international visiting professors (e.g., from Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland) enhances the network of research cooperation. The program objectives explicitly refer to technological, industrial, and scientific development through applied informatics and ICT-driven innovation. The program emphasizes computer-based solutions for real-world problems and ICT applications in various fields (education, business, language processing, etc.)

The 60-credit educational component includes Academic Writing (with Research Component), Modern Teaching Methods, Seminars, and Assistantship to a Professor, all of which are methodologically aligned to support the research component. These courses explicitly prepare students in research methodology, teaching competence, and scientific communication—directly strengthening the dissertation process. The doctoral program encourages interdisciplinary applications of ICT across multiple domains — linguistics (NLP), business, education, and software engineering. The inclusion of AI, neural networks, and natural language processing ensures exposure to cross-domain innovation.

The program provides structured opportunities for skill development:

- Assistantship to a Professor - develops teaching and mentoring ability.
- Seminars - foster scientific communication and analytical debate.
- Academic Writing - enhances scholarly writing and critical analysis.

The program outlines a clear scientific-research component, supervised by qualified professors, and includes structured evaluation and re-submission mechanisms for the dissertation. The grading system for dissertation defense (Summa cum Laude - Sub omni canone) demonstrates transparency and quality control. The program defines an individual research plan implicitly through course mappings and dissertation stages and timeline. The program refers to academic integrity and emphasizes adherence to research quality standards and supervision mechanisms, explicit mention of research ethics policies (e.g., plagiarism, data privacy, consent procedures).

### **Evidences/Indicators**

- Educational programs and syllabi;
- Methodology for planning, developing and implementing a doctoral program, approved by the
- Methodology for planning, developing and implementing a master's program, approved by the
- Minimum standard for doctoral studies, approved by the Academic Council;

- Minimum standard for master's studies, approved by the Academic Council.
- SSU website: [www.sou.edu.ge](http://www.sou.edu.ge)
- Interviews

<b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	<b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
<b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b>		
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>	-add pre-requisite -add Research method course.	
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>		

#### Evaluation <sup>14</sup>

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

<b>Component</b> <b>1.4 - Structure and Content of Educational Programme</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>	Substantial Complies
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>	Complies

### 1.5. Academic Course/Subject

#### Accreditation standards indicators

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

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

#### Cluster evaluation

#### Description and Analysis of Cluster

<sup>14</sup> Evaluation is performed for each programme separately.

The reviewed syllabi from Sokhumi State University's Informatics programs demonstrate full compliance with the EQE Georgia standards for Academic Course/Subject criteria. Each course exhibits a well-structured relationship between its objectives, content, learning outcomes, and evaluation. The balance between contact and independent hours reflects the complexity and academic depth of the subjects. Assessment systems are transparent, diversified, and outcome-based, ensuring validity and fairness. Moreover, the literature and learning resources are current and internationally recognized, confirming alignment with global academic and research developments in Informatics.

All reviewed syllabi explicitly articulate course-level learning outcomes that reflect both field-specific competencies and research-oriented skills expected from Informatics students at corresponding levels.

For instance:

- Doctoral courses such as *Academic Writing with Research Methods* and *Theory of Programming and its Application* demonstrate strong integration with research competence, academic ethics, analytical reasoning, and independent inquiry, directly supporting programme learning outcomes related to scientific research and advanced methodological application
- Master's courses (*Deep Learning*, *Applied Cybersecurity*, *Mobile-based Programming*, *Randomized Algorithms*) focus on practical implementation, analytical modeling, and interdisciplinary integration, aligning with advanced Informatics program objectives emphasizing applied research and professional readiness

Each syllabus includes detailed week-by-week breakdowns that logically correspond to stated outcomes.

Examples:

- *Deep Learning* includes topics like CNNs, RNNs, Transformers, GANs, and optimization methods, directly enabling outcomes such as “analyze, train, and optimize deep neural networks”.
- *Applied Cybersecurity* covers threat analysis, cryptography (classical to neural), and forensics—directly reflecting outcomes in system protection and applied research.
- *Formal Languages and Grammars* and *Theory of Programming* integrate formal theory, computation models, and implementation—supporting learning outcomes in analytical modeling and algorithmic reasoning.
- *Academic Writing with Research Methods* explicitly ties lecture topics (literature review, methodology design, ethical considerations) to its outcomes on academic integrity and research process management

Each syllabus assigns 6 ECTS (150 hours), following consistent distribution norms:

- Contact hours: typically 35–50 (lectures, labs, group work)
- Independent work: 100–115 hours
- Assessment components: 5 hours (midterm, final, project).

This ratio aligns with European workload standards and ensures enough independent research or programming practice time for Informatics courses.

Doctoral courses include relatively more independent research (115 hours, 35 contact), while Master's courses balance labs and projects (50 contact, 100 independent) — showing contextual adaptation to learning level and methodology.

All syllabi include detailed 100-point assessment systems and rubrics, covering multiple dimensions:

- Continuous assessment: participation, quizzes, laboratory or project work.
- Midterm and final exams with open questions, practical tasks, and oral project defense.
- Transparent rubrics defining full/partial/no credit for specific task completion (e.g., accuracy, reasoning, completeness).

Such diversified evaluation ensures each outcome (knowledge, skills, responsibility/autonomy) is measured.

Examples:

- *Deep Learning* and *Applied Cybersecurity* use written + project-based evaluation to assess both theoretical mastery and applied modeling.
- *Theory of Programming* and *Formal Languages* use written, control, and discussion-based evaluations, covering analytical reasoning and practical implementation.
- *Academic Writing* applies quizzes, labs, and projects that directly evaluate research design and ethics understanding

Each syllabus lists current and authoritative literature consistent with international academic standards:

- *Deep Learning* uses 2023–2025 publications (Springer, Cornell University).
- *Applied Cybersecurity* includes up-to-date NIST and post-quantum cryptography references (Boneh & Shoup 2020; NIST PQC project).
- *Formal Languages and Grammars* (Jurafsky & Martin 2023) and *Theory of Programming* (MIT Press 2004) demonstrate appropriate depth and modern scope for doctoral-level theoretical courses.

- *Academic Writing* uses Creswell (2018) and Maxwell (2005), leading references for research design.

The university provides institutional-level guarantees:

- Student surveys conducted regularly with evidence of improving trends.
- Academic and invited staff collaboratively review syllabi and adjust teaching methods based on feedback.
- Progressive structure: courses build from general to specific competencies across semesters and levels.
- Library access (Georgian + foreign literature, international e-libraries) ensures resource availability.

This institutional framework reinforces continuous improvement and stakeholder engagement, satisfying EQE expectations. All are supported by additional materials (case studies, open-source datasets, international library access) as described by the university's statement of practice.

In summary, the Informatics cluster at SSU satisfies all EQE academic course-level standards, with evidence of progressive, research-informed, and student-centered design across Master's and Doctoral programs.

**Individual evaluation** - An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Master in Informatics, VII)<sup>15</sup>**

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the doctoral level educational programme, or the educational program for which a recommendation and/or **suggestion** is issued, with the requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (PhD in Informatics, VIII)<sup>16</sup>**

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the doctoral level educational programme, or the educational program for which a recommendation and/or **suggestion** is issued, with the requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

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<sup>15</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

<sup>16</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

## Evidences/Indicators

- Informatics Master's Program and Syllabus;
- Informatics Doctoral Program and Syllabus;
- Student Survey Results;
- Library
- SSU Electronic Library.
- Interviews

<b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	<b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
<b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b>		
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>		
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>		

## Evaluation <sup>17</sup>

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

<b>Component 1.5 - Academic Course/Subject</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)	Complies
Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)	Complies

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

### Accreditation standards indicators

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

<sup>17</sup> Evaluation is performed for each programme separately.

## 2.1 Programme Admission Preconditions

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

### PHD Programme indicators

- The admission requirements of the doctoral programme are public, they include information on the programme, admission deadlines and documentation to be submitted, as well as information on the research interests of supervisors and support/encouragement mechanisms for studies conducted by doctoral students and other information;
- Admission requirements of the doctoral programme takes into consideration an assessment of the applicants' experience and capabilities, required for successful completion of the doctoral programme.
- When enrolling in the doctoral education programme, the strategy of the scientific research/creative research activity of the HEI/basic educational unit is also taken into account;
- Admission of doctoral students to the doctoral educational programme is ensured on a commission basis;
- The HEI defines the rules for determining the composition, activities, and decision-making of the committee involved in the admission process of the doctoral education programme, which ensures the evaluation of the people wishing to be enrolled in the programme - in compliance with the principles of objectivity, fairness, and transparency;
- A candidate wishing to enroll in a doctoral educational programme shall submit a research/creative research thesis/project to the Commission in accordance with the rules established by the HEI. A candidate is also required to have a previous paper/publication in the relevant field and/or to participate in scientific-research projects and events and/or to have at least 2 years of work experience in the relevant field. The established requirements should provide an opportunity to evaluate the candidate's research skills;
- At the time of admission to the doctoral educational programme, the level of foreign language proficiency is determined. Taking into account the specifics of the field, the person in the programme must have knowledge of the English language at least B2 level or knowledge of one of the other Western European foreign languages at least B2 level and English language knowledge at least B1 level;
- Admission to the doctoral education programme takes into account the human, financial, and research resources available at the HEI, including the ratio of doctoral supervisors to doctoral students. Also, the results of the analysis on the timely completion of the programme by the doctoral students enrolled will be taken into account by the HEI.

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

#### Cluster evaluation

##### Description and Analysis of Cluster

Regarding admission to clustered programs, the university follows generally accepted procedures. The admission requirements are transparent, comply with Georgian legislation, reflect the specifics of the program, and ensure the enrollment of individuals who possess the

knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to successfully complete the program. These requirements are accessible to any interested party.

The prerequisites and procedures for admission to educational programs are outlined in the program and published on the university's website.

