



**NATIONAL CENTER FOR
EDUCATIONAL QUALITY
ENHANCEMENT**

Accreditation Expert Group Report on Cluster of Higher Education Programmes

**Name of the Cluster of Educational Programmes according to the Fields of Study of the
Classifier**

**Doctoral Educational Program in History of Georgia
Doctoral Educational Program in Archaeology**

**Name of Higher Educational Institution
LEPL - Akaki Tsereteli State University**

Evaluation Date(s)
November 3-4, 2025

Report Submission Date
21.01.2026

Tbilisi

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Information on the Higher educational Institution

Name of Institution Indicating its Organizational Legal Form	LEPL - Akaki Tsereteli State University
Identification Code of Institution	212693049
Type of the Institution	University

Expert Panel Members

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I. Information on the Cluster of Educational Programmes

	Programme 1	Programme 2
Name of the educational programme In Georgia	საქართველოს ისტორია	არქეოლოგია
Name of the educational programme In English	History of Georgia	Archaeology
Level of higher education	Doctoral studies	Doctoral studies
Qualification to be awarded	Doctor of History	Doctor of Archaeology
Name and code of the detailed field	History and Archaeology 0222	History and Archaeology 0222
Indication of the right to provide teaching of subject/subjects/group of subjects of the relevant level of general education¹		
Language of instruction	Georgian	Georgian
Number of ECTS credits	40	40
Programme Status (Accredited/Non-accredited/Conditionally Accredited/New/International Accreditation) Indicating Relevant Decision (number, date)	new	new

¹ 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 under review comprises two educational programmes, both on doctoral level: History of Georgia and Archaeology. In 2024, the preparation of the aforementioned doctoral educational programs at the Faculty of Humanities began in accordance with the Competency Descriptor of the “National Qualifications Framework” approved by Appendix 1 to the Order No. 69/N of the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Georgia of April 10, 2019, the “Classifier of Fields of Study” approved by Appendix 2 to this Order, accreditation standards, and the Framework Document for Doctoral Level Education. The qualifications to be awarded by the programs grouped in the cluster were determined according to the fields of study corresponding to the detailed field “0222 History and Archaeology” in the updated classifier of fields of study, in particular, the qualification to be awarded for the doctoral educational program “History of Georgia” is “Doctor of History”, and for the doctoral educational program “Archaeology” - “Doctor of Archaeology”.

▪ **Overview of the Accreditation Site Visit**

The assessment process (site visit) at the Akaki Tsereteli State University (hereinafter referred to as *the Institution*) was conducted on November 3–4, 2025. An initial online meeting of the Accreditation Expert Group was held five days prior to the site visit. During this meeting, the group members shared their preliminary analyses and observations regarding the programmes within the cluster. On the first day of the visit, the Expert Group held meetings with representatives of the institution’s and faculty’s administration, the self-assessment group, programme heads, academic and invited staff, as well as employers. The group also evaluated the institution’s material and technical resources using modern means of communication, technology (projectors, laptops, smart blackboard), library resources (books, journals, repositories, database access). On the second day, the experts conducted meetings with current students and graduates of the programmes, as well as with representatives of the institution’s and faculty’s quality assurance services. At the conclusion of the visit, the Expert Group presented its preliminary findings to the institution. The programme staff, upon reviewing the key points raised, expressed agreement with the observations and evaluations shared by the experts.

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

Overall, both PhD programmes—History of Georgia and Archaeology—demonstrate a good level of compliance with national doctoral education standards. Most criteria are either compliant or substantially compliant, with only isolated areas requiring more significant improvement. However, to achieve full compliance and alignment with best international practices, several specific recommendations and suggestions must be addressed.

Doctoral Programme in History of Georgia

The PhD programme in History of Georgia demonstrates a strong overall level of compliance. Its objectives fully meet required criteria, while the learning outcomes, evaluation mechanisms, and programme structure are assessed as substantially compliant. To address these gaps, it is recommended that learning outcomes be reformulated to clearly demonstrate advanced knowledge and critical analytical abilities, explicitly reflecting principles of research ethics. The curriculum requires updating: specifically, the course "Modern Methods and Technologies of Teaching and

Assessment" and "Methods of Scientific Research" should include topics on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digital tools, alongside updated literature. Additionally, the mandatory reading for "Georgia and the Outside World" requires updating. Suggestions for improvement include adopting a more unified syllabus format to ensure thematic cohesion and integrating modern digital research tools (such as historical GIS platforms) to strengthen the research dimension. While student consulting and supervision are generally compliant, the programme should ensure that office hours for supervisors are formally established and communicated.

Doctoral Programme in Archaeology

The PhD programme in Archaeology also meets the majority of standards but requires focused attention on internationalization and curriculum consistency. While programme objectives comply, the structure and academic courses are substantially compliant. It is recommended that the programme strengthen its international engagement by expanding cooperation with foreign archaeological institutions and renewing expired memoranda. The elective course "Scientific Work Strategies" must be updated to include AI in research processes and research ethics. Suggestions include expanding admission prerequisites to allow applicants with Master's degrees in social or natural sciences, reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of the field. Furthermore, the syllabus structure should be refined to eliminate thematic overlap in period-based courses, and modern technologies (Geophysics, 3D documentation) should be better integrated. To enhance financial and operational sustainability, the programme is urged to increase doctoral student participation in international fieldwork and joint projects.

Quality Assurance and Cluster-Wide Monitoring

Across both programmes, the monitoring and periodic review standards are assessed as partially compliant, signalling the need for a more systematic approach. To rectify this, the following recommendations must be implemented:

1. Self-Evaluation Process: The self-assessment groups must include students and graduates. The reports should clearly identify areas for future strengthening with specific timelines.
2. Assessment of Learning Outcomes: The University must implement mechanisms for the direct assessment of learning outcomes, utilizing specific components from third-level (reinforcement) study courses.
3. Benchmarking: The programmes should be periodically compared with similar programmes at foreign universities to ensure alignment with modern requirements.

Finally, to improve the student experience, it is suggested that policies for formative feedback be developed, and that information regarding international projects and conferences be institutionally organized and equally accessible to all doctoral students.

▪ **Recommendations**

Cluster:

- It is recommended that, alongside academic integrity, the learning outcomes explicitly reflect principles of research ethics, ensuring that the doctoral program aligns with contemporary challenges and complies with international standards of research conduct.
- It is recommended that the course “Modern Methods and Technologies of Teaching and Assessment” include topics related to the use of artificial intelligence and digital learning tools in the teaching process, and that the course content be updated with the latest relevant literature.
- It is recommended to renew the expired memoranda with partner institutions.
- Add office and consultation hours for supervisors
- To conduct a comprehensive self-evaluation it is recommended to include students and graduates in the self-assessment group (even from similar programs).
- It is recommended to identify areas for future program strengthening/enhancement as well as planned activities and timelines for the areas to be improved, especially since this is required in the standard form of the self-assessment report.
- Within the framework of periodic monitoring of the program, the Quality Assurance Department should use as a direct assessment of the achievement of the learning outcomes of the program the specific assessment component/activity from third level (reinforcement level) study courses, which directly measures the mentioned learning outcome. The University should implement the mechanism for evaluating the learning outcomes of the programmes.
- Periodically the programme should be compared with similar programmes of foreign universities. To bring the programmes in compliance with the modern requirements, the best international practices should be applied.

Programme 1 – History of Georgia, PhD

- It is recommended to strengthen the internationalization of the presented programs, which will contribute to the implementation of best practices in the programs, the development of scientific and research activities, and the proper planning and implementation of the research component.
- It is recommended that the course “Methods of Scientific Research and Academic Writing” include topics on the use of artificial intelligence in the research process and on the principles of research ethics, and that the course content be updated with relevant sources and literature.
- It is recommended to update the mandatory reading materials for the elective course “Georgia and the Outside World”.

Programme 2 - Archaeology, PhD

- It is recommended that the elective course “Scientific Work Strategies” include topics on the use of artificial intelligence in the research process and on the principles of research ethics, and that the course content be updated with relevant sources and literature.

- **Suggestions**

Cluster:

- It is desirable to ensure the development and implementation of research ethics norms and mechanisms within the doctoral educational programs presented in the cluster.
- It is advised that the programme strengthen international cooperation and increase doctoral students’ participation in fieldwork, joint projects, and methodological workshops to enhance their research skills and the overall visibility of the programme.
- Development of policies for providing formative feedbacks and regular following of the student progress including information and procedures of plagiarism, ethics and academic style.
- Ensure that information provided to students about international projects, conferences, and various activities is institutionally organized and equally accessible to everyone
- Ensure both doctoral students and their supervisors are explicitly informed of the supervision hours;
- Strengthen communication with doctoral students by providing clearer and more accessible information about the regulatory processes and official documents governing supervisor appointment, responsibilities, and supervisory procedures.
- Across both programmes, applying a unified syllabus structure, formulating learning outcomes with greater precision, specifying assessment criteria more clearly, incorporating modern technologies, and making systematic use of student, employer and supervisor feedback could contribute to the ongoing enhancement of the cluster.
- Strengthen international collaboration and increase the involvement of foreign scholars.
- Expand methodological workshops for doctoral students.
- Increase the visibility of doctoral research on university and professional platforms.

Programme 1 – History of Georgia, PhD

- For the History programme, adopting a more unified and clearly structured syllabus format could support stronger thematic cohesion, especially in courses such as “Research and Academic Writing Methods,” “Source Studies and Historiography,” and “Contemporary Issues in Church History.” Broadening the range of updated literature and integrating modern digital research tools (online archives, academic databases, historical GIS platforms) would further strengthen the research dimension of the programme.
- Broaden research methodology support - Additional seminars in source studies, textology, and historical data analysis are suggested to strengthen doctoral students’ methodological competence.
- Expand access to international historical scholarship -It is advisable to increase doctoral students’ participation in international conferences, research visits to foreign archives, and online scholarly seminars.

- Increase visibility of doctoral research - Greater dissemination of doctoral students' research results through university platforms and relevant scholarly publications is recommended.
- Strengthen collaboration with archival and museum institutions - Enhanced cooperation between the university and national/regional archives and museums is encouraged—through specialized trainings, improved access to sources, and support in working with research materials.

Programme 2 - Archaeology, PhD

- It is desirable, based on the results of the assessment of learning outcomes in the Doctoral Program in Archaeology, it will be possible to reconsider the composition of the mandatory and elective courses within the core field of study.
 - It is suggested to expand the admission prerequisites by allowing applicants holding a master's degree in social sciences or natural sciences, considering the interdisciplinary nature of archaeology.
 - It could be beneficial to further refine the structure and terminology of several syllabi to ensure greater internal consistency, especially in courses such as “Archaeological Research Methods,” “Geological and Geophysical Methods in Archaeology,” and the period-based courses where thematic overlap occasionally appears. Additional clarity in assessment components and a stronger integration of modern research technologies (GIS, photogrammetry, geophysics, 3D documentation) could further enhance the programme's academic profile. Periodic updating of literature—particularly in courses like “Bronze Age Archaeology” and “The Classical World and Georgia”—may also enrich the curriculum.
 - Strengthen interdisciplinary methodological training - It is advisable to expand methodological workshops for doctoral students, particularly in areas such as geoarchaeology, data analysis, and conservation technologies.
 - Increase international academic exposure - More active involvement of foreign scholars through joint seminars, online lectures, and participation in international research projects is recommended.
 - Enhance dissemination of fieldwork results - It is suggested to increase the visibility of archaeological fieldwork outcomes through university platforms and professional academic outlets.
 - Improve documentation of supervisory feedback - During doctoral progress monitoring, it is suggested that supervisory comments be documented in a more structured and standardized manner.
- **Quantitative Data Analysis of the educational programme in accordance with the requirements of the accreditation standards, for example:**
 - **Staff and Supervisors** - Number of the staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, international and invited staff), including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction; ratio of the academic/scientific staff and invited staff; ratio of the affiliated and academic staff; ratio of master's and/or doctoral students to supervisors; supervisors' workload scheme;
 - **The Programme 1 - History of Georgia, PhD** operates with a supervisor-to-doctoral-student ratio of 1:1.66, a proportion that may be regarded as generally adequate for ensuring effective

oversight of doctoral research. This ratio suggests that supervisors are responsible for fewer than two doctoral candidates each, which is typically acceptable within doctoral education standards, as it allows for sustained academic guidance, timely feedback, and meaningful engagement with the student's research trajectory. From a workload-management perspective, the ratio does not indicate immediate pressure on supervisory capacity. In terms of academic qualifications, the programme benefits from supervisors who are well aligned with the programme's disciplinary requirements: three members of the supervisory team hold PhD degrees in the relevant sectoral direction, ensuring appropriate subject-matter expertise. However, the institutional integration of the supervisory body is comparatively limited, as only two supervisors are affiliated with the university. As for the **Programme 2 – Archaeology, PhD** it demonstrates a notably favourable supervisory environment, as reflected in its supervisor-to-doctoral-student ratio of 1:0.83. This proportion indicates that supervisory capacity currently exceeds student demand, allowing supervisors to provide highly individualized guidance and sustained academic mentorship. Such a ratio is considered exemplary within doctoral education, as it facilitates close monitoring of research progress, more frequent feedback cycles, and enhanced responsiveness to students' academic and methodological needs. The supervisory team is well qualified and fully aligned with the programme's disciplinary scope: five supervisors hold PhD degrees in the relevant sectoral direction, ensuring strong subject-matter expertise and comprehensive coverage of research areas. Additionally, the programme benefits from a high degree of institutional integration, with all five supervisors affiliated with the university. This full affiliation strengthens the stability and internal coherence of the programme.

- **Scientific/Research Indicators** - Scientific/research index of the individuals, involved in the programme (for the last 5 years): quantitative data papers published in peer-reviewed journals with an international index²; staff participation rates in local and international conferences; other scientific/research indicators;
- The following analysis evaluates the research output and scientific engagement of staff involved in the Archaeology and History of Georgia programmes. The data covers a 5-year period, focusing on peer-reviewed publications, conference participation, and aggregated research indices. The data reveals distinct operational differences between the two disciplines. While the History of Georgia programme demonstrates a significantly higher volume of total output (Aggregate Index: 220), the Archaeology programme (Aggregate Index: 127) displays a stronger relative focus on international dissemination regarding publications. Archaeology has achieved "Internationalization of Content," evidenced by a higher ratio of international-to-local journal publications.