The university has a mechanism and methodology for planning the student contingent. The main indicators for determining the number of student contingents for educational programs are:

1. Quantitative data on the academic/affiliated/invited/scientific/foreign/administrative/support personnel involved in the program;
2. Ratios in relation to the personnel involved in the program. Including the ratio of supervisors and students in master's and doctoral programs;
3. Quantitative data on the contingent enrolled in the program over the past five years, as well as the employment rate/employment rate by specialty, the rate of continuation of studies at the next level, etc.
4. Material and technical resources.

The main target indicators for planning the student contingent are: 1 professor (professor, associate, assistant professor, assistant) per 12 - 15 students; Average study space per student: 2-2.5 square meters; Computer equipment: 1 computer per 12 students on average.

**Individual evaluation** - An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Informatics, Master)**

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the doctoral level educational programme, or the educational program for which a recommendation and/or suggestion is issued, with the requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

The admission requirements for the Master's Program in "Informatics" are the following:

- Bachelor's academic degree;
- Results of the general master's exam;
- Internal university exam in a foreign language (English) – B2 level (a person who has a certificate confirming language proficiency at the appropriate level or has completed a first-level academic educational program in a foreign language (English) or has been awarded the qualification of an English language philologist by a first-level academic educational program is exempted from the said exam);
- Internal university exam in the specialty;

- Mobility - students of master's programs of Sokhumi State University or other authorized higher educational institution who will transfer to the said program under the rule of mobility in accordance with the procedure established by the legislation of Georgia;
- Other cases provided for by the legislation of Georgia.

The admission prerequisites for the program consider the specific nature of the program and ensure the enrollment of individuals who possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies to successfully complete it, which is also confirmed by the tests passed by the students accepted by the university in 2025.

### **Description and Analysis - Programme 2 (Informatics, Doctoral)**

The University has developed a document on the minimum standard of doctoral studies, which sets out the requirements for the implementation of doctoral programs and the award of the academic degree of Doctor at Sukhumi State University. This document is fully consistent with the Framework Document for Doctoral Education.

The requirements for admission to the program are:

- Master's degree, or an equivalent one-level diploma (the decision is made in each specific case by the admissions sectoral commission);
- Internal university exam in a foreign language (English B2 level);
- Interview with the sectoral commission of the Faculty of Natural Sciences, Mathematics, Technology and Pharmacy;
- Other cases provided for by legislation (mobility, foreign citizens).

Admission to the doctoral program is ensured by a commission, which is established for the purpose of admission to doctoral programs on the basis of the report card of the Dean of the Faculty.

According to the doctoral standard developed by the university, a person wishing to enroll in a doctoral program must submit a research thesis/project to the relevant commission. In addition, the candidate is required to have a paper/publication in the relevant field and/or participate in scientific research projects and events/scientific conferences and/or have at least 2 years of work experience in the relevant field.

These requirements take into account the specifics of the program and ensure the enrollment of individuals who have the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies to successfully complete it.

During the visit, the theses and commission reports of students enrolled in 2025 were requested. This documentation is fully consistent with the standards developed by the university, however, it is recommended that these requirements be added to the program and reflected on the website to make admission requirements more transparent for students.

## Evidences/Indicators

- Educational programs;
- Minimum Standard for Doctoral Studies at Sokhumi State University
- Mechanism and Methodology for Planning the Student Contingent
- Interview results;
- HEI Regulations;
- Enrolment test for Master students;
- Doctoral students theses and commission reports;
- Web Page.

<b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	<b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
<b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b>		
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>		
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>	It is recommended that all necessary requirements be added to the program admission prerequisites and reflected on the website to make admission requirements more transparent for students.	

## Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

<b>Component</b> <b><u>2.1 Programme Admission Preconditions</u></b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>	Complies
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>	Substantially complies

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

## Accreditation standards indicators

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

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

#### Cluster evaluation

##### Description and Analysis of Cluster

The educational programs integrated within the cluster, in accordance with the level of study and the intended learning outcomes, largely ensure the development of students' practical, scientific/research, and transferable skills, as well as their involvement in research projects.

The practical component of the programs is planned in alignment with the expected learning outcomes and corresponds to the relevant level of study. Practical elements are implemented within the courses in the form of projects, laboratory, and practical work, which contribute to the enhancement of students' professional competencies. In the Informatics doctoral program it is mandatory to take the course "Assistantship".

The University has signed memorandums with the employer. During the interviews, the employers confirmed that they maintain close and ongoing cooperation with the University. They are well acquainted with the content of the program and regularly fill out the questionnaires provided by the University, the analysis of which the University uses to improve the programs. The recommendations made by the employers during the consultation process (for example, the inclusion of topics related to randomized algorithms) were taken into account and implemented by the University.

A representative of the Institute of Computational Mathematics noted that a university graduate completed an internship at the institute and subsequently continued to work there. It was also noted that the institute received a research grant in the field of artificial intelligence and is actively collaborating with Sukhumi State University to involve more students in this research project.

The Master's program "Informatics" ensures the development of students' scientific and research skills through the completion of the corresponding mandatory component "Master's thesis". Students are consulted by the program supervisor on issues related to the Master's thesis, and the topic is selected based on preliminary agreement on the topic with the prospective supervisor and reconciliation of research interests.

The expert group reviewed the material version of four Master's theses on site. It was confirmed that the formatting and structure of the works comply with the requirements set by the "Instructions for the Performance, Defense and Evaluation of Master's Thesis". **However, the presented works lack research and analysis methods and the literature used is mainly outdated and needs to be updated with modern scientific sources.**

**It is recommended that the research component of the program be strengthened, including the possible introduction of an additional course that would strengthen students' research methodology and analysis skills.**

In the doctoral program in "Informatics", in addition to the doctoral thesis, the following mandatory courses are offered to develop students' scientific/research and transferable skills: "Modern Teaching Methods" and Academic Writing (with a Research Component).

However, it should be noted that the teaching and learning methods presented in the "Academic Writing (with a Research Component)" course include lecture and practical work formats, as well as a project, which ensures the mastery of basic theoretical foundations and the development of research skills at the initial stage. Nevertheless, given the specifics of the doctoral level, it is advisable to expand the teaching formats and integrate research activities more closely into them, which will contribute to the development of students' research independence, innovation and critical analytical thinking (e.g. research seminars, peer-review method, discussion of publications in international journals/conferences and their analysis, etc.).

A prerequisite for admission to the defense of a dissertation is the publication of at least two scientific papers, one of which must be published in a foreign peer-reviewed journal with an international index. The review of doctoral theses was carried out on site by experts. The structure of the papers complies with the university regulations. The papers present relevance, research methods, scientific novelty, etc. The papers are also accompanied by the conclusions of the reviewers.

When assessing the scientific-research component, GSU uses mechanisms for academic and research ethics, academic integrity, plagiarism prevention, detection and response.

In order to involve students in research activities, the university annually organizes local student conferences, where students actively participate with the help of their supervisor. It was also noted during the interview that the academic staff systematically ensures the involvement of students in various research/practical projects (e.g., projects of the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation).

**Individual evaluation** - An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Master in Informatics, VII)<sup>18</sup>**

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the doctoral level educational programme, or the educational program for which a recommendation and/or **suggestion** is issued, with the requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

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<sup>18</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

## Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (PhD in Informatics, VIII)<sup>19</sup>

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the doctoral level educational programme, or the educational program for which a recommendation and/or **suggestion** is issued, with the requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

### Evidences/Indicators

- Educational programs and Syllabi;
- Interview results;
- HEI Regulations;
- Doctoral and Master Regulation.

<b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	<b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
<b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b>		
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>	It is recommended to strengthen the research component of the program.	
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>	It is recommended that the program include components that will further develop the student's research competencies for doctoral-level teaching.	

### Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

<b>Component 2.2. The Development of Practical, Scientific/Research/Creative/Performing and Transferable Skills</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>	Substantially Complies
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>	Substantially Complies

<sup>19</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

## 2.3. Teaching and Learning Methods

### Accreditation standards indicators

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

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

#### Cluster evaluation

##### Description and Analysis of Cluster

Represented clustered programs applies teaching and learning methods that correspond to the appropriate level of education, course content, learning outcomes, and ensures their achievement. The combination of teaching and learning methods used in the components of the educational program ensures the attainment of the learning outcomes defined by the program and is focused on developing the relevant competencies.

The academic/visiting staff implementing the programs uses modern student-centered teaching and learning methods, which focus on a student-oriented learning process that takes into account the interests and needs of the students. The goal of teaching is focused on the development of various skills and competencies. The organization of the courses considers their specific nature. The teaching and learning methods and activities planned within each course aim to engage students and develop the necessary skills. The teaching methods of the courses are flexible and take into account the individual needs and requirements of the students.

The clustered programs integrate a variety of teaching methods; all aimed at continuous skill development and acquiring practical experience. The programs employ active teaching methods such as: Discussion/debate, group work, problem-based learning, heuristic method, demonstration method, inductive method, deductive method, analysis method, synthesis method, practical methods, action-oriented learning, project development and presentation, etc.

If necessary, an individual study program tailored to the student's interests and academic preparation level is used, and the teaching and learning methods are adapted to meet individual needs.

**Individual evaluation** - An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

##### Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Name and Level)

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the doctoral level educational programme, or the educational program for which a recommendation and/or **suggestion** is issued, with the requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

##### Evidences/Indicators

- Educational programs;
- Course syllabi;
- Interview results;
- HEI Regulations ;
- Learning methods.

<b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	<b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
<b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b>		
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>		
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>		

## Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

<b>Component</b> <b>2.3. Teaching and Learning Methods</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>	Complies
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>	Complies

## 2.4. Student Evaluation

### Accreditation standards indicators

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

### PHD Programme indicators

- Doctoral students are evaluated according to the procedures established in the HEI, that are transparent, reliable and comply with the current legislation;
- The teaching component of the doctoral programme curriculum is assessed with the methods appropriate to the content of the teaching component and the requirements of the doctoral degree, which provides assessment of the student's knowledge and skills, including analytical and critical thinking, selection and independent application of research methodology, substantiated expression of an opinion, and other skills;

- The doctoral education programme provides the requirements for admission of a doctoral student to the defense of a dissertation/creative/performing work, or other research project/paper. This envisages periodic formative assessments of the student's progress;
- Before submitting the dissertation/creative/performance work for the academic degree, the doctoral student is required to publish at least two scientific articles from the relevant research field, one of which must be published in a peer-reviewed journal with a foreign international index.
- The supervisor periodically monitors the progress of consistent performance of a research component by the doctoral student, provides formative assessment, and feedback.
- Requirements of the academic style of the doctoral thesis, methods and criteria for evaluating the doctoral thesis, which take into account the specifics of the field, are known in advance to the doctoral students and are taken into account during the evaluation of the doctoral theses.
- While evaluating the scientific-research component, HEI uses the mechanisms of academic and research ethics, academic integrity, plagiarism prevention, detection and response mechanisms;
- The defense of doctoral theses is performed in accordance with the HEI procedures of evaluation and defense of a doctoral thesis which is in compliance of the current legislation.
- The evaluation of the doctoral thesis is carried out in a commission manner - by the commission/commissions;
- The procedures for the evaluation and/or defense of the doctoral thesis provide for the conclusions of the competent institution (local and/or foreign university, scientific-research institute), local and international reviewer (the conclusion of the international reviewer is not mandatory for the following fields of study: Georgian philology, Abkhazian philology, also, if the doctoral candidate has an international supervisor), who evaluates the novelty of the scientific research/creative work of the dissertation and readiness for the defense of the dissertation;
- A local reviewer is a staff member of a local university, scientific-research institute/center, or a person with emeritus status, who is equipped with the latest knowledge in the field, has actively participated in scientific research, and has published at least 1 scientific work (in artistic directions - creative/performance project) in a peer-reviewed journal with a foreign international index within the last 3 years. This work corresponds to the general topic/field of research of the doctoral student's doctoral work;
- An international reviewer is a staff member of a foreign university, scientific-research institute/center, or a person with emeritus status, who is equipped with the latest knowledge in the field, has actively participated in scientific research, and has published at least 1 scientific work (in artistic directions - creative/performance project) in a peer-reviewed journal with a foreign international index within the last 3 years. This work corresponds to the general topic/field of research of the doctoral student's doctoral work;
- Mechanisms and processes for the selection and appointment of doctoral thesis reviewers by the university should be transparent, impartial, and objective. When selecting reviewers, their anonymity<sup>1</sup> should be ensured, which contributes to the preparation of an unbiased, fair and objective conclusion;
- The defense commission(s) consists of representatives of academic/scientific staff from the relevant field, whose competence allows for in-depth and thorough evaluation of the paper and the originality of the research/creative research and its results;

- Participation of external evaluators is ensured in the composition of the defense commission(s); The supervisor/co-supervisor of the doctoral student does not participate in the work of the defense commission(s);
- Considering the specifics of the field, the defense commission(s) includes (if necessary) an international evaluator(s) with relevant qualification and competence, and a representative(s) of the governmental/non-governmental sector and the labor market;
- Defense of doctoral thesis is public and open; The abstract/summary of the doctoral thesis in Georgian, English and the languages of the programme implementation is public and available to everyone;
- The doctoral educational programme provides the appeal of evaluation results of the doctoral students' enrollment to the programme as well as procedures of dissertation defense. The rules of appeal are publicly available in advance and ensure that an objective and fair decision is made;
- Mechanisms for searching, and appointing reviewer and determining his/her activities are ensured by HEI;
- Information about the topics of current theses and defended theses are published by the HEI on a unified electronic portal.

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

#### **Cluster evaluation**

##### **Description and Analysis of Cluster**

Student evaluation within the Master's and Doctoral programmes in Informatics at Sokhumi State University is carried out in accordance with the institution's regulatory framework, ensuring fairness, transparency, and compliance with national legislation. Evaluation criteria, components, and methods are defined in course syllabi and correspond to programme learning outcomes.

Students are informed of evaluation criteria at the beginning of each semester, and interviews confirm that feedback is regularly provided, allowing students to understand their progress and identify areas for improvement. Academic integrity and plagiarism prevention mechanisms are established and consistently applied.

Master's thesis defenses and Doctoral dissertation evaluations are conducted by formally appointed commissions, ensuring impartiality and adherence to academic standards. The processes for evaluation and appeal are clearly defined and publicly accessible.

Overall, the student evaluation mechanisms at all levels are transparent, fair, and effectively support the achievement of learning outcomes.

The cluster fully complies with the requirements of this sub-standard.

#### **Individual evaluation**

### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Informatics, Master's)<sup>20</sup>**

The evaluation system for the Master's programme in Informatics is transparent and implemented according to established institutional procedures. Each course includes clearly defined assessment components — such as mid-term evaluations, practical assignments, and final examinations — which correspond to the learning outcomes and balance theoretical and applied aspects of the discipline.

Students confirmed that grading systems are well understood, and continuous feedback is provided throughout the semester. The Master's thesis defense procedure is organized in accordance with university regulations, involving an evaluation commission that applies objective criteria to assess the quality of research, methodological soundness, and presentation.

Mechanisms of academic integrity, plagiarism detection, and research ethics are effectively integrated into the evaluation process. The appeal procedure is also transparent and ensures impartial review of contested results.

The evaluation structure successfully ensures fairness, transparency, and outcome alignment, contributing to the overall quality and credibility of the programme.

The programme fully complies with the requirements of this sub-standard.

### **Description and Analysis - Programme 2 (Informatics, Doctoral)<sup>21</sup>**

Student evaluation in the Doctoral programme in Informatics follows rigorous, transparent, and structured procedures that align with both national regulations and the University's internal framework. Doctoral students are evaluated through a combination of formative and summative assessments, ensuring continuous monitoring of research progress and adherence to academic standards.

The teaching component of the doctoral curriculum is evaluated using methods appropriate to doctoral-level study, including research presentations, analytical assignments, and oral examinations, which assess advanced knowledge, critical thinking, methodological skills, and independent problem-solving ability. Supervisors periodically assess progress and provide structured feedback to guide students through each stage of research development.

Admission to dissertation defense is conditional on fulfilling all curriculum requirements, completing periodic progress reviews, and meeting the publication requirement - doctoral candidates must publish at least two scientific articles in their research field, one of which must appear in a peer-reviewed journal with an international index. This ensures both academic rigor and international visibility of research outcomes.

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<sup>20</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

<sup>21</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

The dissertation evaluation and defense process is conducted according to formally approved procedures. Defense commissions are composed of qualified academic and scientific personnel in the relevant field, ensuring in-depth evaluation of the originality, scientific contribution, and methodological quality of the dissertation. External evaluators participate in every defense, while supervisors are excluded from the commission to maintain impartiality.

Each dissertation is reviewed by local and, where applicable, international reviewers who meet defined qualification requirements, including recent publications in indexed journals related to the dissertation topic. Reviewer selection is based on transparent, impartial, and anonymous procedures, which guarantee unbiased assessment.

Defense sessions are public events, and abstracts or summaries of dissertations are published in Georgian, English, and the programme's implementation language, ensuring academic openness. The appeal procedures for both doctoral admission and dissertation defense decisions are clearly defined and ensure fairness and objectivity.

Mechanisms of academic and research ethics, including plagiarism prevention, detection, and response, are in place and actively enforced. Supervisors continuously monitor student progress, ensuring that the research component is conducted ethically and systematically.

Overall, the doctoral student evaluation system at Sokhumi State University reflects high academic standards, procedural transparency, and compliance with legal and ethical requirements. The inclusion of international evaluation components and publication obligations ensures quality and alignment with international doctoral education practices.

The programme fully complies with the requirements of this sub-standard.

#### **Evidences/Indicators**

- Evaluation system regulatory documents and institutional guidelines.
- Course syllabi with defined assessment methods and criteria.
- Electronic student assessment system / portal.
- Master's and Doctoral thesis/dissertation evaluation and defense regulations.
- Documentation on composition and procedures of defense commissions.
- Requirements for dissertation admission, publication, and review processes.
- Regulations for selection and anonymity of reviewers (local and international).
- Mechanisms of plagiarism prevention and academic integrity.
- Methodological guide for academic style and formatting of theses/dissertations.
- Records of feedback and formative assessments by supervisors.
- Documentation of public dissertation defenses and published abstracts.

- Interview results with students, supervisors, reviewers, and commission members.

<b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	<b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
<b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b>		
<b>Programme 1 (Informatics, Master's)</b>		
<b>Programme 2 (Informatics, Doctoral)</b>		

## Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

<b>Component</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>2.4. Student Evaluation</b>	
<b>Programme 1 (Informatics, Master's)</b>	Fully Complies
<b>Programme 2 (Informatics, Doctoral)</b>	Fully Complies

## 3. Student Achievements, Individual Work with Them

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

### 3.1 Student Consulting and Support Services

#### Accreditation standards indicators

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

#### PHD Programme indicators

- Taking into account the specifics of the field, within the framework of the doctoral programme, the HEI cooperates with local and international scientific research institutes/centers/HEIs, doctoral schools, public and private sector/industry and other potential employers to implement a scientific- research component, to integrate graduates into the labour market and promote their career advancement;
- The higher education institution creates appropriate conditions and environment for the doctoral educational programme to encourage international mobility and/or participation in

international conferences, seminars and other scientific/creative activities, which aims to develop a strong and inclusive research environment and promotes the formation of best research practices, internationalization of the research, and implementation of joint research projects.

- HEI provides doctoral students with additional support mechanisms in the form of extra-curricular events and activities aimed at the doctoral student's personal, professional and career development;
- Within the framework of the doctoral educational programme, the higher education institution has developed supporting measures for doctoral students, which allows the doctoral student to complete the doctoral thesis within the timeframe established by the law;
- HEI provides indicative information to the doctoral student about scientific publications/databases with an international index corresponding to the specificity of the field for the publication of an international scientific publication; in the artistic field it provides information about artistic and creative events (concert, festival, competition, master class, exhibition, biennial and others);
- HEI periodically analyzes the indicators of career development of the graduates of the doctoral educational programme, the results of which are aimed at the development of the programme, resources and supporting mechanisms for doctoral students;
- HEI provides doctoral students with information about support services.