The History of Georgia programme shows a robust volume of production with a strong emphasis on regional relevance. There is a massive prevalence of local journal publications (68) compared to international ones (15). This is consistent with the subject matter; research on the "History of Georgia" is naturally most relevant to local academia and published in the native language or specific regional journals. The staff is extremely active in conferences, with a total of 97 presentations (60 international, 37 local). It is notable that despite the focus on local publications, the staff is very successful at disseminating this local knowledge at international conferences (60), suggesting an effort to bring Georgian history to a wider

² In case of doctoral program grouped into a cluster should be indicated as a separate analysis.

audience. With a total index of 220, this programme is highly productive in terms of sheer quantity, likely driven by the high turnover of local articles and conference papers. History of Georgia has achieved "Internationalization of Presence," evidenced by high attendance at international conferences, even while their written scholarship remains rooted in local journals.

The Archaeology programme displays a research profile heavily weighted toward internationalization and fieldwork-related output. Notably, this programme publishes more frequently in international journals (18) than in local journals (14). This suggests that the research topics have global relevance or that the staff is actively integrated into the wider European or global archaeological community. There is a strong disparity between international (34) and local (15) conference presentations. The staff is more than twice as likely to present their findings abroad, indicating a high level of mobility and external peer engagement. A significant portion of the index (46 points) is derived from "Other scientific/research indicators." In the context of Archaeology, this likely reflects non-journal outputs such as excavation reports, artifact catalogs, or fieldwork analyses, which are critical to the discipline but often separate from standard journal publishing.

Both programmes show healthy engagement. The History of Georgia programme acts as a volume driver (high quantity of local output), while Archaeology acts as a quality/reach driver (higher proportion of international journal hits).

- **Academic Staff Turnover Rate** (for the last 5 years) (e.g. the number of retired staff, the number of staff who left the institution and the number of new staff, etc.);

This section evaluates the stability of the human resources powering the History of Georgia and Archaeology programmes. The data measures the movement of Academic and Invited personnel over the last 5 years to assess institutional continuity and workforce sustainability. Both programmes demonstrate identical, static workforce metrics over the observed period. There has been zero movement in personnel for both Academic and Invited staff categories. The programmes boast an exceptional retention rate of 100%, reflecting a highly experienced and dedicated academic team. This stability has allowed for uninterrupted delivery of the curriculum and sustained research focus. Moving forward, the strategic plan involves opening opportunities for early-career researchers to ensure intergenerational knowledge transfer.

- **Data on the Individuals Enrolled** (for the last 5 years; in case of active programmes); number of student places announced for the programme; student progression by academic years;

As the Programme 1 - History of Georgia, PhD is newly established, there is no historical data on student enrollment, progression, or graduation for the past five years. The absence of student cohorts means that key indicators such as retention rates, completion timelines, or supervisor–student interactions have not yet been tested in practice. For the initial admission cycle, the university plans to announce 5 student places. Considering the current supervisor-to-student ratio of 1:1.66, this planned intake remains within an acceptable workload range for the existing supervisory team. The ratio suggests that the supervisory capacity is sufficient to accommodate the first cohort without creating overload. Given that the programme has yet to admit its first cohort, student progression data by academic year cannot be reported at this stage. The first meaningful progression indicators are expected to emerge after the first year

of operation, once the first cohort advances through coursework, research proposal development, and supervision processes. **Programme 2 – Archaeology, PhD** similarly has no enrolled doctoral students, as it is also newly launched. Consequently, no retrospective data on student numbers, annual progression, or completion trends is available for the previous five-year period. The university intends to open 5 student places for the initial cohort. With a highly favourable supervisor-to-student ratio of 1:0.83, the existing supervisory resources exceed the immediate demands of the planned intake. This provides a strong foundation for high-quality student support from the programme's outset.

- **Analysis of other quantitative data provided in the self-assessment and annexes.**
- **Brief Overview of the Best Practices (if applicable)³**
 - **Information on Sharing or Not Sharing the Argumentative Position of the HEI**

Cluster recommendation:

It is recommended that learning outcomes be formulated in such a way as to clearly demonstrate the advanced knowledge, research skills, and critical analytical capabilities developed by students through the doctoral programme, thereby emphasizing its academic and research-oriented nature.

This recommendation and the related opinions are presented in the Expert Report — Standard 1.2 (pp. 21–25). The report notes that the learning outcomes of the doctoral programmes “History of Georgia” and “Archaeology” are logically consistent with the programme objectives and the specific nature of the field of study. The University has emphasized that the integration of educational and research components within the programmes, together with the applied teaching methods, ensures the achievement of programme objectives and contributes to the preparation of appropriately qualified specialists.

The expert panel acknowledges and has shared the University's position. At the same time, it is clarified that the recommendation was not made in the context of alignment between objectives and learning outcomes, but rather with regard to the formulation of the learning outcomes. Specifically, the learning outcomes should be articulated more explicitly so that the research focus of the doctoral programmes is clearly visible. Accordingly, ATSU's position regarding this recommendation was shared.

³ A practice that is exceptionally effective and that can serve as a benchmark or example for other educational programme/programmes.

It is recommended to strengthen the internationalization of the presented programs, which will contribute to the implementation of best practices in the programs, the development of scientific and research activities, and the proper planning and implementation of the research component.

The higher education institution partially agrees with this recommendation, noting that the programmes are newly established. The University supports its position by referring to its involvement in various international projects and its active participation in the archaeology programme through close cooperation with relevant institutions and field experts. Taking this explanation into account, the expert panel has shared the University's position and agrees to remove the recommendation with regard to the Archaeology programme, while maintaining the recommendation for the History of Georgia programme.

Programme recommendation

Regarding the opinions given in the ATSU argumentative position on the doctoral programmes “History of Georgia” and “Archaeology”, the following should be said:

1. History of Georgia, Ph.D

It is recommended to update the mandatory reading materials for the elective course “Georgia and the Outside World”.

The conclusions of the experts regarding the academic course/subject are presented in Expert Report – Standard 1.5, pp. 34–36. In this particular case, we believe that appealing to the status of the Academic Course/Subject is not relevant, since the basis for the recommendation wasn't the learning outcomes of the course and the issue of compliance with the programme's learning outcomes due to its optional status. The expert group focused on the literature on the course “*Georgia and the Outside World*”, which cannot ensure the achievement of the course's goal. Referring to the optional status of the course is inappropriate because we aren't discussing the updating of literature in the context of achieving the programme result. Rather, we are talking about the opportunity for students to expand their knowledge on issues of interest to them through the study course they have chosen, based on its goal and content, especially since optional subjects help students to develop their own interests. In the case of doctoral programmes, we'll also note that the emphasis is on using authentic sources in teaching literature to ensure the relevance of the title, purpose and content of the course. We'll also add the opinion presented by the HEI in the argumentation

position: *“As for its content, it is acceptable and changes will necessarily be implemented by the academic staff. Specifically, the course will be updated with new sources and literature”*. If the HEI agrees that changes are necessary and that the academic staff will make them, their position on moving the recommendation to the suggestions status is even more incomprehensible. Therefore, it is important to update the literature for the teaching course *“Georgia and the Outside World”*.

Accordingly, ATSU's position regarding this recommendation was not shared.

2. Archeology

It is recommended that the elective course “Scientific Work Strategies” include topics on the use of artificial intelligence in the research process and on the principles of research ethics, and that the course content be updated with relevant sources and literature.

The ATSSU's position on the abovementioned recommendation is the same as that presented for the course “Georgia and the Outside World “. The experts' position on the recommendation is also identical to that presented for the aforementioned academic course. Integrating such topics as the use of artificial intelligence in the research process and the principles of research ethics into the content of the training course “Scientific Work Strategies”, as well as adding relevant sources and literature, is still relevant.

Accordingly, ATSU's position regarding the recommendation was not shared.

- **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**

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

No	Contents/ Standard	Programme 1 History of Georgia	Programme 2 Archaeology
1.	Educational Programme Objectives, Learning Outcomes and their Compliance with the Programme	Substantially	Substantially
1.1	<u>Programme Objectives</u>	Complies	Complies
1.2	<u>Programme Learning Outcomes</u>	Substantially	Substantially
1.3	<u>Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes</u>	Complies	Complies
1.4	<u>Structure and Content of Educational Programme</u>	Substantially	Complies
1.5	<u>Academic Course/Subject</u>	Substantially	Substantially
2.	Methodology and Organization of Teaching, Adequacy of Evaluation of Programme Mastering	Complies	Complies
2.1	<u>Programme Admission Preconditions</u>	Complies	Complies

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

5	5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities	Substantially	Substantially
5.1	<u>Internal Quality Evaluation</u>	Substantially	Substantially
5.2	<u>External Quality Evaluation</u>	Complies	Complies
5.3	<u>Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review</u>	Substantially	Substantially

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

The objectives of the educational programs grouped in the cluster are clearly stated, realistic and achievable. The objectives of each program correspond to the requirements of the qualification descriptor of the appropriate level of the National Qualifications Framework, the content of the detailed field of study (0222 History and Archaeology) defined in Article 3 of the Classifier of Fields of Study, the mission of Akaki Tsereteli State University, the strategic development plan of the university and the faculty.

Akaki Tsereteli State University, as a multidisciplinary higher educational institution, strives to provide high-quality education and research activities. The university is aware of its responsibility to society and aims to contribute to the development of the city and the region with its activities. The goals and learning outcomes of the programs are achieved through core courses, which are the basis for the personal and professional development of students.

When formulating the goals of the educational programs grouped in the cluster, the working group took into account the labor market requirements and development trends in the field.

The educational programs will be posted on the university website and will be available to any interested person.

Cluster evaluation

Description and Analysis of Cluster

The doctoral educational programs in History of Georgia and Archaeology, included within the cluster, aim to facilitate the creation of new knowledge and the advancement of existing knowledge through contemporary and innovative research. The objectives of each program align with the requirements of the corresponding level of the National Qualifications Framework, the content of the detailed field of study as defined by the Learning Fields Classifier (0222 – History and Archaeology), the Framework for Doctoral Education, as well as the mission of Akaki Tsereteli State University and the strategic development plans of the University and its Faculty.

Akaki Tsereteli State University, as one of the most significant multidisciplinary educational and research centers in Western Georgia, plays a crucial role in regional development and in the study of cultural heritage. The university does not limit itself to an educational function; it represents an intellectual platform where science, innovation, and regional needs are interconnected.

The historical and cultural heritage of Western Georgia requires the preparation of specialists capable of researching Georgian history and archaeological monuments in accordance with modern methodological and technological standards. This objective is pursued through the doctoral educational programs in History of Georgia and Archaeology established at Akaki Tsereteli State University.

The programs offered by the University respond both to national educational policy and to the specific needs of the labor market in Western parts of Georgia. In a region where unique archaeological sites and historical heritage are concentrated, there is a high demand for local professionals capable of studying and researching historical monuments and primary sources.

In defining the objectives of the cluster-based educational programs, the University relies on the actual demands of the labor market and on trends in the development of the field. Consideration is also given to the needs of students in master's programs in the humanities and social sciences, providing them with opportunities to continue their studies and acquire skills for independent research at the next academic level without leaving the region. Additionally, the programs support local employment prospects, as the regional labor market demonstrates a sustained demand for specialists in Georgian history and archaeology.

The doctoral programs in History and Archaeology presented within the cluster are newly developed. Their objectives are clearly formulated, and the goals and learning outcomes of the compulsory courses in both programs are logically aligned with the overall program objectives and outcomes. This alignment ensures that students acquire in-depth knowledge and develop the necessary skills and competencies relevant to the field.

The programs included in the cluster are based on the principles of creating a learning and research environment oriented toward the needs of doctoral students. They integrate local and international

experience, ensure transparent teaching and research processes, and their implementation is grounded in the active involvement of the University's academic staff.

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 (PhD, History of Georgia)⁴

The Doctoral Program in History of Georgia is designed to cultivate highly qualified and competitive researchers capable of contributing to the advancement of national and international historical scholarship. Through a combination of rigorous academic training and independent research, doctoral students acquire a comprehensive mastery of modern scientific research methods, historiographical analysis, and contemporary approaches to teaching and assessment.

The program emphasizes the critical re-evaluation of entrenched stereotypes in Georgian historiography, encouraging students to challenge interpretations shaped by past ideological or conjunctural influences and to develop new, evidence-based perspectives. Doctoral candidates are trained to identify, analyze, and assess both Georgian and foreign historical sources, determine their authenticity and reliability, and integrate them effectively into scholarly discourse.

In addition, the program equips students with the capacity to evaluate complex challenges within the field, articulate these issues in thematic and interdisciplinary discussions at both local and international levels, and manage research processes with intellectual independence and ethical responsibility. By combining advanced research methodologies with a strong commitment to academic integrity and professional ethics, graduates of the program are prepared to produce original, methodologically sound scholarly work that contributes to the deepest understanding of Georgian history.

Description and Analysis - Programme 2 (Ph.D. Archaeology)

The Doctoral Program in Archaeology is designed as an advanced intellectual environment where students engage with both the theoretical and practical dimensions of cultural heritage research. The program cultivates specialists who not only master contemporary methodologies for investigating archaeological monuments, but also develop a nuanced understanding of the principles of heritage protection, conservation, restoration, and the complex processes involved in monument stabilization, rehabilitation, and modernization.

Doctoral candidates are trained to conduct both reconnaissance and in-depth field research, integrating meticulous documentation, data analysis, and interpretation into a coherent scholarly

⁴ 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).

approach. The program emphasizes critical reflection on the methodological and conceptual challenges inherent in archaeology, guiding students to formulate research strategies that are responsive to the evolving needs of the field.

By engaging with modern technologies and interdisciplinary approaches, students develop the intellectual autonomy necessary to produce original scholarly work, effectively communicate their findings, and contribute to the broader discourse on heritage preservation. Throughout this process, adherence to academic integrity and professional ethics remains a central pillar, ensuring that each research endeavor not only advances knowledge but also upholds the ethical responsibilities inherent to the study and preservation of cultural heritage.

In the context of this program, it was noted that there is a particularly high demand in the region for specialists equipped with strong research skills. This need is further intensified by the fact that, for several years now, Akaki Tsereteli State University has been actively collaborating with an international Polish expedition to conduct joint archaeological fieldwork. Such cooperation underscores the urgency of addressing the shortage of qualified research archaeologists in Kutaisi and across Western parts of Georgia.

Evidences/Indicators

- Component evidences/indicators, including the relevant documents and interview results
- PHD - History of Georgia. Doctoral Program - Annex N1
- PHD - History of Georgia. Map of Program Objectives and Learning Outcomes - Annex 1
- PHD - Archeology. Doctoral Program - Annex 1
- PHD - Archeology. Map of Program Objectives and Learning Outcomes - Annex 1
- Analysis of the labor market and employer requirements - Annex 7
- Memoranda - Annex 8
- Self-evaluation report submitted by the University
- Site-visit interviews
- ATSU website <https://atsu.edu.ge/>

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	<u>Recommendation(s):</u> 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)	<u>Suggestion(s):</u> 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)
General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster	none	none
Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)	none	none

Programme (Archaeology, Ph.D.)	2	none	none
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Evaluation ⁵

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component 1.1 - Programme Objectives	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)	Complies
Programme 2 (Ph.D. Archaeology)	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

The learning outcomes of the clustered doctoral educational programs in History of Georgia and Archaeology are logically aligned with the objectives of the respective educational programs and correspond to the descriptors of the classifier of the 8th level of qualification. The programs presented are newly developed. The learning outcomes have been formulated with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders (academic, scientific, and invited staff, employers, and others), and they also take into account the needs and expectations expressed by students and graduates of related doctoral programs regarding the refinement of the programs and the achievement of clearly defined results. The outcomes are measurable, attainable, and realistic.