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

### **Cluster evaluation**

#### **Description and Analysis of Cluster**

Sokhumi State University offers a wide range of consulting and support services to students enrolled in the Master's and Doctoral programs in Informatics. Individuals involved in the implementation of these programs ensure that students receive relevant information regarding the services and ongoing processes within the university.

During interviews, students noted that they regularly receive information about academic semester planning, both through face-to-face communication and via electronic platforms. The university operates an effective Learning Management System (LMS) — **Stud-lab** — which enables students to access up-to-date information continuously. Through this system, they have access to course syllabi, learning materials, financial information, and all other essential academic resources.

The university also has a **Career Practice and Career Management Office**, which continuously provides students with information about new job vacancies. During interviews, both students and alumni mentioned that, based on university recommendations, they had been employed in various institutions and continue to work successfully. Furthermore, the university regularly organizes **employment forums**, offering students opportunities to attend events aligned with their professional interests and to

obtain relevant information. It is noteworthy that the university also strives to employ its outstanding students within its own institution. A specific example is **Irakli Khardava**, who is currently involved in both teaching and research supervision.

The university actively promotes students' integration into the academic environment through diverse activities coordinated by the **Department of Sports, Culture, and Youth Affairs**, as well as the **Student Self-Government Body**. These units organize and coordinate various sports, cultural, and educational events. Sports sections are available in football, basketball, chess, table tennis, volleyball, and wrestling, selected based on students' interests. Cultural activities are also well developed, providing students with multiple opportunities for engagement.

In addition to sports and cultural programs, the university offers a variety of **financial support services**. The university provides funding to students who are:

- academically outstanding;
- internally displaced persons;
- actively involved in student life;
- socially vulnerable;
- orphaned or have lost a breadwinner;
- from large families (four or more children);
- from high mountainous regions.

The university also allows students to obtain funding for their **research activities**. Financial support is provided for:

1. participation of students at all levels in exchange programs;
2. involvement in research projects;
3. participation in educational and scientific projects, including international university conferences;
4. engagement in seasonal schools.

Despite the existence of these mechanisms, interviews with students and graduates revealed that many of them have not benefited from the university's financial support services or have limited experience with such opportunities. It is therefore advisable for the university to organize meetings and information sessions to raise awareness among students regarding these available support mechanisms. Enhancing support for research activities and initiatives would be particularly valuable for doctoral students.

The university maintains a **network of international partnerships**, providing students with opportunities to participate in various exchange programs and research activities. Interview

results indicate that students regularly receive information about ongoing projects and exchange opportunities; however, their level of participation in these activities remains relatively low.

It is recommended that the institution **strengthen its efforts** in this area by improving student awareness and understanding of the importance of participating in exchange programs. These measures will encourage greater student engagement and contribute to the enhancement of their academic and professional development.

**Individual evaluation** – An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

#### **Description and Analysis – Programme 1 (Master in Informatics, VII)<sup>22</sup>**

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the doctoral level educational programme, or the educational program for which a recommendation and/or **suggestion** is issued, with the requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

#### **Description and Analysis – Programme 1 (PhD in Informatics, VIII)<sup>23</sup>**

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the doctoral level educational programme, or the educational program for which a recommendation and/or **suggestion** is issued, with the requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

#### **Evidences/Indicators**

- Regulation of the Department of Scientific Research and Development
- Regulation of the Department of Sports, Culture, and Youth Affairs
- Regulation of the Student Self-Government Body
- Regulation of the Career Practice and Career Management Office
- Regulation of the Department of International Relations and Intercultural Communication
- Student participation in exchange programs
- Student involvement in scientific activities

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<sup>22</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

<sup>23</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

- Results of interviews

<b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	<b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
<b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b>	It is further recommended to increase student participation in ongoing projects and exchange programs through the implementation of targeted informational and educational activities.	It is suggested, university organize regular information sessions to raise student awareness of available financial support services and research funding opportunities, with particular attention to the needs of doctoral students.
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>		
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>		

## Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

<b>Component 3.1 Student Consulting and Support Services</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>	Substantial Complies
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>	Substantial Complies

## 3.2. Master's and Doctoral Student Supervision

### Accreditation standards indicators

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

### PHD Programme indicators

- The supervisor coordinates the performance of the scientific-research component of the doctoral student;
- The HEI has developed the documents regulating the appointment and change of supervisor/co-supervisor of the doctoral student and implementation of supervision/co-supervision;
- The HEI has developed a sample of agreement/contract to be signed between the doctoral student, his/her supervisor/co-supervisor and the HEI, which defines the rights and responsibilities of all parties; The supervision of the doctoral student is included in the overall university workload of the relevant academic/scientific staff;
- The terms of the agreement/contract facilitate the effective implementation of the activities by the supervisor/co-supervisor and the completion of the thesis by the doctoral student within the timeframes;
- During the research process the supervisor has regular consultations with doctoral students on methodological, structural, conceptual and other issues related to the research/creative research. The frequency of the consultations corresponds to the specifics of the research topic and the individual needs of the doctoral student. A supervisor provides consultations over the following topics during the research: research design and project management, research methodology, professional development, the process of writing a thesis/scientific-research work/dissertation, integration process within the local and international scientific/creative network, the processes of participation in local and international scientific/creative events and presentation of the results; publication of scientific articles in peer-reviewed journals, etc.;
- Co-supervisor (if any) supports the doctoral student in the implementation of the scientific-research component through the mutual agreement with the supervisor and the doctoral student;
- Taking into account the specifics and needs of the research, the university promotes the involvement of the staff of a foreign university, scientific-research institute/center, or a person with emeritus status including a compatriot person living abroad, as a supervisor/co-supervisor in the research/creative research process of the doctoral candidate;
- To ensure the doctoral programme sustainability, the HEI, when planning the number of the doctoral thesis supervisors, considers the workload of the supervisors, the amount of existing and future doctoral students, specifics of the programme and best international practices;
- HEI has developed a methodology for the ratio of the doctoral thesis supervisors to doctoral students in the doctoral educational programme, thus ensuring the effective implementation of the supervision;
- The ratio determined by the HEI between the supervisor and his/her active doctoral students does not exceed - 1:3, within the framework of one higher education institution; A ratio of 1:5 between the supervisor and his doctoral students with active status is allowed if a suspended doctoral student requires reinstatement of status to submit a thesis/creative/performance work to be awarded an academic degree. The mentioned ratio can be determined differently depending on the conditions of the scientific grant/project;
- The HEI has developed mechanisms for evaluating the activities of the supervisor/co-supervisor of the doctoral thesis, which ensures the effective implementation of the supervision/co-supervision;

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

### Cluster evaluation

#### Description and Analysis of Cluster

**Individual evaluation** – An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

#### Description and Analysis – Programme 1 (Master in Informatics, VII)<sup>24</sup>

Sokhumi State University has developed comprehensive documents regulating the procedures for the selection and activities of scientific supervisors for both Master's and Doctoral programs.

For the **Master's program in Informatics**, students have the opportunity to choose a scientific supervisor from among the academic staff of the relevant department/field at Sokhumi State University (professors, associate professors, or assistant professors), or a contracted PhD holder with appropriate qualifications. Before the beginning of the final semester, the list of proposed Master's thesis topics and research problems is prepared by the academic staff of the respective field and approved by the Faculty Council.

Prior to the commencement of the final semester, the student's Master's thesis topic and supervisor are approved, based on the faculty dean's recommendation, within no more than two weeks from the beginning of the semester. The appointment is formalized by an order issued by the Rector of the University. Students are also allowed to have a **co-supervisor**, who provides additional support throughout the process of completing the thesis.

The scientific supervisor is obliged to provide the student with appropriate consultation at every stage of the thesis preparation. During interviews, graduates emphasized that they had received maximum support from their supervisors according to their individual needs. The number of consultations corresponded to the nature and specifics of the research topic. Supervisors provided guidance on research design, methodology, literature review, and participation in research activities. Graduates also reported active collaboration with co-supervisors, which was likewise confirmed during interviews.

To ensure the effective functioning of the supervision process, the university has established a **methodology for determining the ratio of scientific supervisors to students**. According to the

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<sup>24</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

“Regulation on Academic and Invited Staff Workload and Individual Workload Scheme,” one supervisor may supervise a maximum of three Master’s students.

The institution has also developed **mechanisms for evaluating the performance of scientific supervisors and co-supervisors** of Master’s and Doctoral theses. This evaluation process includes anonymous surveys of graduates. During interviews, graduates stated that they had participated in evaluating their supervisors after completing their Master’s program. The university presented the official **questionnaire for supervisor evaluation** (along with the results), which covers all significant aspects relevant to the process of working on a Master’s thesis.

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (PhD in Informatics, VIII)<sup>25</sup>**

At Sokhumi State University, particular attention is given to the selection and performance of scientific supervisors for students enrolled in the **Doctoral Program in Informatics**. The institution has developed the **Minimum Standard for Doctoral Studies**, which clearly defines the procedures for the selection, approval, and responsibilities of scientific supervisors and co-supervisors.

A scientific supervisor must be a member of the academic staff of Sokhumi State University and must possess research experience and publications in a scientific field related to the doctoral dissertation topic. A doctoral student may have more than one supervisor or co-supervisor. The decision to appoint more than one supervisor is made by the relevant Dissertation Council.

Students interviewed reported that they received strong support from the faculty during the process of selecting a scientific supervisor.

According to existing university regulations, the supervisor must conduct **regular consultations** with the doctoral student and provide guidance in all necessary areas. Throughout the research process, supervisors meet regularly with doctoral students to advise on methodological, structural, conceptual, and other relevant issues. The frequency of consultations corresponds to the specifics of the research topic and the individual needs of the doctoral student.

Supervisors provide consultations in the following areas:

- research design and project management;

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<sup>25</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

- research methodology;
- professional development;
- writing of the thesis/scientific research work/dissertation;
- integration into local and international scientific or creative networks;
- participation in and presentation of results at local and international scientific or creative events;
- publication of research articles in peer-reviewed journals indexed in international databases.

Students noted that communication with their scientific supervisors was always accessible, and that they received guidance at every stage of their research as well as in their professional development. With the support of their supervisors, doctoral students prepared research project proposals for grant competitions, published academic papers, and participated in various scientific conferences.

For the effective management of the supervision process, the university has also developed a **methodology for determining the supervisor-to-doctoral student ratio**. According to the standards established by Sokhumi State University, the ratio of an active doctoral supervisor to their students must not exceed **1:3** within a single higher education institution. A ratio of **1:5** is permissible only in cases where a suspended doctoral student requests reinstatement of status for the purpose of submitting a dissertation for the award of an academic degree.

To further enhance the supervision process, the **Quality Assurance Office** continuously evaluates the performance of scientific supervisors. The evaluation questionnaire encompasses all key aspects relevant to the dissertation supervision process. Students assess the supervisor's performance across multiple dimensions and provide feedback on both the positive and negative aspects encountered during their work.

<b>Data related to the supervision of master's/doctoral students Programme 1 (name, level)<sup>26</sup></b>	
Number of master's/doctoral theses supervisors	<b>7</b>
//Number of doctoral thesis supervisors	<b>5</b>
Number of master's students	<b>9</b>
//Number of doctoral students	<b>12</b>

<sup>26</sup> In case of necessity please add the appropriate number of tables for the educational programmes grouped in a cluster.

Ratio - supervisors of master's theses/master's students	0,78
Ratio - supervisors of doctoral theses/doctoral students	0.42

### Evidences/Indicators

- Faculty Regulation
- Methodology for the Planning, Development, Approval, and Improvement of Master's Programs
- Regulation of the Dissertation Council in Informatics
- Minimum Standard for Doctoral Studies at Sokhumi State University
- Results of Scientific Supervisor Evaluation
- Students' scientific activities
- Results of Interviews

<b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	<b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
<b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b>		
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>		
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>		

### Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

<b>Component</b> <b>3.2. Master's and Doctoral Student Supervision</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>	Complies
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>	Complies

## 4. Providing Teaching Resources

### Accreditation standards indicators

Human, material, information and financial resources of educational programme/educational

programmes grouped in a cluster ensure the sustainable, stable, efficient and effective functioning of the programme and the achievement of the defined objectives.

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#### 4.1 Human Resources

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

The doctoral education programme involves at least 5 affiliated academic staff of the relevant field, including at least 3 professors/associate professors. If available, the institution should involve scientific staff in the programme implementation;

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- The qualification of the academic/research staff of the doctoral educational programme is confirmed by a scientific paper published in the peer-reviewed journals with the international index during the last 3 years and/or a practical/creative/performing project, which confirms his/her competence in the relevant field;
- HEI promotes the participation of foreign university, scientific-research institute/center staff, or a person with emeritus status in the process of implementing the doctoral educational programme;
- The Head of the doctoral programme has the necessary knowledge and experience for the design and development of the programme, as well as the appropriate competence in the field of study of the programme. He/she is directly involved in the implementation of the programme and is the affiliated academic and/or scientific staff of the institution;

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

#### Cluster evaluation

##### Description and Analysis of Cluster

The Informatics Master's and Doctoral programmes at Sokhumi State University are implemented by qualified academic, scientific, and invited personnel whose competences correspond to the programme learning outcomes. The staff are engaged in accordance with institutional regulations and Georgian legislation governing higher education.

The qualifications of the academic and scientific staff are confirmed through their educational background, previous teaching experience, and professional activities in the field of Informatics. Most of them are affiliated academic personnel, ensuring programme stability and continuity. Invited lecturers, all holding doctoral degrees, contribute specialized expertise that enriches the applied and research components of the programmes.

The workload schemes are defined and updated each semester, encompassing teaching, research, and student consultation hours. The ratios between staff numbers and enrolled students ensure an optimal learning environment and allow for sufficient supervision and academic interaction. Administrative and support personnel are available in appropriate numbers and possess qualifications consistent with their duties, ensuring the smooth implementation of the programmes.

The Head of the Master's and Doctoral programmes possesses substantial academic and managerial experience and is actively engaged in programme design, delivery, and continuous improvement. They maintain close contact with students and teaching staff and participate in university-wide quality assurance and curriculum enhancement processes.

Overall, the academic and invited staff composition, structure, and workload ensure the sustainable implementation of both programmes. The cluster fully complies with the requirements of this sub-standard.

**Individual evaluation** - An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Informatics, Master's)**

The Master's programme in Informatics is implemented by 13 personnel, including 10 affiliated academic staff (1 professor, 6 associate professors, 2 assistant professors, and 1 assistant) and 3 invited lecturers holding doctoral degrees. The academic personnel possess relevant qualifications, degrees in Informatics and related disciplines, and significant teaching and professional experience that align with the programme learning outcomes.

While academic staff demonstrate sufficient engagement in teaching and supervision activities, their research productivity could be further strengthened. Several members have participated in university-level and applied projects, though publication activity varies across the team.

The workload scheme is updated each semester, defining teaching, scientific, and consultation hours. This system ensures an equitable distribution of responsibilities and allows sufficient time for student guidance and research supervision. The ratio of staff to students is adequate for personalized supervision and effective teaching.

The Head of Programme meets the qualification requirements, holding a doctoral degree in the relevant field and demonstrating experience in programme management, curriculum development, and student advising. Administrative and support staff are competent and ensure efficient organization of teaching and learning processes.

Overall, the composition and qualifications of the programme staff are appropriate for the level and objectives of the Master’s programme. To further strengthen the programme’s international dimension, it is suggested to increase the involvement of visiting professors from abroad, especially by engaging former university graduates currently working in foreign academic institutions.

The programme fully complies with the requirements of this sub-standard.

<b>Programme 1 (Informatics, Master’s)<sup>27</sup></b>				
<b>Number of the staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, and invited staff)</b>	<b>Number of Programme Staff</b>	<b>Including the staff with sectoral expertise<sup>28</sup></b>	<b>Including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction<sup>29</sup></b>	<b>Among them, the affiliated academic staff</b>
<b>Total number of academic staff</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>
- Professor	1		1	1
- Associate Professor	6		6	6
- Assistant-Professor	2		2	2
- Assistant	1	1		1
<b>Invited Staff</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>—</b>
<b>Scientific Staff</b>				<b>—</b>
<b>Including International Staff</b>				

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 2 (Informatics, Doctoral)**

The Doctoral programme in Informatics is implemented by 9 personnel, comprising 7 affiliated academic staff (1 professor, 4 associate professors, and 2 assistant professors) and 2 invited academic doctors. The academic personnel possess the qualifications and experience necessary for doctoral-level teaching and supervision. Their academic degrees and professional records align with the programme’s objectives, ensuring methodological and scientific adequacy.

<sup>27</sup> In case of necessity please add the appropriate number of tables for the educational programmes grouped in a cluster.

<sup>28</sup> Staff implementing the relevant components of the main field of study

<sup>29</sup> Staff with relevant doctoral degrees implementing the components of the main field of study

The staff demonstrate solid experience in research and supervision of Master’s and Doctoral theses. However, as with the Master’s programme, engagement in high-impact publications could be further enhanced. The staff are actively involved in university research initiatives and scientific events, maintaining relevance to the programme’s content.

The workload scheme clearly outlines teaching, supervision, and consultation hours, ensuring balanced academic and research activities. The number of supervisors and doctoral students is proportionate, enabling effective individual guidance. Administrative and technical personnel provide necessary support for both research and educational processes.

The Head of Programme possesses significant academic and managerial experience in Informatics and plays an active role in programme coordination, curriculum improvement, and student supervision.

The current staff composition ensures programme sustainability and academic quality. To enhance the programme’s international exposure and strengthen supervision practices, it is suggested to invite more international visiting scholars and external experts, including former Sokhumi graduates affiliated with foreign universities, to contribute to doctoral research supervision and seminars.

The programme fully complies with the requirements of this sub-standard.

<b>Programme 2 (Informatics, Doctoral)<sup>30</sup></b>				
<b>Number of the staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, and invited staff)</b>	<b>Number of Programme Staff</b>	<b>Including the staff with sectoral expertise<sup>31</sup></b>	<b>Including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction<sup>32</sup></b>	<b>Among them, the affiliated academic staff</b>
<b>Total number of academic staff</b>	<b>9</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>
- Professor	1		1	1
- Associate Professor	4		4	4
- Assistant-Professor	2		2	2
- Assistant				
<b>Invited Staff</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>—</b>
<b>Scientific Staff</b>				<b>—</b>

<sup>30</sup> In case of necessity please add the appropriate number of tables for the educational programmes grouped in a cluster.

<sup>31</sup> Staff implementing the relevant components of the main field of study

<sup>32</sup> Staff with relevant doctoral degrees implementing the components of the main field of study

Including International Staff			
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**Evidences/Indicators**

- Personnel qualification requirements and institutional regulations.
- Staff personal files, contest materials, and appointment documentation.
- Records of academic degrees, professional experience, and teaching history.
- Evidence of publications, research involvement, and project participation.
- Academic/scientific/invited staff workload schemes (including teaching, research, and consultation hours).
- Methodology for determining staff numbers and student –staff ratios.
- Data on staff turnover and sustainability analysis.
- Qualification and functions of Heads of Programmes.
- Information on administrative and support personnel.
- Interview results with academic staff, Heads of Programmes, and students.