The instructional and research components embedded within the programs, along with the selected teaching methods, ensure the achievement of the established objectives and facilitate the preparation of specialists possessing the appropriate academic qualifications. These graduates will be employed

⁵ Evaluation is performed for each programme separately.

in various educational, cultural, and social institutions in positions corresponding to their level of education. Their research and practical activities will contribute to addressing existing research challenges in the fields of history and archaeology in Georgia, as well as to the dissemination of the results obtained.

The learning outcomes of the presented programs logically derive from the programs' objectives and correspond to the challenges and demands existing within the field, as well as to the mission and strategic plan of Akaki Tsereteli State University. The learning outcomes are coherently aligned with the program objectives and the specific nature of the field of study; they clearly describe the knowledge, skills, and/or levels of responsibility and autonomy that students are expected to acquire upon completion of the program.

However, it is recommended to incorporate aspects of research ethics, which have become particularly relevant and challenging in the contemporary era—especially considering the widespread use of artificial intelligence.

Cluster evaluation

Description and Analysis of Cluster - Programme 1 - History of Georgia, Doctoral Studies

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.

The learning outcomes of the Doctoral Educational Program in History of Georgia are logically aligned with the objectives of the program and the specific nature of the field of study. The learning outcomes clearly describe the knowledge, skills, and/or levels of responsibility and autonomy that students are expected to acquire upon completion of the program.

The learning outcomes of the program are formulated as follows: Upon completion of the program, the doctoral student conducts research on current and problematic issues in Georgian historiography, evaluates contemporary challenges in the field, and identifies the achievements and shortcomings of various historiographical schools throughout different stages of the research process. The student examines newly discovered archival materials and other historical sources, determines appropriate approaches for solving research problems, and reconstructs historical processes using modern methodologies and technologies. The student classifies sources according to their reliability, integrates them into scientific circulation, and contributes to the long-term development of Georgian source studies and historiography.

The student perceives the history of Georgia as part of world history and prepares scholarly works and publications in accordance with academic ethics and professional integrity, subsequently presenting research findings at both local and international levels. Moreover, the student critically evaluates the works of preceding researchers and respects differing ideas, perspectives, and values. However, it is also recommended to incorporate aspects of research ethics, which have become increasingly relevant and challenging in the contemporary era - particularly in light of the widespread use of artificial intelligence.

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 (Archaeology PhD)

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 learning outcomes of the Doctoral Educational Program in Archaeology are logically aligned with the program's objectives and the specific characteristics of the field of study. They clearly describe the knowledge, skills, and/or levels of responsibility and autonomy that students are expected to acquire upon completion of the program.

The learning outcomes of the program are formulated as follows: Upon completion of the program, the doctoral student conducts research on archaeological sites and artifacts, determines the fundamental principles of their classification, conservation, restoration, and reconstruction, and employs both traditional and modern methods. The student studies archaeological theories and research concepts, as well as the policies and practices of heritage protection in Georgia and Europe.

The student searches for sources in museum, archival, library, and electronic repositories, determines their reliability, classifies them, and introduces them into scientific circulation. The student applies modern research methods, develops interdisciplinary knowledge and skills, analyzes the condition of archaeological sites or artifacts, selects appropriate restoration and conservation approaches, and determines optimal strategies for their maintenance and preservation.

The student prepares a doctoral dissertation and research papers based on the critical analysis and synthesis of recent discoveries, uses information and communication technologies, academic writing skills, and specialized terminology, adheres to the principles of academic integrity, and presents research findings to academic and professional communities.

However, it is also recommended to incorporate aspects of research ethics, which have become increasingly relevant and challenging in the contemporary era - particularly given the widespread use of artificial intelligence.

Evidences/Indicators

- Component evidences/indicators, including the relevant documents and interview results
- History of Georgia. Doctoral Program - Annex N1

- History of Georgia. Map of Program Objectives and Learning Outcomes - Annex 1
- Archeology. Doctoral Program - Annex 1
- Archeology. Map of Program Objectives and Learning Outcomes - Annex 1
- History of Georgia. Doctoral Program. - Map linked study courses to programm outcomes - Annex N1
- Archeology. Doctoral Program - Map linked study courses to programm outcomes - Annex 1
- Course syllaby - Annex 1
- Analysis of the labor market and employer requirements - Annex 7
- Memoranda - Annex 8
- Self-evaluation report submitted by the University
- Site-visit interviews
- ATSU website <https://atsu.edu.ge/>

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	Recommendation(s): 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)	Suggestion(s): 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)
General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster	It is recommended that, alongside academic integrity, the learning outcomes explicitly reflect principles of research ethics, ensuring that the doctoral program aligns with contemporary challenges and complies with international standards of research conduct.	none
Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)	none	none
Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)	none	none

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component	Evaluation
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1.2 Programme Learning Outcomes	
Programme 1 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)	Substantially
Programme 2 (Ph.D. Archaeology)	Substantially

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

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.

The programs presented in the cluster are new; therefore, the process for assessing their learning outcomes has been defined based on the practice employed by the university and used in related programs. According to the self-assessment report, mechanisms for evaluating the learning outcomes have been established for both programs.

The assessment of the learning outcomes of the presented educational programs is a process through which the achievement of learning outcomes by students is determined, and measures for program improvement are identified.

The evaluation of learning outcomes for the Doctoral Educational Programs in History of Georgia and Archaeology consists of four stages: Formulation of the program's learning outcomes; Curriculum analysis, during which it is determined whether the program provides students with sufficient opportunities to achieve the intended learning outcomes; Assessment of the program's learning outcomes, which includes the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data to determine the extent to which students have attained the desired level of learning outcomes; Use of assessment results to improve the program.

A curriculum map has been developed, which incorporates the programs' learning outcomes, the core compulsory courses corresponding to the main content of the educational field offered by the programs, and identifies which course contributes to the development of each specific learning

outcome across three progressive levels: I – Introduction; P – Proficiency/Deepening/M – Mastery/Reinforcement

For each learning outcome, target benchmarks are established. The assessment of course-specific outcomes is conducted using the evaluation methods and criteria outlined in the syllabus. Outcomes specified in the syllabi are considered achieved if at least 80% of the students registered for the respective course successfully complete it.

Comparison with the target benchmarks, in the case of doctoral educational programs, occurs three years after program completion.

The assessment of program learning outcomes is carried out through both direct and indirect methods. Direct assessment methods verify whether a student has achieved the program learning outcomes through the completion of assigned tasks. Student activities are evaluated based on completed assignments, including analysis of archaeological monuments/artifacts, architectural monument analysis, assessment of monument/artifact condition, assessment of cultural heritage site conditions, cultural heritage site analysis, discussions, debates, presentations, term papers, written source work, seminar papers, and the preparation/submission of research papers. During the completion of various types of assignments, the attainment of the learning outcomes specified by the course is recorded, which ultimately enables the determination of the achievement rate of the program's learning outcomes.

Direct evidence of learning outcome attainment is represented by the student's academic performance, specifically the scores they obtain through midterm and final examinations, as well as various types of activities whose evaluation criteria and rubrics are specified in the course syllabus. The assessment of student achievements is conducted in accordance with the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia No. 3 of January 5, 2007, No. 102/n of August 18, 2016, and No. 105/n of December 29, 2021.

Indirect assessment methods include surveys of students, graduates, and employers, employment rates, program completion rates, and similar measures. The final stage of program learning outcome assessment involves utilizing the assessment results to improve the programs. Based on the analysis of learning outcome assessment results, the program's academic working group, together with the program delivery staff, deliberates on the extent to which students have achieved the learning outcomes defined by the program; it identifies those learning outcomes that the majority of students have achieved poorly or not at all. In such cases, appropriate interventions are implemented within the educational program. The program learning outcome assessment plan details what is assessed, how it is assessed, and the target benchmarks of the program.

Personnel involved in the program are familiar with the assessment methods for learning outcomes and are directly engaged in the evaluation of the program.

The extent to which students achieve the learning outcomes as defined by the program's learning outcomes is largely dependent on the quality of activities conducted at partner institutions. The number of such institutions is substantial. The University has presented the relevant memoranda; however, some of these agreements have already expired and require renewal.

Based on the analysis of the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), accompanying documentation, and results of on-site interviews, it can be concluded that the university has clearly defined mechanisms for the

assessment of program learning outcomes. The assessment process encompasses the identification, collection, and analysis of data necessary to measure learning outcomes. The analysis of program learning outcome assessments is utilized to inform and enhance program 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 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)

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
- History of Georgia. Doctoral Program - Annex N1
- History of Georgia. Map of Program Objectives and Learning Outcomes - Annex 1
- Archeology. Doctoral Program - Annex 1
- Archeology. Map of Program Objectives and Learning Outcomes - Annex 1
- History of Georgia. Doctoral Program. - Map linked study courses to programm outcomes - Annex N1
- Archeology. Doctoral Program - Map linked study courses to programm outcomes - Annex 1
- Course syllaby - Annex 1
- Memoranda - Annex 8
- Self-evaluation report submitted by the University
- Site-visit interviews
- ATSU website <https://atsu.edu.ge/>

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	Recommendation(s): 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)	Suggestion(s): 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)
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General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster	none	none
Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)	none	none
Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)	none	none

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component <u>1.3 Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes</u>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)	Complies
Programme 2 (Ph.D. Archaeology)	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;
- 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.

The development of the doctoral educational programs in History of Georgia and Archaeology, united within the cluster, is based on the research potential of the ATSU Faculty of Humanities in the fields of History and Archaeology, the existence of prior research experience in the relevant areas, successful practices, and the research outcomes possessed by the academic staff involved in the programs, as well as by students and graduates. This was clearly demonstrated during interviews with the administration, program directors, academic and invited staff, employers, and alumni. It should be noted that these programs were implemented until 2019. Their subsequent suspension was related to the institution's efforts to revise the programs in accordance with the requirements of cluster

accreditation and the contemporary challenges associated with the development of the respective fields and educational programs.

The educational programs grouped within the cluster have been developed in accordance with the “Educational Programs Quality Assurance Policy – EP-QA” implemented at Akaki Tsereteli State University (Resolutions of the ATSU Academic Council: №49 [17/18], №39 [20/21], 15.07.2021, №8 [22/23], 16.09.2022). The policy aims to promote the creation and development of outcome-oriented educational programs of high academic standards. Within the cluster 0222 History and Archaeology, the doctoral educational programs “History of Georgia” and “Archaeology” were developed in accordance with the requirements of the National Qualifications Framework, approved by Annex 1 of the Order №69/n of the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia, dated 10 April 2019, and the Learning Fields Classifier, approved by Annex 2 of the same order.

The content of the doctoral programs in History of Georgia and Archaeology includes admission prerequisites, objectives, learning outcomes and competencies, teaching and learning methods, pathways to achieving learning outcomes and their assessment, employment fields, and necessary resources. The structure of each program is sequential and logical, and its content and volume correspond to the level of study (doctoral level). The content and structure ensure the achievement of program learning outcomes.

The duration of the doctoral educational programs grouped within the cluster is no less than three years. The academic component amounts to 40 credits, with one credit corresponding to 25 hours. The development of the program curricula involved all relevant stakeholders, including academic and invited staff, as well as employers. The qualifications awarded by the cluster programs are aligned with the program content and learning outcomes.

Based on the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) submitted by the university and other relevant documentation, it is evident that the programs are oriented toward the development of scientific research activities, disciplinary and scientific collaboration, and the formation of professional networks. This is excellently corroborated by interviews with university representatives, program directors, and representatives of partner institutions and employers, demonstrating their joint efforts to strengthen research potential in History and Archaeology across the country, particularly in Western Georgia.

The structure of the programs presented within the cluster includes compulsory courses corresponding to the core field of study, elective courses aligned with the core field of study, and, simultaneously, the doctoral student undertakes a research component. The compulsory academic component involves supervision by a professor, who guides future doctoral students in applying theoretical and practical knowledge based on the latest achievements in the field through active student engagement in the learning process. This component also aims to develop the specific aspects of pedagogical expertise required for higher education instructors, including the ability to effectively plan the learning process and, considering the specifics of each course, select innovative methods and tools for teaching and assessment.

The three seminars included in the compulsory academic component ensure the expansion of the existing knowledge base in the field with the most recent advancements. These courses facilitate mastering the dissertation preparation methodology and prepare doctoral students for the dissertation defense process. Within the academic component, through the development of transferable skills

and/or deepening knowledge on current issues and trends in the field, the doctoral student prepares a scientific publication for submission to a peer-reviewed journal, adhering to the necessary standards, which also contributes to the implementation of the doctoral research component.

The institution actively utilizes an internal funding system to support the development of the doctoral students' research potential. During interviews, specific examples were provided by the administration, program directors, as well as students and alumni from doctoral programs in related fields. It should be noted that the budget allocated for the doctoral programs grouped within the cluster sufficiently supports the implementation of the academic component, while the research component receives comparatively less funding.

The submitted documentation and interviews also revealed that the doctoral educational program supports the development of competencies among doctoral students in planning and conducting research activities, seeking and managing grants, project management, and pedagogical practice. These competencies enable students to identify alternative sources of grant funding, which they actively utilize for example, grants from the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation and internal university funding to support participation in conferences during the preparing research component. For the effective implementation of the research component of the doctoral programs, ATSU has a mechanism for selecting, changing the research topic, implementing and submitting the scientific-research component, which, in accordance with the research field/fields of the educational program and taking into account the interests of doctoral students, ensures the fulfillment of the scientific-research component by the doctoral student, taking into account the protection of academic integrity mechanisms; The doctoral student's individual research plan clearly outlines the research objectives, the structure of the dissertation, the anticipated schedule and timeline for conducting the research, the methodology, and other relevant details. The research plan supports the student's work in alignment with the chosen research topic and facilitates the completion of the dissertation within the legally established timeframe.

The university has established standards for upholding academic integrity and operates a plagiarism detection system. However, it was noted that academic staff are less familiar with the latest challenges and advancements related to research ethics and artificial intelligence, which we consider essential for the effective implementation of the doctoral programs. It should be noted that the issue of research ethics is not foreign to the institution, as it is involved in the Erasmus+ institutional project "Responsible Conduct of Research – Research Integrity and Ethics in Georgian Universities (ETHICS)." ATSU has participated multiple times in activities envisaged by this project, which provides assurance that the processes initiated at the university are aligned with local and international standards for the ethical development of research activities.