<b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	<b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
<b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b>		Increase the involvement of visiting professors from abroad, especially by engaging former university graduates currently working in foreign academic institutions.
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>		
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>		

**Evaluation**

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component <a href="#">4.1 Human Resources</a>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)	Complies
Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)	Complies

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

### Accreditation standards indicators

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

### PHD Programme indicators

- HEI has developed qualification requirements for scientific supervisor/co-supervisor, which respond to the specifics of the programme and international best practice;
- Due to the specifics and development of the field, the scientific supervisor of each doctoral student is equipped with the latest knowledge, has the academic degree in the relevant field, has experience
- of supervision/co-supervision, or has completed a relevant activity (training, seminar, professional development course, etc.), as well as actively participated in scientific research and/or has published a scientific work (in the field of art - creative/performing project) which corresponds to the general topic/research field of the doctoral thesis;
- Due to the specifics and development of the field, the doctoral student's supervisor has published at least 1 scientific paper (in the field of arts - creative/performing project) in the foreign peer-reviewed journal with the international index defined by the HEI during the last 3 years, and this paper corresponds to the general topic/research field of the doctoral student's doctoral thesis;
- The supervisor of the doctoral student, as well as in the case of several supervisors, one of the supervisors, is an academic (professor, associate professor) and/or scientific staff of the HEI with doctoral degree or equivalent to the doctoral degree. The requirement in the section on holding an academic position does not apply to an international supervisor/co-supervisor;
- The doctoral student's supervisor has professional connection with the local and international scientific/artistic community (joint researches/grants/projects, scientific associations/unions/educational/scientific institutions);
- The qualification requirements of the co-supervisor correspond to the topic/research field of the doctoral student's doctoral thesis;
- HEI periodically provides the doctoral thesis supervisor with such activities (training, seminar, workshop, etc.) that facilitate the effective implementation of supervision;
- HEI has developed mechanisms to encourage doctoral students' supervisors in the doctoral education programme;

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

#### Cluster evaluation

#### Description and Analysis of Cluster

The Informatics Master's and Doctoral programmes at Sokhumi State University have developed transparent qualification requirements for scientific supervisors and co-supervisors. These requirements comply with national legislation and reflect international best practices in graduate-level supervision.

Supervisors hold doctoral degrees in Informatics or closely related fields, and their academic and research backgrounds correspond to the thematic areas of the students' theses. The assignment of supervisors is based on field compatibility, research interests, and the methodological adequacy required for each topic. The University maintains formal procedures for supervisor selection and appointment, ensuring transparency and academic relevance.

While supervisors are qualified and experienced in programme management, teaching, and student guidance, their publication activity remains limited. Many are more engaged in programme development and teaching-related responsibilities than in ongoing research or international publication. The faculty acknowledges this issue and has already taken steps toward improvement by initiating collaborations with professors from other universities and engaging in new research partnerships to strengthen academic productivity.

The supervision process itself is well-structured, with regular consultations, feedback mechanisms, and active involvement of supervisors in thesis development, evaluation, and defense. These practices ensure academic integrity and adherence to methodological standards.

Overall, both programmes are implemented with qualified supervisors who ensure the proper academic and research guidance of students. The cluster substantially complies with the requirements of this sub-standard.

**Individual evaluation** - An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Informatics, Master's)**

The Master's programme in Informatics currently involves 10 academic personnel who serve as supervisors for Master's students. All hold doctoral degrees and possess relevant expertise in Informatics or closely related fields. Supervisors are appointed according to transparent institutional procedures that ensure compatibility between student research topics and supervisory specialization.

They actively guide students in research design, methodology, and thesis development, providing continuous feedback and maintaining regular consultations. The number of

supervisors relative to students is balanced, ensuring adequate mentorship. While the qualifications of supervisors fully correspond to programme requirements, it has been observed that their publication activity is modest. Most supervisors are more involved in programme coordination and internal development than in international research dissemination.

To strengthen academic standing and international visibility, the University has already initiated measures to encourage greater participation in joint projects and publication in peer-reviewed journals. By continuing to expand supervisors' involvement in scientific publications and collaborative research, the programme will further reinforce its research capacity and alignment with global academic practice.

The programme substantially complies with the requirements of this sub-standard.

<b>Programme 1 (Informatics, Master's)<sup>33</sup></b>			
<b>Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses</b>	<b>These supervisors</b>	<b>Including the supervisors holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction<sup>34</sup></b>	<b>Among them, the affiliated academic staff</b>
<b>Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>- Professor</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>- Associate Professor</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>- Assistant-Professor</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Invited Staff</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>—</b>
<b>Scientific Staff</b>			<b>—</b>
<b>Including International Staff</b>			

### **Description and Analysis - Programme 2 (Informatics, Doctoral)**

The Doctoral programme in Informatics is also supported by ten academic personnel who act as supervisors for doctoral research projects. All supervisors hold doctoral degrees and have professional and academic backgrounds corresponding to the main research areas of the dissertations. Their qualifications and expertise are adequate for guiding doctoral students in complex, independent research.

<sup>33</sup> In case of necessity please add the appropriate number of tables for the educational programmes grouped in a cluster.

<sup>34</sup> These supervisors having a PhD degree relevant to the qualification awarded by the educational programme.

Supervision is organized in line with institutional rules, ensuring that supervisory workloads and responsibilities are clearly defined. Supervisors provide consistent academic and methodological support, closely monitoring research progress and ensuring academic integrity. The supervisor-to-student ratio is appropriate, allowing for effective guidance and personalized feedback.

While the supervisors' qualifications are fully adequate, the level of international publication activity remains relatively limited. Faculty members are aware of this challenge and have already taken steps to strengthen collaboration with visiting professors and to engage in cross-institutional research projects. These efforts are expected to enhance the programme's academic visibility and integration within the broader research community.

By intensifying supervisors' participation in international publications and research collaborations, the doctoral programme will significantly improve its scientific profile and alignment with international standards.

The programme substantially complies with the requirements of this sub-standard.

<b>Programme 2 (Informatics, Doctoral)<sup>35</sup></b>			
<b>Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses</b>	<b>These supervisors</b>	<b>Including the supervisors holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction<sup>36</sup></b>	<b>Among them, the affiliated academic staff</b>
<b>Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
- Professor	1	1	1
- Associate Professor	6	6	6
- Assistant-Professor	1	1	1
<b>Invited Staff</b>	2	2	—
<b>Scientific Staff</b>			—
<b>Including International Staff</b>			

### **Evidences/Indicators**

- Qualification requirements for Master's and Doctoral supervisors and co-supervisors.

<sup>35</sup> In case of necessity please add the appropriate number of tables for the educational programmes grouped in a cluster.

<sup>36</sup> These supervisors having a PhD degree relevant to the qualification awarded by the educational programme.

- Personal files of supervisors and co-supervisors with supervision records.
- Evidence of supervisors' scientific publications and participation in projects.
- Institutional procedures regulating supervisor selection, appointment, and responsibilities.
- Records of supervisor-to-student ratios for both programmes.
- Documentation of cooperation with visiting professors and research partners.
- Interview results with supervisors, co-supervisors, students, and programme management.

<b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	<b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
<b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b>	Intensify supervisors' engagement in scientific publishing and collaborative research, including participation in international peer-reviewed journals, conferences, and joint projects.	
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>		
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>		

## Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

<b>Component <u>4.2 Qualification of Supervisors of Master's and Doctoral Students</u></b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>	Substantially Complies
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>	Substantially Complies

## 4.3 Professional Development of Academic, Scientific and Invited Staff

### Accreditation standards indicators

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

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

### **Cluster evaluation**

#### **Description and Analysis of Cluster**

Sokhumi State University conducts periodic evaluations of academic, scientific, and invited staff, which include assessments of teaching effectiveness, research activity, and overall professional engagement. Evaluation outcomes are analyzed and shared with programme heads; however, their systematic use for professional development planning and promotion decisions could be further enhanced.

The University ensures that academic and scientific staff, including supervisors of Master's and Doctoral students, have access to training and development activities such as seminars, conferences, and internal academic events. Nevertheless, participation remains irregular and largely dependent on personal initiative rather than structured institutional planning.

Currently, the University provides a supportive environment for academic growth but does not offer sufficient material or motivational incentives for research and publication. Professional development is not consistently encouraged through targeted mechanisms such as awards, grants, or recognition schemes. This limits staff motivation to engage in international research projects, academic publishing, and scientific conferences.

The introduction of institutional incentives would significantly strengthen research culture, stimulate faculty engagement in scholarly activity, and contribute to long-term programme sustainability.

The programmes substantially comply with the requirements of this sub-standard.

**Individual evaluation** - An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Informatics, Master's)**

The Master's programme benefits from qualified academic staff who demonstrate commitment to continuous improvement in teaching quality. Staff participate in occasional workshops and academic events organized by the University, though there is no structured professional development plan directly tied to research enhancement or international engagement.

The institution conducts staff evaluations, yet their results are only partially utilized to guide training or identify specific development needs. Academic staff members note that opportunities for professional growth - particularly related to international mobility and research projects - are limited and often rely on individual effort.

To ensure a sustainable and motivated academic community, it is recommended to develop and institutionalize incentive mechanisms that reward high-quality publications, participation in conferences, and involvement in joint international research. This approach would encourage greater staff engagement in professional development and align their activities with institutional strategic objectives.

The programme substantially complies with the requirements of this sub-standard.

**Individual evaluation** - An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

### **Description and Analysis - Programme 2 (Informatics, Doctoral)**

The Doctoral programme involves experienced academic staff and supervisors who possess the necessary qualifications and mentoring capacity. Faculty members have access to certain internal and external professional development opportunities, but participation is largely voluntary and dependent on personal initiative.

Although the University fosters a collegial academic environment, the absence of a structured incentive framework limits research productivity and participation in international networks. Staff members recognize the importance of enhancing their publication activity and have expressed the need for institutional encouragement, such as awards or funding for publication fees and conference attendance.

It is recommended that the University introduce specific incentive and recognition mechanisms, for example, annual awards for scientific publication, travel grants for conferences, or bonuses for participation in international projects, to strengthen motivation and promote continuous academic growth.