During a meeting with the Quality Assurance Office, it was highlighted that, within the framework of the aforementioned institutional project, the development of a Research Ethics Code has commenced, and training sessions for academic staff have been conducted. However, training for the staff involved in the cluster's doctoral programs is scheduled for future implementation, which should naturally be reflected in the professional development plans of the personnel executing the programs. These trainings also addressed challenges related to artificial intelligence and issues of copyright and publishing ethics. Information about these trainings is available on the university's website. The Quality Assurance Office further noted that, within the ETHICS project framework, work has begun

at Ilia State University on developing norms and mechanisms for research ethics, which are expected to be fully implemented in the near future.

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 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)

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 structure of the Doctoral Program in History of Georgia is defined as follows:

Programmatic academic component – 40 credits;

Compulsory courses corresponding to the core field of study – 35 credits;

Elective courses – 5 credits.

Description and Analysis - Programme 2 (Ph.D. Archaeology)

The structure of the Doctoral Program in Archeology is defined as follows:

Programmatic academic component – 40 credits;

Compulsory courses corresponding to the core field of study – 35 credits;

Elective courses – 5 credits.

Over time, based on the results of the assessment of learning outcomes in the Doctoral Program in Archaeology, it will be possible to reconsider the composition of the mandatory and elective courses within the core field of study.

Evidences/Indicators

- Component evidences/indicators, including the relevant documents and interview results
- History of Georgia. Doctoral Program - Annex N1
- Archeology, Doctoral Program - Annex N1
- Course syllaby - Annex 1

- ATSU Quality Assurance Policy– EP-QA (Resolutions of the Academic Council №49 [17/18], №39 [20/21], 15.07.2021, №8 [22/23], 16.09.2022).
- **Individual Scientific/Creative Research Plan of the Doctoral Student**
- Methodology for planning, conducting, and presenting the research component.
- Self-evaluation report submitted by the University
- Site-visit interviews
- ATSU website <https://atsu.edu.ge/>

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	Recommendation(s): 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)	Suggestion(s): 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)
General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster		It is desirable to ensure the development and implementation of research ethics norms and mechanisms within the doctoral educational programs presented in the cluster.
Programme 1 (History of Georgia)	It is recommended to strengthen the internationalization of the presented programs, which will contribute to the implementation of best practices in the programs, the development of scientific and research activities, and the proper planning and implementation of the research component.	
Programme 2 (Archaeology)		It is desirable, based on the results of the assessment of learning outcomes in the Doctoral Program in Archaeology, it will be possible to reconsider the composition of the mandatory and elective courses within the core field of study.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component 1.4. Structure and Content of Educational Programme	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)	Substantially
Programme 2 (Ph.D. Archaeology)	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

The content of the constituent courses of the clustered PhD programs in History of Georgia and Archaeology is described in the respective syllabi. The learning outcomes of the mandatory component of each program represent a part of the program's overall learning outcomes and correspond to the program content. Curriculum maps have been developed for the programs, confirming the alignment of individual courses with the program's learning outcomes.

Based on the specifics of each course (course content and learning outcomes), the credit load and the corresponding number of hours have been defined. The syllabi specify the time allocated for contact hours and independent work, taking into account the nature of each course. All courses in the clustered educational programs are fully described in the syllabi, which include the following information: course title, course type, number of credits with specified contact and independent hours, course instructor, course objectives, course format, learning outcomes, assessment system and criteria, teaching and learning methods, learning resources, course content, and more. The syllabi also provide detailed descriptions of assessment forms, methods, and rubrics.

During the development of new programs, in order to ensure compliance with accreditation standards and improve the programs, the Faculty of Humanities' Quality Assurance Office, in coordination with program directors and academic staff, verified the availability of the required literature and other learning materials in the university library. During the site visit, the experts confirmed that future students of the clustered programs will have access to the main textbooks listed in the syllabi. The necessary literature is available in the university library's collection in printed and/or electronic format. This collection also includes supplementary literature and is regularly updated.

Access to literature was also confirmed by students and graduates of related PhD programs, who reported unrestricted access to the university's electronic catalog and e-library (<http://elibrary.atsu.edu.ge/lms/>), which allows easy retrieval of required learning resources. It is also noteworthy that the integrated library system's online catalog (OPAC) service is available.

In the library, access is provided to electronic databases:

http://www.atsu.edu.ge/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=508&Itemid=762⟨=en.

Students of the programs will have access to the following scientific databases of Akaki Tsereteli State University Library:

<https://www.cambridge.org/core>;

<http://www.eifl.net/e-resources/oxford-journals-collection>;

<https://www.dukeupress.edu>; <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/IMEche>;

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/jrnlallbooks/sub/artsandhumanities>;

<https://www.scopus.com/home.uri>;

<http://search.epnet.com>; <https://www.jstor.org>.

The self-assessment report submitted by Akaki Tsereteli State University indicates that the syllabi of the courses include the latest core and supplementary literature necessary for studying the courses. However, in some courses, certain gaps are observed in the use of the most recent literature.

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 (History of Georgia)

According to the presented syllabus, the compulsory course “Methods of Scientific Research and Academic Writing” covers the identification of the latest and proper methodological principles of scientific research, planning research stages, highlighting scientific novelty, critically analyzing established historiographical views, analyzing documents and determining their reliability, avoiding unintentional plagiarism, sourcing and classifying references, using appropriate terminological apparatus, and adhering to academic integrity and ethical principles during research. However, upon analyzing the course content, it can be stated that the course largely reiterates knowledge acquired at the master’s level in this field, naturally deepening it to the doctoral level. Nevertheless, it does not specifically address topics directly related to one of its objectives - the protection of ethical principles - and there is no mention of the use of artificial intelligence in the research process.

The same observation applies to the compulsory course “Modern Methods and Technologies of Teaching and Assessment”, which, on the one hand, demonstrates the skills necessary for pedagogical creativity using the latest methods of teaching and assessment. However, the core literature allocated for this course is only partially sufficient for achieving the intended outcomes. In the era of artificial intelligence, it would have been appropriate to include, within the course framework, the institution’s accumulated experience in the use of digital teaching tools, as developed through the Erasmus+ Institutional Development project “Developing and Implementing Technology-Enhanced Teaching and Learning at Georgian HEIs” (DITECH).

It is also important to update the literature for the elective course “Georgia and the Outside World”. The literature currently listed is not up-to-date and does not provide doctoral students with the latest information on Georgia–European Union relations.

Programme 2 Archeology, Doctoral Studies

According to the presented syllabus, the course “**Scientific Work Strategies**” deepens the knowledge acquired at the master’s level regarding the implementation of the research component. However, in the context of today’s challenges, it does not address the use of artificial intelligence in the research process, which we consider very important for the full implementation of the doctoral programs.

It is also worth noting that in the Archaeology PhD program, several courses are taught by foreign specialists who have long been involved in the Kutaisi excavation. To some extent, the excavation is staffed with students from the corresponding undergraduate and master’s programs. These specialists have limited proficiency in the Georgian language; however, the main language of communication is English. According to the program coordinator, this does not pose a problem, as the admission requirements for the program presuppose an adequate level of English proficiency, which was also confirmed through interviews with students and graduates of neighboring doctoral programs.

Evidences/Indicators

- Component evidences/indicators, including the relevant documents and interview results
- History of Georgia. Doctoral Program - Annex N1
- Archeology, Doctoral Program - Annex N1
- Course syllaby - Annex 1
- Self-evaluation report submitted by the University
- Site-visit interviews
- ATSU website <https://atsu.edu.ge/>
- ATSU Library electronic catalog: <https://atsu.library.ac.ge/eg/opac/home;>
- Electronic library: [https://elibrary.at su.edu.ge/;](https://elibrary.at su.edu.ge/)
- Scientific databases: <https://library.at su.edu.ge/scientific-bases.html>.

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	<u>Recommendation(s):</u> 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)	<u>Suggestion(s):</u> 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)
General recommendations/	It is recommended that the course “Modern Methods and Technologies of Teaching and Assessment”	

Suggestion of the Cluster	include topics related to the use of artificial intelligence and digital learning tools in the teaching process, and that the course content be updated with the latest relevant literature.	
Programme 1 (History of Georgia Ph.D.)	It is recommended that the course “Methods of Scientific Research and Academic Writing” include topics on the use of artificial intelligence in the research process and on the principles of research ethics, and that the course content be updated with relevant sources and literature. It is recommended to update the mandatory reading materials for the elective course “Georgia and the Outside World”.	
Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)	It is recommended that the elective course “Scientific Work Strategies” include topics on the use of artificial intelligence in the research process and on the principles of research ethics, and that the course content be updated with relevant sources and literature.	

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component 1.5. Academic Course/Subject	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)	Substantially
Programme 2 (Ph.D. Archaeology)	Substantially

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.

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

The prerequisites for admission to the doctoral educational programs in Georgian History and Archaeology grouped in the cluster take into account the level of study, the specificity of the programs, and the admission of individuals with appropriate knowledge, skills, and competencies. The prerequisites and procedures for admission to the programs comply with applicable legislation. Enrollment in programs is possible through internal and external mobility, which is regulated by the Order No. 10/N of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia of February 4, 2010 - “On Approval of the Rules and Fees for Transferring from a Higher Educational Institution to Another Higher Educational Institution” and the Resolution of the Academic Council No. 87(23/24) of February 28, 2024 “On the Rules for Obtaining, Suspending, Terminating, Restoring, Mobility, Awarding Qualifications and Recognition of Education Received” developed and approved by Akaki Tsereteli State University. ATSU ensures the publicity and accessibility of information about the prerequisites for admission to educational programs. Programs are posted on the university website, and information about them is also provided in the catalog of higher education programs.

The admission process is strategically aligned with the institution's research goals. When enrolling students in the History of Georgia and Archaeology programs, the strategy of the scientific and creative research activity of the basic educational unit is strictly taken into account. This ensures that the research interests of incoming doctoral candidates align with the university's ongoing projects and strategic direction. The admission of doctoral students is ensured on a commission basis to guarantee impartiality. ATSU has defined specific rules for determining the composition, activities, and decision-making of the admission committee. These regulations ensure that the evaluation of applicants is conducted in strict compliance with the principles of objectivity, fairness, and transparency, preventing conflicts of interest and ensuring merit-based selection.

The analyzed ATSU cluster comprises two doctoral educational programs; accordingly, the admission prerequisites align with the criteria established for the doctoral programs. According to the cluster’s self-evaluation report (p. 12), the admission prerequisites information according the national legislation.

Finally, the planning of student quotas and admission approval is evidence-based. The process takes into account the human, financial, and research resources available at the HEI, with particular emphasis on maintaining an optimal ratio of doctoral supervisors to doctoral students. Furthermore, admission planning is informed by an analysis of the timely completion rates of previous doctoral cohorts, ensuring that the programs do not exceed their capacity to graduate students successfully and on time.

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 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)

The prerequisites for admission to the Doctoral Educational Program in the History of Georgia are as follows: applicants must hold a master’s or equivalent academic degree in the humanities or social

sciences. The right to study in the doctoral program may also be granted to a graduate of a foreign university in accordance with Article 50 of the Law of Georgia "On Higher Education." If a doctoral candidate wishes to study in a Georgian-language program and Georgian is not their native language, they must present a certificate confirming their knowledge of the Georgian language. Upon admission, the required level of foreign language proficiency is determined—taking into account the specifics of the field—which includes knowledge of English at least at the B2 level, or knowledge of one of the Western European languages (German or French) at least at the B2 level, along with English at least at the B1 level. Foreign language proficiency is verified through a university exam or testing, or by submitting an internationally recognized certificate. In addition, candidates must have previous work or publications in the relevant field and/or participation in scientific-research projects and events, and/or at least two years of professional experience in the relevant field. Applicants are also required to pass a university exam in the history of Georgia, with exam questions and procedures published on the ATSU website (atsu.edu.ge) at least one month before the start of the exams. Enrollment in the program is possible through both external and internal mobility. Furthermore, applicants must submit a motivation letter, a concept of the proposed research topic, and a recommendation from the program director or prospective scientific supervisor describing the applicant's achievements.

Once the examination committees have made their recommendations and established the ranked lists, the Rector formalizes the candidate's admission to doctoral studies through an individual administrative act.

Description and Analysis - Programme 2: Archaeology, PhD

The prerequisites for admission to the Doctoral Educational Program in Archaeology are as follows: applicants must hold a master's or equivalent academic degree in the humanities. The right to study in the doctoral program may also be granted to graduates of foreign universities in accordance with the requirements of Article 50 of the Law of Georgia "On Higher Education." If a doctoral candidate wishes to study in a Georgian-language program and Georgian is not their native language, they must present a certificate confirming their knowledge of the Georgian language. Upon admission, the required level of foreign language proficiency is determined, taking into account the specifics of the field, and requires knowledge of English at least at the B2 level, or knowledge of one of the Western European languages (German or French) at the B2 level together with English at least at the B1 level. Foreign language proficiency is verified through a university exam or testing, or by submitting an internationally recognized certificate. Candidates are also required to have previous work or publications in the relevant field and/or participation in scientific research projects and events, and/or at least two years of experience in the relevant field. In addition, applicants must pass a university exam in archaeology, with exam questions and procedures published on the ATSU website (atsu.edu.ge) at least one month before the start of the exams. Enrollment in the program is possible through both external and internal mobility. Furthermore, applicants must submit a motivation letter, a concept of the proposed research topic, and a recommendation from the program director or prospective scientific supervisor describing the applicant's achievements (if any).

We suggest opening admission to applicants from the social sciences and natural sciences as well, since archaeology is an interdisciplinary field that benefits from students with diverse academic backgrounds. Allowing entry from these areas would enrich the program by integrating different perspectives and methodologies. Moreover, the existing additional requirements—such as the university exam in archaeology—serve as effective tools to assess a candidate’s interest, motivation, and qualifications in the field, ensuring that only those with genuine aptitude and commitment are admitted.

Evidences/Indicators

- Component evidences/indicators, including the relevant documents and interview results
- Educational programs grouped in the cluster;
- Resolution of the Academic Council Resolution No. 87(23/24), 28.02.2024- On approval of the rules for obtaining, suspending, terminating, restoring, mobility, granting qualifications and recognizing the received education.
- ATSU website: <https://www.atsu.edu.ge>.
- Results of interviews.

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	<u>Recommendation(s):</u> 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)	<u>Suggestion(s):</u> 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)
General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster		
Programme 1 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)		
Programme 2 (Ph.D: Archaeology)		It is suggested to expand the admission prerequisites by allowing applicants holding a master’s degree in social sciences or natural sciences, considering the interdisciplinary nature of archaeology.