The programme substantially complies with the requirements of this sub-standard.

### **Evidences/Indicators**

- Results of staff evaluations and satisfaction surveys, including analysis and utilization.
- Data on staff participation in training, conferences, exchange programmes, and research projects.
- Records of internal and external professional development events.

- University policies and support mechanisms for fostering research and academic mobility.
- Examples of publications, conference participation, or funded research projects.
- Interview results with academic staff, supervisors, and programme administrators.

<b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	<b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
<b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b>	Establish clear incentive and award mechanisms to encourage academic and scientific staff participation in research and publication activities, including financial rewards or recognition for papers published in international peer-reviewed journals.	
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>		
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>		

## Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

<b>Component <u>4.3 Professional Development of Academic, Scientific and Invited Staff</u></b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>	Substantially Complies
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>	Substantially Complies

## 4.4. Material Resources

### Accreditation standards indicators

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

### PHD Programme indicators

- The doctoral education programme is equipped with the necessary research and artistic-creative infrastructure and technical equipment (scientific laboratory, computer resource, information resource, digital resource, individual working spaces for doctoral students, etc.), which are necessary for the implementation of the educational and scientific-research components of the educational programme and for the achievement of the learning outcomes;
- Library book fund, latest scientific periodicals, international electronic library bases both from the university territory and from any other location are available for doctoral students, which allow them to have access and get to know the scientific resources of the relevant research field to achieve the learning outcomes of the programme;
- In order to implement the scientific-research component, the HEI promotes the sharing of scientific-research infrastructure both within the institution and among other higher educational and scientific institutions outside it;
- HEI constantly takes care of the renewal and development of scientific-research/creative research infrastructure.

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

#### **Cluster evaluation**

##### **Description and Analysis of Cluster**

The Master's and Doctoral programmes in Informatics at Sokhumi State University are supported by adequate material, technical, and informational resources that ensure the effective achievement of programme learning outcomes. The University provides four fully equipped computer laboratories, each containing 15 workstations, while two additional labs are currently under development. These facilities adequately support both teaching and research components, allowing students to engage in practical and experimental activities in line with programme requirements.

The University has also benefited from a recent grant from the Ministry of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia for computer equipment, specifically allocated to strengthen the Informatics programmes. The library provides access to essential international databases such as Scopus, ScienceDirect, ACM Digital Library, and zbMath Open, giving students and staff access to a broad range of current scientific publications and research materials.

The institution maintains and updates its technical infrastructure and digital resources regularly, and both students and staff confirmed unrestricted access to computing facilities, online resources, and digital platforms used for teaching and assessment. Library and IT staff assist users in navigating electronic databases and e-learning systems, supporting effective use of resources.

Overall, the material and digital infrastructure effectively support teaching, learning, and research activities. However, it is suggested to continue updating the library's printed and electronic collections, particularly by acquiring the latest textbooks and specialized references relevant to the current courses of the Master's and Doctoral programmes, in order to ensure continuous alignment with modern scientific developments.

The programmes fully comply with the requirements of this sub-standard.

**Individual evaluation** - An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Informatics, Master's)**

The Master's programme is provided with all necessary learning resources, including modern laboratories, licensed software, and access to international digital databases. The University ensures that students can effectively apply theoretical knowledge through hands-on work in the computer labs. Internet connectivity and e-learning tools are available and function reliably.

Students have access to international databases such as Scopus, ScienceDirect, ACM, and zbMath Open, which are directly relevant to Informatics and computer science. These databases enable them to explore recent publications and support the development of their thesis research. Library staff offer guidance on accessing these resources, and course syllabi list updated core literature.

While the infrastructure and library resources are generally sufficient, it is suggested to further enrich the library's printed and digital materials with the latest textbooks and references in Informatics, ensuring that students and staff remain up to date with current academic and technological trends.

The programme fully complies with the requirements of this sub-standard.

**Individual evaluation** - An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 2 (Informatics, Doctoral)**

The Doctoral programme benefits from the same resource base as the Master's programme. Laboratories, computing equipment, and software are appropriate for advanced research activities, supporting doctoral students in conducting experiments and developing scientific projects. Access to international databases such as Scopus, ScienceDirect, ACM, and zbMath

Open enables doctoral candidates to engage with cutting-edge research and apply current methodologies in their dissertations.

The University's ongoing investment in technical infrastructure, combined with the new laboratory expansion, ensures sustainability of material resources. Staff and students have full access to digital resources both on-site and remotely, and the electronic learning platforms facilitate distance learning and communication.

Although the current library holdings meet programme needs, continued renewal of printed and electronic literature is encouraged to further strengthen the research base and ensure continuous alignment with global scientific developments.

The programme fully complies with the requirements of this sub-standard.

#### Evidences/Indicators

- Inventory and documentation of computer laboratories, technical devices, and digital infrastructure.
- Records confirming recent Ministry of Education grant for ICT equipment.
- Library catalogues, licenses, and access certificates for Scopus, ScienceDirect, ACM, and zbMath Open databases.
- Compliance check of library holdings against core literature listed in syllabi.
- Usage statistics for digital and online resources.
- Interviews with students, faculty, and library staff confirming accessibility and adequacy of facilities.

<p><b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b></p>	<p><b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)</p>	<p><b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)</p>
<p><b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b></p>		<p>Continue upgrading and expanding the library's printed and electronic collections with up-to-date textbooks and references in Informatics to maintain alignment with international academic standards and</p>

		strengthen the research base of both programmes.
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>		
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>		

## Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

<b>Component <a href="#">4.4. Material Resources</a></b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>	Complies
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>	Complies

## **4.5. Programme/Faculty/School Budget and Programme Financial Sustainability** **Accreditation standards indicators**

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

### **PHD Programme indicators**

- The budget of the HEI/faculty/school/programme provides support and funding mechanisms to the doctoral students for implementation of the teaching and research components of the doctoral education programme.
- The budget of the HEI/faculty/school/programme provides sources/mechanisms of financial support to facilitate the implementation of research by academic and/or research staff, including funding for
- publishing scientific articles in peer-reviewed journals with international index, for participation in scientific conferences, research trips and research/creative projects, for publication monographs and other research, creative/performing activities;
- The budget of the HEI/faculty/school/programme for the effective implementation of the doctoral education programme envisages the development of scientific-research/artistic infrastructure;
- The HEI facilitates the search for external funding sources for targeted research within the doctoral education programme.

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

### **Cluster evaluation**

#### **Description and Analysis of Cluster**

The Master and Doctoral Programmes in Informatics are fully financed by the university through a combination of tuition income, national and international educational and scientific grants, investments and other legally permitted revenue sources. University financial resources are systematically allocated to support teaching, research, library development, infrastructure and extracurricular activities, both in the current period and for sustainable future development. The budgets for the Master's and Doctoral Informatics programmes are approved by the Faculty Council and integrated into the university's overall budget. To strengthen the financial autonomy of the programmes, it is recommended increasing budget allocations for laboratory equipment, student internships and publication costs in impact factor journals, and for staff to actively seek additional funding from international partners and local businesses. This approach would not only enhance the programmes' financial sustainability but also support the professional development of staff and facilitate fuller integration of their research activities into international scientific networks.

**Individual evaluation** - An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Master in Informatics, VII)<sup>37</sup>**

The Master's Programme in Informatics enrolling nine students. The programme operates with a total income of GEL 20250 and expenses of GEL 20200, resulting in a small surplus of GEL 50, reflecting careful financial management.

Expenditures are primarily directed toward research and academic development, including international and domestic business trips, personnel training, conferences and workshops, publication of scientific papers and the acquisition of teaching and scientific materials. Direct expenses (GEL 20200) covering business trips (domestic GEL 1000; international GEL 3000), office expenses, research activities and academic events. Office and administrative costs are minimal (GEL 600, primarily for literature and stationery) and no allocations are made for laboratory equipment, student internships or indirect operational costs. Other goods and services (totally GEL 15600) including personnel training (GEL 2000), conferences and workshops (GEL 3000), publication of scientific papers (GEL 4000), purchase of scientific works and teaching materials (GEL 3000), laboratory consumables (GEL 500) and cultural/educational events (GEL 1000).

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (PhD in Informatics, VIII)<sup>38</sup>**

The Doctoral Programme in Informatics is accredited and currently enrolls 12 students for a 60 ECTS credit curriculum. The programme operates with a total income of GEL 27000 and expenses of GEL 27200, resulting in a minor deficit of GEL 200. Overall, the budget demonstrates careful financial planning and a focus on core doctoral priorities.

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<sup>37</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

<sup>38</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

Expenditures are primarily directed toward research and academic development, including support for conferences, workshops, publication of papers in impact factor journals and personnel training (totally GEL 18600). International and domestic business trips represent a notable portion of the budget (GEL 8000 (domestic GEL 3000; international GEL 5000)), reflecting the programme’s commitment to scholarly networking and collaboration. Minimal spending is allocated to office supplies, scientific materials and illustrative or teaching resources.

Notably, the programmes’ budgets do not include allocations for laboratory equipment or student internships. While this aligns spending with the research-focused nature of the master and doctoral programmes, it may limit flexibility in supporting practical training or unexpected operational needs. Additionally, the costs allocated for publishing scientific papers in impact factor journals are very limited for both programmes and should be increased to better support research dissemination and academic visibility.

During the interview process, it was highlighted that the primary sources of funding for the programmes and related research activities are grants, with staff predominantly focusing on obtaining grants from the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation.