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component 2.1 Programme Admission Preconditions	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)	Complies
Programme 2 (Ph.D. Archaeology)	Complies

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

Accreditation standards indicators

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

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

Cluster evaluation

Description and Analysis of Cluster

The doctoral educational programs included in the cluster are designed to develop students’ practical and research skills in accordance with the defined learning outcomes and academic level. The syllabi of the academic courses specify activities tailored to the specifics of each field, such as the analysis of archaeological and architectural monuments or artifacts, assessment of their condition, examination of cultural heritage sites, as well as participation in discussions, debates, presentations, abstract writing, and the preparation of seminar and research papers.

To ensure these practical activities effectively translate into professional competence, the cluster enforces strict supervision standards. In the framework of any practice, scientific research, or performance project—including the university-organized archaeological and ethnological expeditions—students are supervised by a qualified person in the field. These supervisors are selected based on their specific expertise to guide the student’s research and practical skill acquisition.

Student involvement in extracurricular academic activities and external partnerships plays a significant role in this process. The programs are supported by formal partnerships with museums and national agencies. These collaborations are regulated by agreements/memoranda that are not

merely declarative; they explicitly specify the number of students involved, the specific objectives and expected outcomes of the practice, the duration of the activity, and the mechanisms required to support the achievement of learning outcomes. This structure ensures that external engagements—such as the ATSU Students’, Master’s, and Doctoral Students’ Scientific Conference or field expeditions—provide structured, measurable opportunities for academic development and professional growth.

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 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)

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.

Within the framework of the curriculum, students of the program have the opportunity to enhance their practical skills through both mandatory and elective courses such as “Methods of Scientific Research and Writing,” “Cultural Heritage Management,” and “Fundraising and Project Management.” Additionally, students of the Doctoral Program in the History of Georgia can further develop their practical experience through collaborations established by relevant memoranda with institutions such as the N. Berdzenishvili Kutaisi State Historical Museum, the National Museum of Georgia, the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Protection, and other related organizations. These partnerships provide valuable opportunities for students to apply their theoretical knowledge in real-world professional and research settings.

Description and Analysis - Programme 2 – Archaeology, PhD

Students of the program have the opportunity to enhance their practical skills within the framework of the curriculum through a range of mandatory and elective courses, including “Methods of Archaeological Research,” “Conservation of Archaeological Artifacts,” “Issues of the History of the Protection and Conservation-Restoration of Antiquities,” “Strategies of Scientific Work,” “Methods of Geological and Geophysical Research in Archaeology,” and “Cultural Heritage Management.” In addition, students of the Doctoral Program in Archaeology can further develop their practical experience through partnerships established by relevant memoranda with institutions such as the N. Berdzenishvili Kutaisi State Historical Museum, the National Museum of Georgia, the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Protection, and other related organizations. These collaborations provide valuable opportunities for students to apply theoretical knowledge in practical and research-oriented environments.

Evidences/Indicators

- Component evidences/indicators, including the relevant documents and interview results
- Clustered doctoral educational programs;
- Memoranda/agreements.

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	Recommendation(s): 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)	Suggestion(s): 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)
General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster	It is recommended to renew the expired memoranda with partner institutions.	It is advised that the programme strengthen international cooperation and increase doctoral students' participation in fieldwork, joint projects, and methodological workshops to enhance their research skills and the overall visibility of the programme.
Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)		
Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D:)		

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component 2.2. The Development of Practical, Scientific/Research/Creative/Performing and Transferable Skills	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)	Complies
Programme 2 (Ph.D. Archaeology)	Complies

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.

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 teaching and learning methods of the Doctoral Educational Programs in History of Georgia and Archaeology, presented in the cluster, are fully aligned with the requirements of the modern educational environment. The structure of the programs ensures opportunities for students to acquire both theoretical knowledge and practical skills, as well as to develop general and field-specific competencies. Both mandatory and elective courses incorporate various forms of teaching, including lectures and practical or group work. The teaching and learning methods selected to achieve the intended learning outcomes are consistent with the overall goals of the programs and are directed toward the realization of the results envisaged in the curricula. These methods vary depending on individual courses and are reflected in the learning outcomes matrix within the program syllabi. The programs employ diverse instructional approaches such as demonstration, explanation, written work, discussion and debate, inductive and deductive reasoning, analysis and synthesis, and heuristic methods.

All teaching methods have been approved by the academic personnel responsible for implementing the programs, who also actively participate in ongoing methodological training. In addition to traditional forms of teaching and learning, Akaki Tsereteli State University utilizes modern online e-learning platforms, including Microsoft Teams and Moodle, to support an interactive and flexible learning process. According to the results of interviews with students and professors, the classes and lectures are flexible and feasible for students.

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

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Evidences/Indicators

- Component evidences/indicators, including the relevant documents and interview results
- Educational programs grouped in the cluster;
- Syllabi of academic courses.

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	<u>Recommendation(s):</u> Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster.	<u>Suggestion(s):</u> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please
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	Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster		
Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)		
Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)		

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component 2.3. Teaching and Learning Methods	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)	Complies
Programme 2 (Ph.D. Archaeology)	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 anonymity¹ 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

The assessment system existing at Akaki Tsereteli State University is divided into the following components:

From the total score of the educational program component assessment (100 points), the share of midterm assessment totals 60 points, which, in turn, includes the following assessment forms:

- Student activity during the academic semester (includes various assessment components) - no more than 30 points;
- Midterm exam - no less than 30 points;
- Final exam - 40 points.

A student whose minimum competency threshold for the components of the midterm evaluations is at least 18 points is allowed to take the final exam.

The assessment system allows:

a) Five types of positive evaluation:

- a.a) (A) Excellent – 91-100 points;
- a.b) (B) Very good – 81-90 points;
- a.c) (C) Good – 71-80 points;
- a.d) (D) Satisfactory – 61-70 points;
- a.e) (E) Sufficient – 51-60 points.

B) Two types of negative assessment:

- B.A) (FX) failed –41-50 points, which means that the student needs more work to pass and is given the right to take an additional exam once with independent work;
- B.B) (F) failed –40 points and less, which means that the work done by the student is not enough and he/she has to study the subject again.

In the educational component of the educational program, in case of receiving FX, an additional exam will be scheduled no later than 5 days after the announcement of the final exam results.

The minimum threshold for the assessment received by a student on the final exam is determined at 15 points.

The assessment received by the student on the additional exam is not added to the number of points received in the final assessment. The assessment received on the additional exam is the final assessment and is reflected in the final assessment of the educational program's academic component. Taking into account the assessment received on the additional exam, if the student receives 0-50 points in the final assessment of the educational component, the student receives a grade of F-0 points. Additional criteria for assessing student achievements in the academic course are determined by the corresponding syllabus.

Doctoral study component.

The doctoral program's academic component involves the doctoral student's disciplinary and methodological skill development. It includes compulsory and optional courses, which aim to provide in-depth study of specialized and related subjects based on the dissertation topic. Core courses must include: contemporary research methods in the field; contemporary teaching methods, followed by the doctoral student's involvement in the teaching process (professor assistantship and conducting lectures and practical sessions under their supervision).

At Akaki Tsereteli State University, the assessment of academic achievement of higher education program students is carried out using contemporary indicators according to the principles defined by Order №3 (05.01.2007) of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia and Resolution № 5, (17/18) 15.09.2017 of the Academic Council of Akaki Tsereteli State University.

The assessment system existing at Akaki Tsereteli State University is divided into the following components:

From the total score of the educational program component assessment (100 points), the share of midterm assessment totals 60 points, which, in turn, includes the following assessment forms:

- Student activity during the academic semester (includes various assessment components) - no more than 30 points;
- Midterm exam - no less than 30 points;
- Final exam - 40 points.

A student whose minimum competency threshold for the components of the midterm evaluations is at least 18 points is allowed to take the final exam.

The assessment system allows:

a) Five types of positive evaluation:

a.a) (A) Excellent – 91-100 points;

a.b) (B) Very good – 81-90 points;

a.c) (C) Good – 71-80 points;

a.d) (D) Satisfactory – 61-70 points;

a.e) (E) Sufficient – 51-60 points.

B) Two types of negative assessment:

B.A) (FX) failed –41-50 points, which means that the student needs more work to pass and is given the right to take an additional exam once with independent work;

B.B) (F) failed –40 points and less, which means that the work done by the student is not enough and he/she has to study the subject again.

In the educational component of the educational program, in case of receiving FX, an additional exam will be scheduled no later than 5 days after the announcement of the final exam results.

The minimum threshold for the assessment received by a student on the final exam is determined at 15 points.

The assessment received by the student on the additional exam is not added to the number of points received in the final assessment. The assessment received on the additional exam is the final assessment and is reflected in the final assessment of the educational program's academic component.

Taking into account the assessment received on the additional exam, if the student receives 0-50 points in the final assessment of the educational component, the student receives a grade of F-0 points.

Additional criteria for assessing student achievements in the academic course are determined by the corresponding syllabus.

Research component of the doctoral program.

An essential component of the doctoral student's research component is the colloquium. The colloquium represents a presentation of the doctoral student's research results, assessment-discussion of new scientific achievements, problems, and literature in the doctoral student's field of activity, followed by scientific discussion. The doctoral student is obligated to make presentations at the colloquium three times in the second and third years of study. One or two reviewers are appointed to evaluate the colloquium, and in case of their positive review, a commission is appointed consisting

of no less than 3 and no more than 5 members. Each member of the commission evaluates the colloquium either positively or negatively. The colloquium is considered completed if it is evaluated positively by more than half of the commission members. The acquisition of credits allocated for the research component is confirmed by the successful defense of the dissertation work.

The prerequisites for presenting the dissertation work for public discussion before the dissertation commission are:

- Submission of a consolidated certificate confirming the acquisition of credits allocated for the academic component of the doctoral program to the faculty dissertation council. The consolidated certificate is issued by the faculty dean's office and signed by the university vice-rector and the faculty dean.

- Submission of minutes confirming completion of three colloquia provided by the research component of the doctoral program to the faculty dissertation council (completion of colloquia is confirmed by a certificate. The certificate is signed by the faculty dean). The methodology for evaluating colloquia is determined by paragraph 17 of article 4 of Order №3 of January 5, 2007 of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia; by Resolution №57(16/17) of July 17, 2017 of the Academic Council of Akaki Tsereteli State University (Annex N2);

- The number of publications determined by the faculty dissertation council in publications approved by the faculty dissertation council, which are confirmed by submission of articles; the dissertant may also submit a dissertation work published as a monograph, or a certificate from the publisher and payment receipt; participation in conferences of the number determined by the faculty dissertation council and presentations related to the dissertation topic, the completion of which is confirmed by publication of the relevant work in the conference proceedings collection and its submission;

- Evaluation of articles of the number determined by faculty dissertation councils by an anonymous expert;

- Minutes of discussion of the completed dissertation work at a special meeting of the department;

- Appointment of official experts by the faculty dissertation council, which is submitted to the rector for approval; the number of official experts and their obligations are determined by Resolution №1 of September 5, 2007 of the Academic Council of Akaki Tsereteli State University (Article 19);

- In case of positive evaluation by official experts, appointment of 2 or 3 reviewers by the faculty dissertation council, which is submitted to the rector for approval; the identity and obligations

of official reviewers are determined by Resolution №1 of September 5, 2007 of the Academic Council of Akaki Tsereteli State University (Article 20) and Resolution №40(14/15) of December 22, 2014 of the Academic Council of Akaki Tsereteli State University; if more than half of the reviewers evaluate the dissertation negatively, the dissertant will not be admitted to defense; in case of negative conclusion from one of two reviewers, the dissertation council appoints a third reviewer within 10 days;

□ In case of positive evaluation by official reviewers, the dissertant has the right to present the dissertation for public discussion before a dissertation committee appointed by the faculty dissertation council. The dissertation committee appointed by the faculty dissertation council is submitted to the rector for approval; the composition of the dissertation committee is determined by Resolution №1 of September 5, 2007 of the Academic Council of Akaki Tsereteli State University (Article 21); by Resolution № 17 (09/10) of November 6, 2009 of the Academic Council of Akaki Tsereteli State University, Resolution №61 (14/15) of May 7, 2015 of the Academic Council of Akaki Tsereteli State University, Resolution № 17 (09/10) of November 6, 2009 of the Academic Council of Akaki Tsereteli State University;

□ The procedure for evaluating dissertation work by the dissertation committee is determined by paragraph 17 of article 4 of Order N3 of January 5, 2017 of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, by Resolution № 17 (09/10) of November 6, 2009 of the Academic Council of Akaki Tsereteli State University;

□ In case of successful defense of the dissertation work, the faculty dissertation council submits to the university rector for approval a project regarding the awarding of the doctoral academic degree to the dissertant.

The supervisor consults the doctoral student during the research process on the following issues: research design and project management, research methodology, professional development, the process of writing a thesis/scientific research paper/dissertation, the process of integrating into local and international scientific/creative networks, the process of participating in local and international scientific/creative events and presenting results, publishing scientific articles in a peer-reviewed journal with an international index, etc.; Depending on the specifics and development of the field, the scientific supervisor of each doctoral student shall be equipped with the latest knowledge, have an academic degree in a relevant broad field, have experience in supervision/co- supervision, or have completed relevant activities (training, seminar, professional development course, etc.), and shall have actively participated in scientific research and/or published a scientific paper (in professional areas - a creative/performing project) that corresponds to the general topic/field of research of the doctoral student's doctoral thesis; Based on the specifics and development of the field, the doctoral

student's supervisor shall have published at least 1 scientific paper (in professional fields - creative/performing project) in a peer-reviewed journal with a foreign international index determined by the university within the last 3 years, which corresponds to the general topic/research field of the doctoral student's doctoral thesis

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 one scientific paper in a foreign peer-reviewed journal with an international index within the last 3 years (in professional fields - a creative/performing project that corresponds to the general topic/field of research of the PhD student's doctoral thesis).

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 one scientific paper in a foreign peer-reviewed journal with an international index within the last 3 years (in professional fields - a creative/performing project that corresponds to the general topic/field of research of the PhD student's doctoral thesis).

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

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Evidences/Indicators

- Component evidences/indicators, including the relevant documents and interview results
- University documents and program
- Curricula and syllabi of the programs
- Onsite interviews

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	<u>Recommendation(s):</u> 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)	<u>Suggestion(s):</u> 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)
General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster		Development of policies for providing formative feedbacks and regular following of the student progress including information and procedures

		of plagiarism, ethics and academic style.
Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)		
Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)		

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component	Evaluation
2.4. Student Evaluation	
Programme 1 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)	Complies
Programme 2 (Ph.D. Archaeology)	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

Multiple stakeholders systematically provide student consultation, including Faculty Administration, Quality Assurance Service, Department Heads, and Program Heads. These consultations address educational process planning, program-related issues, course selection, mobility rules, teaching and learning methodologies, and assessment systems.