**Evidences/Indicators**

- Self-evaluation report
- Faculty Budget
- Programmes’ Budgets
- Interview results

<b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	<b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
<b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b>	<p>It is recommended that the university consider increasing budget allocations for laboratory equipment, student internships and publication costs in impact factor journals. This would enhance practical training opportunities, provide greater operational flexibility and strengthen the research output and international visibility of both the master’s and doctoral programmes.</p> <p>It is recommended that staff actively seek additional funding from</p>	

	international partners and local businesses.	
Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)		
Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)		

## Evaluation

Component <a href="#">4.5. Programme/Faculty/School Budget and Programme Financial Sustainability</a>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)	Substantially Complies
Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)	Substantially Complies

## 5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities

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

### 5.1. Internal Quality Evaluation

#### Accreditation standards indicators

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

#### PHD Programme indicators

- Internal quality assurance mechanisms of the doctoral educational programme include the evaluation of the scientific-research component, resources, and support mechanisms of the doctoral student. Evaluation results are applied for the improvement of the HEI's activities and the doctoral programme.
- The activities of the staff implementing the teaching and scientific components of the programme, including the supervisor/co-supervisor of the doctoral thesis are evaluated within the framework of the monitoring of the doctoral educational programme and the evaluation results are used to improve the staff performance;
- The doctoral education programme regularly uses formative peer review to improve the doctoral programme and the research environment;
- In order to develop a doctoral programme, all the interested parties (doctoral student, graduate, staff, doctoral student's supervisor, co-supervisor, employer, etc.) are involved in the evaluation of the doctoral programme implementation.

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

## Cluster evaluation

### Description and Analysis of Cluster

The quality assurance system at Sokhumi State University and within the Faculty of Natural Sciences, Mathematics, Technology and Pharmacy demonstrates a structured, systematic and legally grounded approach that aligns well with national and European quality standards. The institution effectively applies the principles of the “Plan-Do-Check-Act” (PDCA) cycle and continuously works to strengthen its internal QA mechanisms.

The Academic Council has approved the “Mechanisms for Assessing the Potential for Improving the Quality of Education,” which outlines procedures for assessing educational programmes, the learning process, research activities and staff performance. This formal framework provides coherence and accountability in QA implementation.

The planning and implementation of educational programmes and their QA processes are led by representatives of both central and faculty quality assurance services. At the same time, broad stakeholder involvement is ensured through mechanisms such as surveys, working groups, systematic and needs-based research. This inclusive structure promotes a participatory quality culture across all levels of the institution.

It is noteworthy that some of the learning outcomes formulated in the programmes within the cluster do not fully correspond to the academic level expected of master’s and doctoral studies. According to the programme head, the development of these outcomes was guided by a sectoral document and several outcomes were directly transferred from it into the programmes. A comparison between the master’s programme learning outcomes and the sectoral document confirms this fact. However, the doctoral programme does not have a sector-specific framework defining the expected learning outcomes.

It is essential that, in both programmes, the learning outcomes are revised and formulated in alignment with the National Qualifications Framework, ensuring consistency with the expected level descriptors. The active involvement of the Quality Assurance Service in this process is crucial, as is the provision of appropriate consultations with the academic staff responsible for programmes development.

The development and updating of educational programmes grouped in the cluster, as well as the preparation of the self-evaluation report for the Master’s and Doctoral Programmes in Informatics, involved a wide range of participants, including university administration, academic and invited staff, active students and graduates. Such collaboration reflects transparency, shared responsibility and commitment to programmes improvement.

**Individual evaluation** - An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

### Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Master in Informatics, VII)<sup>39</sup>

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the doctoral level educational programme, or the educational program for which a recommendation and/or **suggestion** is issued, with the

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<sup>39</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

### Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (PhD in Informatics, VIII)<sup>40</sup>

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the doctoral level educational programme, or the educational program for which a recommendation and/or **suggestion** is issued, with the requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

#### Evidences/Indicators

- Self-evaluation report
- Education Programme
- Statute of the Quality Assurance Service
- Mechanisms for Assessing the Potential for Improving the Quality of Education
- Learning outcomes assessment mechanism
- Questionnaire forms
- Interview results

<b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	<b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
<b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b>	It is recommended that both programmes revise and align their learning outcomes with the National Qualifications Framework to ensure they correspond to the appropriate master's and doctoral levels. The Quality Assurance Service should actively support this process through consultations and methodological guidance to the programme staff.	
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>		

<sup>40</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)		
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## Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component <a href="#">5.1. Internal Quality Evaluation</a>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)	Substantially Complies
Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)	Substantially Complies

## 5.2. External Quality Evaluation

### Accreditation standards indicators

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

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

### Cluster evaluation

#### Description and Analysis of Cluster

According to the cluster self-assessment document, external evaluation of educational programmes at Sokhumi State University is conducted through authorization and accreditation procedures. During these processes, data obtained from self-assessment reports and authorization/accreditation visits are analyzed and recommendations are developed which are subsequently used in programmes development. In addition, the university has implemented the practice of collecting and sharing feedback from graduates, employers and potential employers, as well as conducting peer evaluations of educational programmes with partner universities and organizations operating in similar fields.

University systematically submits self-assessment reports for each educational programmes to the National Center for the Development of Education Quality, adhering to prescribed deadlines and formats. The Master's and Doctoral programmes grouped in a cluster regularly engage with external quality assessment processes, carefully reviewing recommendations provided during accreditation and authorization procedures and incorporating them into programmes modifications and improvements.

Additionally, the development and updating of clustered programmes involved formative peer review as an external evaluation mechanism. Programmes were reviewed by field experts, including field representator from Georgian Technical University. A peer expert evaluated the content, curricula, syllabi, objectives and learning outcomes of the programmes. Peer evaluator recommendations focused on increasing internationalization, promoting joint research projects, improving laboratory infrastructure, ensuring periodic software updates and adding new courses to the curriculum (e.g., data science and analytics, blockchain, etc.). The self-

evaluation groups actively utilized feedback from these external colleagues to enhance the content, structure and quality of both Master’s and Doctoral programmes.

**Individual evaluation** – An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

**Description and Analysis – Programme 1 (Master in Informatics, VII)<sup>41</sup>**

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the doctoral level educational programme, or the educational program for which a recommendation and/or **suggestion** is issued, with the requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

**Description and Analysis – Programme 1 (PhD in Informatics, VIII)<sup>42</sup>**

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the doctoral level educational programme, or the educational program for which a recommendation and/or **suggestion** is issued, with the requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

**Evidences/Indicators**

- Self-evaluation report
- Education Programmes
- Peer experts' evaluation reports
- Interview results

<b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	<b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
<b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b>		
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>		
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>		

<sup>41</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

<sup>42</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

## Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component <b>5.2. External Quality Evaluation</b>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)	Complies
Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)	Complies

### 5.3. Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review

#### Accreditation standards indicators

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

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

##### Cluster evaluation

##### Description and Analysis of Cluster

The monitoring and periodic evaluation of the Master's and Doctoral Programmes in Informatics demonstrates a systematic, inclusive and continuous approach to quality assurance. The evaluation process actively involves all relevant stakeholders, including academic and invited staff, administrative personnel, students, graduates and employers. Data collection and analysis are conducted through surveys, systematic research and structured information processing. Students participate in semester evaluations of courses and lecturers, providing feedback that is processed by the Quality Assurance Service and communicated back to both staff and students. These evaluation results are then actively used to modify, adapt and improve the programmes, ensuring responsiveness to learners' needs and evolving academic standards.

To assess the learning outcomes of these programmes, a formal "Mechanism for Assessing Programme Learning Outcomes" has been developed. This mechanism provides clear guidance for programme implementation, specifying direct and indirect methods for outcome assessment, the frequency of monitoring, instruments for measuring each learning outcome and procedures for reviewing and responding to the results.

In line with the practices established at SSU, the monitoring process for the master's and doctoral programmes in Informatics within the cluster was conducted with the involvement of stakeholders and using various mechanisms. Specifically, to improve the educational programmes:

- Continuous surveys are conducted each semester to evaluate courses and instructors; the results are analyzed and used to inform programme modifications.
- Periodic surveys are conducted among programme graduates and employers; the results are analyzed and applied to programme development.

- Programme objectives, learning outcomes and curricula were evaluated by employers, as well as internal and external experts.
- Labour market research was conducted to ensure programme relevance to current and emerging sector needs.
- Students' academic performance results were analyzed.
- Programmes were benchmarked against similar Georgian and international higher education programmes in the same field.

The results of this monitoring and evaluation process have led to a series of improvements within the clustered programmes, including the addition of new courses, clarification of programme and course titles, incorporation of diverse teaching methods, inclusion of additional course topics and other updates to better meet learning outcomes and stakeholder expectations.

**Individual evaluation** - An individual evaluation of the doctoral educational program or of the educational program for which a recommendation and/or advice is issued.

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Master in Informatics, VII)<sup>43</sup>**

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the doctoral level educational programme, or the educational program for which a recommendation and/or **suggestion** is issued, with the requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

#### **Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (PhD in Informatics, VIII)<sup>44</sup>**

Describe, analyse and evaluate the compliance of the doctoral level educational programme, or the educational program for which a recommendation and/or **suggestion** is issued, with the requirements of the component of the standard, based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit.

#### **Evidences/Indicators**

- Component evidences/indicators, including the relevant documents and interview results
- Self-evaluation report
- Education programmes
- Labor market and employer requirements analysis document
- Analysis of graduate survey results
- Graduate employment statistics
- Statistical analysis of student survey results
- Annual report of the Quality Assurance Service
- Interview results

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<sup>43</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

<sup>44</sup> Please repeat the description and analysis field according to the number of programmes, for example, programme 2 (name, cycle), programme 3 (name, cycle) and so on. (Please consider this reference format when evaluating each subsequent component).

<b>Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	<b>Suggestion(s):</b> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
<b>General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster</b>		
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>		
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>		

### Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

<b>Component <u>5.3. Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review</u></b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>Programme 1 (MS Informatics, VII)</b>	Complies
<b>Programme 2 (PhD Informatics, VIII)</b>	Complies

Attached documentation (if applicable):

### Signatures

#### Chair of Accreditation Experts Panel

Seifedine Kadry



#### Of the member(s) of the Accreditation Experts Panel

Nani Arabuli, signature



Giorgi Iashvili



kristine Chikhladze 

Tamar Tkhelidze 