Academic staff consultation is embedded within the institutional structure through several mechanisms. Faculty members specify consultation schedules in course syllabi, including designated days and hours. The department maintains consultation tables for each academic course, which are disseminated through multiple channels: information boards within the department, postings in relevant auditoriums, and electronic communication via corporate email.

The systematic consultation services provided by Faculty Administration, Quality Assurance Service, Department and Program Heads address various issues related to programs, creating opportunities for students to receive guidance regarding publication strategies as well. Academic staff consultations, scheduled regularly and communicated through multiple channels ensures that doctoral students can discuss publication plans and receive recommendations about appropriate venues. The academic calendar, publicly accessible via the university website, enables students to plan their academic activities effectively.

The Individual Curriculum Development Rule represents an institutional mechanism for accommodating diverse student requirements, needs, and academic preparation levels. The rule creates possibilities for implementing the educational process in an adapted environment and, if necessary, provides appropriate human resources. This adaptability is essential for doctoral students who may require accommodations due to varying research timelines, field work requirements in archaeology, archival research needs in history, or other discipline-specific factors affecting thesis completion timelines.

The faculty provides appropriate infrastructure supporting academic achievement through technological and physical resources. Students access learning materials through online platforms, including Microsoft Teams and Moodle, which deliver distance learning courses, e-learning materials, textbooks, and presentations. The availability of international scientific databases through the university library supports doctoral students' engagement with international research communities and facilitates identification of relevant conferences and collaborative opportunities. Access to these databases enables students to remain informed about international developments and to identify appropriate venues for presenting their research.

The institution maintains active cooperation with both local and international academic partners, with Polish universities representing the largest group among its international collaborators. These partnerships are formalized through a series of memoranda of understanding that enable joint research initiatives, academic exchanges and collaborative projects. In addition to its international engagement, the institution also works closely with local industries and organizations, including the Kutaisi Central Archive and the Kutaisi State Historical Museum.

Through these strategic collaborations, the institution strengthens the practical orientation of its academic programs and supports the integration of its doctoral students into the labor market. Active memoranda with employers create opportunities for internships, applied research, and professional development, ensuring that doctoral candidates gain relevant experience and are well-prepared for employment in their respective fields.

Career development support is institutionalized through the Student Support and Development Service, as part of the Student Career Development Center. This service provides several career-oriented functions: monitoring labor market vacancies, disseminating employment information to students, organizing and participating in employment forums, conducting specialized training courses for career advancement, and promoting employment opportunities for students with disabilities and other vulnerable populations, including socially vulnerable individuals and displaced families. The students can access these services through direct contact with the Student Support and Development Service or via the dedicated email address. The Service also provides information regarding local and international projects, university and faculty events, and exchange programs, thereby expanding students' awareness of professional development opportunities.

Information dissemination occurs through multiple channels, ensuring comprehensive student access. The university website (www.atsu.edu.ge) serves as a central information repository, supplemented by the Android application ATSU NEWS, which provides timely updates on educational processes and university events. The institution maintains an official Facebook page for additional communication. All students receive corporate email addresses upon first-year registration, mandated for official communication with university structural units and faculty. Furthermore, the faculty provides students with information about exchange programs, international projects, and events, creating awareness of opportunities for international participation. However, the faculty may pay attention to the enhancement of service quality and equity. Information provided to students about international projects, conferences, and various activities should be institutionally organized and equally accessible to everyone. The institution disseminates information through multiple channels, however, formalizing processes to ensure that all doctoral students, regardless of their position within departmental networks or their individual faculty relationships, have equal access to comprehensive, well-organized information about international opportunities would enhance the already existing framework.

The institution, through its Student Support and Development Service, systematically tracks the career paths of its alumni. This unit conducts regular analyses of key career indicators, including employment rates, job relevance to the field of study, and graduates' professional advancement. The data collected from these evaluations are not only used for reporting purposes but also play an important role in the ongoing enhancement of the program. Insights gained from alumni career trajectories help the institution identify strengths, address potential gaps, and adjust its curriculum and support services to better align with labor market demands and stakeholder expectations.

During the site visit, the panel of experts had an opportunity to verify whether international mobility support mechanisms in place were fit for purpose. The students confirmed that the institution actively facilitates international experiences, providing concrete examples of support enabled through bilateral agreements and, most prominently, the ERASMUS+ program. These frameworks allow students to participate in academic exchanges, study abroad periods, and joint research activities with partner universities.

Students also highlighted their involvement in international conferences and seminars, noting that the university offers financial assistance for such activities. In several cases, the institution fully covered participation costs; in others, students were asked to choose which expenses—such as accommodation, flight tickets, or registration fees—they preferred the university to fund. This flexible model was viewed positively by students, as it allowed them to tailor the financial support to their individual needs and circumstances.

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

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Evidences/Indicators

- Student Support and Development Service https://atsu.edu.ge/ge/office/11-student_service;
- Student and Alumni Career Development and Employment Support <https://atsu.edu.ge/index.php/carrier-development-info>;
- Academic Council Resolution No. 30 (17/18) “On Approval of the Rule for Making an Individual Student Learning”
- Resolution of the Academic Council No. 30(17/18) "On Approval of the Rules for Developing a Student's Individual Curriculum at the University";
- Memoranda;
- SER;
- Interview results;
- University website: www.at-su.edu.ge

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	Recommendation(s): Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster.	Suggestion(s): Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please
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	Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster		Ensure that information provided to students about international projects, conferences, and various activities is institutionally organized and equally accessible to everyone
Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)	none	none
Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)	none	none

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component 3.1 Student Consulting and Support Services	Evaluation
Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)	Complies
Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)	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

The Regulation of the Dissertation Council at the Faculty of Humanities clearly establishes that scientific supervisors must possess relevant research experience and significant publications aligned with the doctoral student's dissertation topic. These requirements ensure that supervisors are well-qualified to coordinate research activities effectively. The institution has articulated mechanisms through which supervisors guide, monitor, and support research progress, including planning processes, regular consultations, and structured oversight of research timelines. The procedures are in place for monitoring progress, evaluating milestones, and adjusting research trajectories as necessary, ensuring coordinated and effective supervision throughout the doctoral journey.

The Dissertation Council regulation clearly outlines academic position, degree requirements, and affiliation criteria, ensuring that only qualified individuals may serve as supervisors. Procedures for appointing and changing supervisors or co-supervisors are fully documented, providing transparent mechanisms for addressing circumstances such as supervisory incompatibility. These procedures

ensure continuity of guidance and maintain the integrity of the supervisory process. The rights and responsibilities of doctoral students and their supervisors are documented and in place. These agreements are formally executed by all parties, ensuring clarity, enforceability, and mutual accountability. The contracts explicitly define expectations and responsibilities, guaranteeing a transparent and well-regulated supervision environment. However, during the interview session with the supervisors and the students, it was evident that the institution may strengthen communication with doctoral students by providing clearer and more accessible information about the regulatory processes and official documents governing supervisor appointment, responsibilities, and supervisory procedures. Improved awareness of these regulations will help students better understand their rights and obligations, navigate supervisory arrangements with confidence, and engage more effectively in the doctoral process.

Co-supervisors are appointed when research complexity, interdisciplinary needs, or methodological specialization requires additional expertise. Procedures for appointing, coordinating, and evaluating co-supervisors are clearly documented. Co-supervisors collaborate closely with primary supervisors and students to ensure continuous support and complementary scholarly guidance.

The institution fully supports and encourages the involvement of international supervisors and external experts. Regulations explicitly allow the participation of scholars from foreign universities, research institutes, and centers, as well as emeritus professors. Policies detail procedures for appointing international supervisors or co-supervisors and integrating them into supervisory processes.

The institution's regulations specify how supervision hours are calculated, weighted, and incorporated into the overall workload alongside teaching and research responsibilities. Supervisory duties are formally recognized in workload allocation, and adjustments are made when staff supervise multiple doctoral students. Although the institution's regulations clearly define how supervision hours are calculated, weighted, and integrated into the academic workload, it is suggested that both doctoral students and their supervisors be explicitly informed of these supervision hours. Ensuring that all parties are aware of the allotted supervisory time will promote transparency, support realistic planning of consultations and research activities, and help maintain shared expectations regarding supervisory responsibilities and availability.

In addition to the rule limiting each professor to supervising no more than three active doctoral students, the institution conducts systematic planning to ensure adequate supervisory capacity. This includes forecasting student enrollment, monitoring current workloads, evaluating program needs, and aligning supervisor availability with international best practices.

Doctoral program durations, milestone requirements, intermediate evaluations, and consequences for deviations from established schedules are explicitly defined. Individual research plans include detailed timelines aligned with program regulations, and supervisors actively monitor adherence to these schedules. The regulations also outline provisions for extensions in exceptional circumstances, ensuring both rigor and flexibility in supporting timely completion of the thesis.

<p>Data related to the supervision of doctoral students Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Doctoral Studies)</p>
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Number of doctoral thesis supervisors	3
Number of doctoral students	5
Ratio - supervisors of doctoral theses/doctoral students	1.66

Data related to the supervision of doctoral students Programme 2 (Archaeology, Doctoral Studies)	
Number of doctoral thesis supervisors	6
Number of doctoral students	5
Ratio - supervisors of doctoral theses/doctoral students	0.83

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

Evidences/Indicators

- Component evidences/indicators, including the relevant documents and interview results
- Doctoral Program of History of Georgia;
- Doctoral Program of Archeology;
- The Regulation of the Dissertation Council at the Faculty of Humanities;
- SER;
- Interview results.
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Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	Recommendation(s): 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)	Suggestion(s): 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)
General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster	Add office and consultation hours for supervisors	Ensure both doctoral students and their supervisors are explicitly informed of the supervision hours; Strengthen communication with doctoral students by providing clearer and more accessible information about the regulatory processes and official documents governing supervisor

		appointment, responsibilities, and supervisory procedures.
Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)		
Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)		

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component <u>3.2. Master's and Doctoral Student Supervision</u>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)	Substantially
Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)	Substantially

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.

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.

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;
- 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 academic, scientific, and invited personnel involved in the implementation of the programme operate in full compliance with national legislation and the internal regulations of the higher education institution. Their qualifications fully correspond to the requirements of their positions, professional responsibilities, and applicable legal standards. The competence of academic and scientific staff is evidenced by scientific outputs produced over the past five years monographs, textbooks, and articles published in peer-reviewed journals as well as by relevant practical experience. Similarly, the qualification of invited personnel is determined by their professional background, knowledge, and skills necessary to support students in achieving the programme's learning outcomes.

The programme is implemented on the basis of a clearly structured and regularly updated workload scheme, which encompasses teaching, research, administrative duties, and student consultations. In allocating workload, the institution takes into account all academic and scientific responsibilities carried by each staff member across the various institutions in which they are employed. This balanced distribution of work contributes to the uninterrupted delivery of the programme and the proper fulfilment of assigned responsibilities.

Quantitative indicators demonstrate that the number of academic, scientific, and invited personnel is adequate in proportion to the number of students enrolled. The ratio between doctoral students and their supervisors ensures opportunities for high-quality, individual scientific supervision. Staff stability and an optimal turnover rate further support the long-term sustainability of the programme. The institution systematically analyses key indicators including staff workload, turnover rates, and student numbers and uses these data to strengthen and continuously improve the programme.

The Programme Head possesses the academic qualifications, research experience, and professional competencies appropriate for leading a doctoral-level programme. The Head is actively engaged in programme planning, implementation, evaluation, and development, as well as in student advising and the academic and scientific activities carried out within the programme framework.

The programme is additionally supported by a sufficient number of administrative and technical personnel, whose qualifications and functions fully correspond to institutional needs and ensure the effective organisation of teaching and research processes.

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 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)

Programme 1 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)⁶				
Number of the staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, and invited staff)	Number of Programme Staff	Including the staff with sectoral expertise⁷	Including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction⁸	Among them, the affiliated academic staff
Total number of academic staff	3	3	3	3
- Professor	2	2	2	2
- Associate Professor	1	1	1	1
- Assistant-Professor	0	0	0	0
- Assistant	0	0	0	0
Invited Staff	3	3	3	0
Scientific Staff	0	0	0	0
Including International Staff	0	0		0

Description and Analysis - Programme 2 (Archaeology, PhD)

The doctoral programme is implemented by academic, scientific, and invited personnel who possess the relevant scientific degrees, extensive teaching experience, and field-specific competencies. The specialists involved in the programme represent various branches of archaeology - prehistoric, classical, and medieval archaeology, artefact conservation, geological and geophysical research methods, cultural heritage management, project management, and research methodology - ensuring comprehensive academic coverage of the discipline.

The majority of the programme staff hold doctoral degrees and demonstrate high academic and research competence, which fully corresponds to the requirements of a doctoral-level programme. Their professional background and subject-specific expertise enable them to deliver both theoretical and practical knowledge at an advanced level.

⁶ In case of necessity please add the appropriate number of tables for the educational programmes grouped in a cluster.

⁷ Staff implementing the relevant components of the main field of study

⁸ Staff with relevant doctoral degrees implementing the components of the main field of study

The programme also benefits from the participation of internationally experienced specialists, which significantly enhances the quality of teaching, promotes alignment with contemporary research standards, and provides doctoral students with access to the international academic environment.

Considering the qualifications, research experience, and subject-specific competence of both local and international personnel, the staff fully ensures the effective and high-quality implementation of the doctoral programme.

Programme 2 (PhD in Archaeology)⁹				
Number of the staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, and invited staff)	Number of Programme Staff	Including the staff with sectoral expertise¹⁰	Including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction¹¹	Among them, the affiliated academic staff
Total number of academic staff	8	5	8	8
- Professor	4	1	4	4
- Associate Professor	2	2	2	2
- Assistant-Professor	2	2	2	2
- Assistant	0	0	0	0
Invited Staff	2	2	1	0
Scientific Staff	0	0	0	0
Including International Staff	2	2	1	0

Evidences/Indicators

- Programme documentation and quality assurance materials (SER, programme structure, syllabi, reading lists, QA conclusion).
- Results of internal and external evaluations.
- Survey results from employers, doctoral students, and supervisors.
- Evidence of resources and infrastructure (library, electronic databases, laboratories, classrooms).

⁹ In case of necessity please add the appropriate number of tables for the educational programmes grouped in a cluster.

¹⁰ Staff implementing the relevant components of the main field of study

¹¹ Staff with relevant doctoral degrees implementing the components of the main field of study

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	Recommendation(s): 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)	Suggestion(s): 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)
General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster		Across both programmes, applying a unified syllabus structure, formulating learning outcomes with greater precision, specifying assessment criteria more clearly, incorporating modern technologies, and making systematic use of student, employer and supervisor feedback could contribute to the ongoing enhancement of the cluster.
Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)		For the History programme, adopting a more unified and clearly structured syllabus format could support stronger thematic cohesion, especially in courses such as “Research and Academic Writing Methods,” “Source Studies and Historiography,” and “Contemporary Issues in Church History.” Broadening the range of updated literature and integrating modern digital research tools (online archives, academic databases, historical GIS platforms) would further strengthen the research dimension of the programme
Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)		It could be beneficial to further refine the structure and terminology of several syllabi to ensure greater internal consistency, especially in courses such as “Archaeological Research Methods,” “Geological and Geophysical Methods in Archaeology,” and the period-based courses where thematic overlap occasionally appears. Additional clarity in assessment components and a stronger integration of modern research technologies (GIS, photogrammetry, geophysics, 3D documentation) could further enhance the programme’s academic profile.

		Periodic updating of literature-particularly in courses like “Bronze Age Archaeology” and “The Classical World and Georgia”-may also enrich the curriculum.
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Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component 4.1 Human Resources	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)	Complies
Programme 2 (Ph.D. Archaeology)	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

Based on the Self-Evaluation Report, the annexed documents, and the information obtained during the site visit, it is established that the supervisors and co-supervisors involved in the programmes generally meet the requirements of the standard. The Higher Education Institution has defined qualification criteria for supervisors that correspond to the specifics of the programme and to international practice.

Supervisors hold relevant doctoral degrees, possess research experience in the appropriate field, and demonstrate active scholarly engagement. Most supervisors have published at least one scientific article in an internationally indexed, peer-reviewed journal within the last three years. Supervisors maintain professional links with local and international research and artistic communities, which contributes to the overall quality of doctoral research.

The criteria for selecting co-supervisors are clearly defined within the programme and ensure alignment with the dissertation topic. The Higher Education Institution provides regular professional development opportunities for supervisors, including trainings, seminars, and workshops, and has established mechanisms to encourage and support their academic and supervisory activities.

Conclusion:

compliant with the requirements of the standard. The qualifications, research activity, international engagement, and institutional support mechanisms for supervisors ensure adequate academic and methodological guidance for students' research.

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 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)

The doctoral educational programme "*History of Georgia*" complies with the requirements of the standard based on its aims, learning outcomes, and the mechanisms through which these outcomes are achieved and assessed. The self-evaluation report, supporting documentation, and information collected during the site visit demonstrate that the programme is coherently aligned with the university's mission and the strategic priorities of its research profile.

The programme's learning outcomes are formulated in accordance with Level 8 of the National Qualifications Framework and reflect the doctoral student's ability to generate new knowledge, conduct source-based research, perform critical analysis, and communicate scientific findings. The curriculum analysis shows that the programme's components enable the achievement of these

outcomes, while the assessment mechanisms — using both direct and indirect methods — allow for continuous monitoring of students’ progress.

The integration of fieldwork materials, archival sources, historiographical issues, and modern research approaches creates an environment conducive to independent research and engagement in the academic field. Information obtained during the site visit confirms that the programme systematically applies monitoring, evaluation, and improvement mechanisms, ensuring a student- and research-oriented learning environment.

Overall, the documentation and practical implementation indicate that the programme fully meets the requirements of the standard component and provides a solid basis for the research and academic development of doctoral students.

Programme 1 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)¹²			
Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses	These supervisors	Including the supervisors holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction¹³	Among them, the affiliated academic staff
Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses	3	3	2
- Professor	2	2	2
- Associate Professor	1	1	1
- Assistant-Professor	-	-	-
Invited Staff	-	-	-
Scientific Staff	-	-	-
Including International Staff	-	-	-

Description and Analysis - Programme 2 (Archaeology, PhD)

The HEI has established clear and transparent qualification requirements for supervisors and co-supervisors, which fully correspond to the standards of Master’s and Doctoral level supervision and are aligned with the programme’s profile and international best practice. Supervisors possess up-to-date academic knowledge, are actively involved in scientific research, and have recent publications relevant to the thematic direction of students’ theses, ensuring high-quality academic guidance.

Where co-supervisors are appointed, they also meet the required criteria, either through recent scholarly output or relevant professional experience directly connected to the student’s research area. This approach supports interdisciplinary perspectives and strengthens the research environment.

¹² In case of necessity please add the appropriate number of tables for the educational programmes grouped in a cluster.

¹³ These supervisors having a PhD degree relevant to the qualification awarded by the educational programme.

Programme 2 (PhD in Archaeology)¹⁴			
Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses	These supervisors	Including the supervisors holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction¹⁵	Among them, the affiliated academic staff
Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses	6	5	5
- Professor	4	3	3
- Associate Professor	2	2	2
- Assistant-Professor	0	0	0
Invited Staff	2	2	0
Scientific Staff	0	0	0
Including International Staff	2	2	0

Evidences/Indicators

- Document defining qualification requirements for supervisors and co-supervisors
- Records/official orders confirming supervisor appointments
- Updated CVs of supervisors and co-supervisors
- List of recent publications demonstrating thematic relevance
- Documentation confirming topic–supervisor alignment
- Internal regulation on Master’s/Doctoral supervision
- Quality assurance monitoring reports

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	<u>Recommendation(s):</u> 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)	<u>Suggestion(s):</u> 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)
General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen international collaboration and increase the involvement of foreign scholars. 2. Expand methodological workshops for doctoral students.

¹⁴ In case of necessity please add the appropriate number of tables for the educational programmes grouped in a cluster.

¹⁵ Theses supervisors having a PhD degree relevant to the qualification awarded by the educational programme.

		<p>3. Increase the visibility of doctoral research on university and professional platforms.</p>
<p>Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)</p>		<p>1. Broaden research methodology support Additional seminars in source studies, textology, and historical data analysis are suggested to strengthen doctoral students’ methodological competence.</p> <p>2. Expand access to international historical scholarship It is advisable to increase doctoral students’ participation in international conferences, research visits to foreign archives, and online scholarly seminars.</p> <p>3. Increase visibility of doctoral research Greater dissemination of doctoral students’ research results through university platforms and relevant scholarly publications is recommended.</p> <p>4. Strengthen collaboration with archival and museum institutions Enhanced cooperation between the university and national/regional archives and museums is encouraged—through specialized trainings, improved access to sources, and support in working with research materials.</p>
<p>Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)</p>		<p>1. Strengthen interdisciplinary methodological training It is advisable to expand methodological workshops for doctoral students, particularly in areas such as geoarchaeology, data analysis, and conservation technologies.</p> <p>2. Increase international academic exposure More active involvement of foreign scholars through joint seminars, online lectures, and participation in international research projects is recommended.</p>

		<p>3. Enhance dissemination of fieldwork results It is suggested to increase the visibility of archaeological fieldwork outcomes through university platforms and professional academic outlets.</p> <p>4. Improve documentation of supervisory feedback During doctoral progress monitoring, it is suggested that supervisory comments be documented in a more structured and standardized manner.</p>
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Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

<u>Component 4.2 Qualification of Supervisors of Master’s and Doctoral Students</u>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)	Complies
Programme 2 (Ph.D: Archaeology)	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

Based on the submitted documentation and information obtained during the site visit, the Higher Education Institution demonstrates clear mechanisms for evaluating academic, scientific, and invited staff and supporting their continuous professional development. Staff performance evaluation is conducted regularly and includes analysis of teaching quality, research productivity, student feedback, and participation in institutional activities. The results of evaluations are used to improve teaching practices and strengthen staff engagement in research.

The institution provides various opportunities for professional growth, including trainings, workshops, methodological seminars, and participation in international conferences and research projects. Academic and scientific staff benefit from access to research infrastructure, library resources, and partnerships with external institutions. Invited staff are also encouraged to engage in professional development activities and to participate in the academic environment. The institution supports scientific research through internal grants, consultation platforms, and collaboration opportunities, which enhance the overall academic capacity of the programmes.

The programmes comply with the requirements of this component. The HEI implements regular and systematic staff evaluation, offers relevant professional development opportunities, and actively supports the scientific and research work of academic, scientific, and invited personnel. These mechanisms ensure the sustainability and quality of the teaching and research environment.

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 (History of Georgia)

The higher education institution systematically conducts the evaluation of programme staff, and the results are duly reviewed and utilized in the processes of programme development and improvement. The evaluation of academic, scientific, and invited personnel encompasses their teaching and research activities, as well as their creative or performing activities. The results of these evaluations are effectively used to support the professional development of staff and are taken into consideration in decisions related to promotion and the application of relevant support mechanisms.

The institution annually provides a range of professional development activities for academic and scientific personnel, including programme heads and supervisors of master’s and doctoral students. Adequate material and financial resources are ensured to support the research and creative activities of academic, scientific, and invited staff. The institution also actively promotes staff participation in international projects, research activities, and conferences.

Personnel involved in the programme receive training, as needed, to effectively use modern methods of e-learning, distance teaching, and assessment. These mechanisms and processes fully comply with the requirements of the standard and ensure the sustainable development of the programme’s quality.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-Evaluation Report,
- curriculum,
- course descriptions,
- mapping of programme aims and learning outcomes.
- results of interviews.

Recommendations and Suggestions	<u>Recommendation(s):</u> Please, write the developed recommendations that	<u>Suggestion(s):</u> Please, write the developed suggestions that apply
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according to the programmes:	apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster		
Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)		
Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)		

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

<u>Component 4.3 Professional Development of Academic, Scientific and Invited Staff</u>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)	Complies
Programme 2 (Ph.D. Archaeology)	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

Based on the Self-Evaluation Report, attached documentation, and site-visit materials, both doctoral programmes grouped in the cluster demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the component related to material resources. The institution provides the necessary research, teaching, and digital infrastructure required for the implementation of doctoral-level educational and scientific-research components.

Doctoral students have access to a fully functioning library system, which includes an updated book collection, recent scientific periodicals, and international electronic databases available both on campus and remotely. These resources ensure that students can access relevant scholarly literature and research materials in their respective fields.

The programmes benefit from appropriate working environments, including computer-equipped spaces, internet access, and departmental facilities suited for research in the humanities. For the Archaeology programme, additional field and laboratory opportunities - including access to archaeological expeditions, museum collections, and conservation laboratories - further strengthen the research component.

The Higher Education Institution actively promotes the sharing of research infrastructure within the university and with external scientific institutions, museums, and archives. This fosters interdisciplinary collaboration and ensures that doctoral students are provided with the resources needed to achieve programme learning outcomes. Moreover, the institution demonstrates continuous investment in updating and developing its scientific-research infrastructure.

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

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-Evaluation Report,
- Interview results.

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	<u>Recommendation(s):</u> 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)	<u>Suggestion(s):</u> 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)
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General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster		
Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)		
Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)		

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component <u>4.4. Material Resources</u>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)	Complies
Programme 2 (Archaeology Ph.D.)	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

Self-evaluation materials and institutional budget documentation demonstrate that both doctoral programmes included in the cluster (PhD in Archaeology and PhD in History of Georgia) are financially sustainable and adequately supported by the university's budget. According to the institutional regulations and approved budget forms (Decision №82 and Decision №175), programme financing is planned based on student numbers, workload calculations, and the actual costs of teaching and research components.

Both programmes benefit from a budgeting model that allocates resources to academic salaries, administrative support, library services, technological equipment, infrastructure development, and research-related expenses. As outlined in the financial justification document (Decision №175), funding mechanisms cover conference participation, fieldwork, archival research, publication of scientific outputs, and research mobility. The budget also anticipates annual infrastructure renewal and includes risk-management reserves to ensure long-term stability.

The university additionally encourages external funding opportunities, including grants, partnerships, and alternative resource mobilisation, which further strengthen the sustainability of the research components. Overall, the available financial framework and documented mechanisms fully support the effective implementation of both doctoral programmes and ensure continuity and stability.

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 (Archaeology, PhD)

The financial resources currently allocated to the programme sufficiently cover its core components; however, given the specific nature of archaeology particularly fieldwork, laboratory research, and participation in international research activities it is advisable to increase funding. Additional financial support would strengthen doctoral students' research capacities and enhance the international competitiveness of the programme.

Evidences/Indicators

- Financial documentation (submitted budget forms and the institutional financial support mechanisms (Decision №82 – Budget Form and Decision №175 – Programme Financial Provision))

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	Recommendation(s): Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster.	Suggestion(s): Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please
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	Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster		
Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)		
Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)		

Evaluation

Component 4.5. <u>Programme/Faculty/School</u> <u>Budget and Programme</u> <u>Financial Sustainability</u>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Ph.D: History of Georgia)	Complies
Programme 2 (Ph.D: Archaeology)	Substantially

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

Processes and mechanisms for quality assurance at Akaki Tsereteli State University (ATSU) are coordinated by the quality assurance service of the university. The work of the University Quality Assurance Service is based on the “Akaki Tsereteli State University Quality Assurance Concept”. The university has developed a number of regulations and frameworks related to the elaboration and development of educational programmes, as well as the procedure for the peer review of educational programmes.

The internal quality system at the university is based on three main policies: Quality assurance policy of educational programs; Research development policy; Management efficiency improvement policy. The University uses these policies, procedures and regulatory documents for internal quality assurance and monitoring and management of current processes.

The preparation of an educational programme for accreditation is carried out according to three procedures: Procedure for initiating, planning and approving an educational programme; Procedure for evaluating an educational programme; Procedure for developing an effective educational programme.

The quality assurance system of the ATSU operates with internal and external evaluation tools and uses a cyclical process that includes four main interrelated elements: planning, implementation, evaluation and improvement (PDCA cycle). The PDCA cycle approaches used in quality management have been implemented at the level of the main structural units of the university - faculties. The quality assurance services operating at the faculties annually develop action plans. The head of the faculty quality assurance service submits a report on the implementation of the activities specified in the action plan to the faculty council and the ATSU’s quality assurance service.

The Quality Assurance Service has developed a self-evaluation form for the educational programme. Both academic and administrative staff are involved in compiling the programme's self-evaluation report. Programme was developed with the engagement of implementing staff. The proposals of educational programs were approved and initiated by the members of the Faculty of Humanities.

At the meeting of the Council of the Faculty of Humanities of Akaki Tsereteli State University (№14 20.07.2020), the programs grouped in the cluster to be submitted for accreditation were initiated. In order to develop educational programs and bring them into line with accreditation standards, working groups and program self assessment groups were formed. The composition of the self-assessment group was determined as follows: representatives of the Quality Assurance Service of the Faculty of Humanities, academic personnel (head of the Department of History and Archaeology) invited personnel and employers.

It should be noted that according to the self-assessment report submitted by the University, the self-assessment group did not include students and graduates. Despite the fact that the presented programmes are new and there are no graduates and students enrolled at the programmes, students and graduates from similar programs should be included in the self-evaluation team to conduct comprehensive self-evaluation. **Recommendation: To conduct a comprehensive self-evaluation it is recommended to include students and graduates in the self-assessment group (even from similar programs).**

With the involvement of the program implementation staff and through joint discussions, the goals and learning outcomes of the programs were refined, the scope of the program components and their constituent training courses were determined. Permanent consultation meetings were held with the authors of the syllabi regarding the definition and formulation of the goals and learning outcomes of each training course. The self-assessment group discussed and analyzed the activities corresponding to the standards and made recommendations. Internal and external assessment recommendations were introduced and discussed.

A self-evaluation report was prepared with annexes including all activities and collected information in preparation for the accreditation process. The educational programmes were presented and

approved at the meeting of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Humanities, ATSU Department of Quality Assurance and ATSU Academic Council. The Quality Assurance Service of the University and the faculty provided consultation and assistance to the group members during the preparation of the self-assessment report and the attached documentation.

It should be noted that In some cases, the self-assessment report does not indicate areas for improvement (for example, Standard 2, Standard 3, Standard 5), and in some cases, Planned activities and deadlines for the development of areas for improvement (for example, Standard 1 and Standard 4) are not indicated. There are technical inaccuracies, for example, the name of the faculty and one of the programs is incorrectly indicated on pages 25 and 26 of the English-language self-assessment report. **Recommendation: it is recommended to identify areas for future program strengthening/enhancement as well as planned activities and timelines for the areas to be improved, especially since this is required in the standard form of the self-assessment report.**

For the monitoring and evaluation of the electronic/distance learning process during Covid-19 pandemic the university adopted the regulations for using electronic services to ensure the adaptation of internal quality assurance mechanisms for the distance/electronic/hybrid study process. Furthermore, for monitoring and evaluation of the electronic/distance learning process ATSU ensures the adaptation of internal quality assurance mechanisms by integrating questions about the quality of distance learning in the questionnaire of students' satisfaction surveys. At the moment of the expert group visit no study courses were conducted remotely.

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 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)

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.

(See cluster evaluation). Number of the supervisors -3; number of students- 0 (program is a new programme). To evaluate the scientific-research component, resources, and support mechanisms of the doctoral student the University conducts several types of satisfaction surveys, among them doctoral students surveys. The resources and research environment at the doctoral programme are

evaluated through the satisfaction surveys and focus group interviews conducted by the Quality Assurance Service.

The supervision/co-supervision of the doctoral thesis as well as research component of the program is evaluated within the framework of the monitoring of the doctoral educational programme. The Developmental/formative peer review is used to improve the programme regularly (see more details in the narrative part of standards 5.2 and standard 5.3). The University submitted the tamplate of questionnaire for the evaluation of doctoral students supervisor, satisfaction survey questionnaire for the doctoral students, and analysis of the results of the survey of doctoral students of the Faculty of Humanities for 2024-2025 academic year .

Based on the analysis of the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), the accompanying documentation and the results of the on-site visit interviews, it can be concluded that the University has a mechanism for assessment and development of scientific research and teaching performance/ activities of the personnel involved in the implantation of the doctoral programmes.

Description and Analysis - Programme 2 (Archeology, PhD)

(See cluster evaluation). Number of the supervisors -3; number of students- 0 (program is a new programme). To evaluate the scientific-research component, resources, and support mechanisms of the doctoral student the University conducts several types of satisfaction surveys, among them doctoral students surveys. The resources and research environment at the doctoral programme are evaluated through the satisfaction surveys and focus group interviews conducted by the Quality Assurance Service.

The supervision/co-supervision of the doctoral thesis as well as research component of the program is evaluated within the framework of the monitoring of the doctoral educational programme. The Developmental/formative peer review is used to improve the programme regularly (see more details in the narrative part of standards 5.2 and standard 5.3). The University submitted the tamplate of questionnaire for the evaluation of doctoral students supervisor, satisfaction survey questionnaire for the doctoral students, and analysis of the results of the survey of doctoral students of the Faculty of Humanities for 2024-2025 academic year .

Based on the analysis of the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), the accompanying documentation and the results of the on-site visit interviews, it can be concluded that the University has a mechanism for assessment and development of scientific research and teaching performance/ activities of the personnel involved in the implantation of the doctoral programmes.

Evidences/Indicators

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

- The Conception of Assuring Quality At Akaki Tsereteli State University
- Quality Assurance Policies at Akaki Tsereteli State University
- Statue on the definition of the basic principles of conducting doctoral studies
- Doctoral Educational programmes and syllabi
- Internationalization strategies of the educational programmes
- Analysis of the results of the survey of doctoral students of the Faculty of Humanities 2024-2025
- Results of employers survey
- Questionnaire for the evaluation of doctoral students supervisor
- Questionnaire for the doctoral students
- Report of the Quality Service of the Faculty of Humanities for the 2023-2024 academic year
- Faculty of Humanities Quality Assurance Service Work Plan 2024-2025
- Internal evaluations of the educational programmes
- External peer evaluation of educational programmes
- Learning outcomes evaluation plans of educational programmes
- Sample of Learning Outcomes Assessment Analysis for the doctoral programme “Art History and Theory”
- Job and Educational Markets research
- Comparison/benchmarking document with the similar programmes
- Site-visit interviews
- Self-evaluation report submitted by the University

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	Recommendation(s): 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)	Suggestion(s): 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)
General recommendations/	To conduct a comprehensive self-evaluation it is recommended to	none

Suggestion of the Cluster	include students and graduates in the self-assessment group (even from similar programs). It is recommended to identify areas for future program strengthening/enhancement as well as planned activities and timelines for the areas to be improved, especially since this is required in the standard form of the self-assessment report.	
Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)	none	none
Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)	none	none

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component 5.1. Internal Quality Evaluation	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)	Substantially
Programme 2 (Ph.D. Archaeology)	Substantially

5.2. External Quality Evaluation

Accreditation standards indicators

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

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 external mechanisms for the evaluation of the quality of educational process are authorization and accreditation processes according the Georgian Legislation: the external mechanisms for evaluating the implementation of the educational programme are based on the "Regulation on the Accreditation of Educational Programmes of Educational Institutions" and the "Regulation on the Authorization of Educational Institutions".

The University periodically submits information about each educational programme to the legal entity under public law to the National Center for Education Quality Development (NCEQE) in the form of a self-evaluation report in accordance with the established deadlines and forms. The personnel involved in the programmes take into account the recommendations received by experts during authorization and accreditation and make appropriate changes to the program. The changes to be implemented in the programmes are discussed by the heads of the program and the staff involved in the programme.

Doctoral educational programmes are new programs, subsequently, the above mentioned mechanism was not used yet to receive the feedback from external evaluators but the programmes were evaluated by the local/foreign field experts/professional experts (see details below in the narrative part of the individual evaluation of doctoral programmes).

Periodic external evaluation of the quality of the educational programme at the university is carried out with the involvement of graduates and employers. The results of the survey of industry professionals, partners and other interested parties such as alumni were taken into account. The results of the analysis of the employer's requirements were also taken into consideration.

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 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)

Developmental peer review of the educational doctoral programme is conducted by two (local and foreign) field experts/professionals: (1) Head of the Doctoral Program in History of Georgia, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor at Sokhumi State University (Georgia) and (2) Doctor of Theology, Visiting Professor at the University of Thrumau, Rector of the St. Ephrem Scientific Center for Orinet&Occident Studies.

Description and Analysis - Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)

Developmental peer review of the educational doctoral programme is conducted by a local field expert/professional - Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor at Sokhumi State University, Research Fellow at the German Institute of Archaeology.

Evidences/Indicators

- Component evidences/indicators, including the relevant documents and interview results
- Doctoral Educational programmes and syllabi
- Results of employers survey
- Report of the Quality Service of the Faculty of Humanities for the 2023-2024 academic year

- External peer evaluation of educational programmes
- Site-visit interviews
- Self-evaluation report submitted by the University

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	Recommendation(s): 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)	Suggestion(s): 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)
General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster	none	none
Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)	none	none
Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)	none	none

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component 5.2. External Quality Evaluation	Evaluation
Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)	Complies
Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)	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

Program monitoring and periodic evaluation is conducted by the quality assurance service of the University and the faculties. The process of monitoring and evaluating the quality of educational programs involves all parties. Periodic evaluation is carried out by systematic collection, processing, and analysis of information with the participation of academic, administrative, and support staff, students, graduates, employers, and other interested parties.

Based on the analysis of the evaluation results within the framework of periodic monitoring of educational program and study process at the University, the programmes are modified. Academic and invited staff, employers, specialized specialists, industry professionals, students, graduates were involved in the evaluation process. Evaluations were carried out both at meetings and through questionnaires. To evaluate the program, the information received was processed, analyzed. The self-assessment groups of the educational programs participated in assessing the quality of the educational programs and in the process of preparing for accreditation.

ATSU undertakes the following activities to monitor the quality of educational process and educational programs: surveys of key stakeholders (student, teacher, employer, graduate); analysis of students' academic performance; graduate employment analysis; analysis of the evaluation of the performance of the persons involved in the implantation of the program (academic, invited personnel and administrative/support staff); analysis of the satisfaction surveys of interested parties. The results of the analysis are sent to the head of the program and the relevant department, who provide information to the staff involved in the implementation of the programs. The results of the surveys and the conclusions made based on the analysis serve for the development of educational programs. At the end of each academic year, a self-evaluation report of the educational program is drawn up. In addition, if it is necessary, analysis of peer observation and evaluation of the classroom work performance is conducted. The person/structure leading the analysis of peer observation and evaluation of the classroom work is conducted by the relevant departments and the quality assurance service of the faculty. The process of peer observation and assessment of the classroom work is regulated in accordance with the “Quality Assurance Policy and Procedures” of the University.

According to the University’s Quality Assurance policy, at the end of each core study course, students anonymously evaluate (through questionnaires) the instructor and study course. The university conducts the evaluation of the research component of master and doctoral programs as well as scientific supervision of master students and analyzes the results of surveys of master and doctoral students with this regard.

The institution does not evaluate administrative personnel individually. The activities of the entire structural units such as departments or services are evaluated. The institution has determined the introduction of individual evaluation of administrative and support personnel in the future.

The institution measures learning outcomes primarily based on students’ academic performance. According to the mechanism of program learning outcome evaluation “..Direct evidence of students’ achievement of programme learning outcomes is their academic performance, specifically the grades they accumulate through midterm and final examinations, as well as various types of activities whose assessment criteria and rubrics are outlined in the course syllabi...”. As part of monitoring and evaluation of the program, the University also evaluates the achievement of the learning outcomes of the program. The University presented a plan for evaluation of program learning outcomes and an

analysis of the students' academic performance. This is an indirect assessment of the achievement of learning outcomes of the program. The final evaluation of the study course is used as a direct method of evaluating the specific result of the educational program, which is not recommended according to the guidelines for the evaluation of accreditation standards developed by the National Center for Education

Quality

Enhancement

<https://eqe.ge/res/docs/%E1%83%A1%E1%83%90%E1%83%AE%E1%83%94%E1%83%9A%E1%83%9B%E1%83%AB%E1%83%A6%E1%83%95%E1%83%90%E1%83%9C%E1%83%94%E1%83%9A%E1%83%9D%E1%83%93%E1%83%90%E1%83%9B%E1%83%A2%E1%83%99%E1%83%98%E1%83%AA%E1%83%94%E1%83%91%E1%83%A3%E1%83%9A%E1%83%98.pdf>

Recommendation: Within the framework of periodic monitoring of the program, the Quality Assurance Department should use as a direct assessment of the achievement of the learning outcomes of the program the specific assessment component/activity from third level (reinforcement level) study courses, which directly measures the mentioned learning outcome. The University should implement the mechanism for evaluating the learning outcomes of the programmes.

Local universities' experience and analogical programs were considered during the process of modification/development of the educational programmes. Accordingly, a benchmarking document was developed. Considering the specificity of the programmes, the programme's comparison/benchmarking document with the foreign similar programs were not developed.

Recommendation: Periodically the programme should be compared with similar programmes of foreign universities. To bring the programmes in compliance with the modern requirements, the best international practices should be applied.

Based on the analysis of such complex indicators the Quality Assurance Department assesses the efficiency of implementation of educational programmes and offers recommendations and suggestions to programme personnel for further development of the education programmes.

Within the monitoring process of the doctoral educational programmes, the University evaluates the research performance of personnel to identify who can be scientific supervisor of the doctoral students. According to the University regulations, based on the specifics and development of the field, the doctoral student's supervisor must have published at least 1 scientific paper in a peer-reviewed journal with a foreign international index determined by the university within the last 3 years. This publication must be consistent with the general topic/field of research of the doctoral student's doctoral thesis. In accordance with this request, a list of potential supervisors is sent to the university's Research Development Service, which verifies whether the potential scientific supervisor has the requested type of publications.

Within the monitoring process of the doctoral educational programmes, the doctoral regulations and the regulations of the dissertation councils have all changed due to the introduction of the new Framework for Doctoral Education in Georgia at the end of 2024. Nothing has changed in the quality assurance policies and procedures of the institution itself due to the introduction of this framework, because the institution already had the mechanism to evaluate the research component and the scientific supervisors of doctoral students.

Evidences/Indicators

- Component evidences/indicators, including the relevant documents and interview results
- The Conception of Assuring Quality At Akaki Tsereteli State University
- Quality Assurance Policies at Akaki Tsereteli State University
- Statue on the definition of the basic principles of conducting doctoral studies
- Doctoral Educational programmes and syllabi
- Internationalization strategies of the educational programmes
- Analysis of the results of the survey of doctoral students of the Faculty of Humanities 2024-2025
- Results of employers survey
- Questionnaire for the evaluation of doctoral students supervisor
- Questionnaire for the doctoral students
- Report of the Quality Service of the Faculty of Humanities for the 2023-2024 academic year
- Faculty of Humanities Quality Assurance Service Work Plan 2024-2025
- Internal evaluations of the educational programmes
- External peer evaluation of educational programmes
- Learning outcomes evaluation plans of educational programmes
- Sample of Learning Outcomes Assessment Analysis for the doctoral programme “Art History and Theory”
- Job and Educational Markets research
- Comparison/benchmarking document with the similar programmes
- Site-visit interviews
- Self-evaluation report submitted by the University

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	Recommendation(s): Please, write the developed recommendations that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster.	Suggestion(s): Please, write the developed suggestions that apply equally to the educational programmes grouped in the cluster. Also, please
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	Also, please indicate, according to individual programs (if any)	indicate, according to individual programs (if any)
General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster	<p>Within the framework of periodic monitoring of the program, the Quality Assurance Department should use as a direct assessment of the achievement of the learning outcomes of the program the specific assessment component/activity from third level (reinforcement level) study courses, which directly measures the mentioned learning outcome. The University should implement the mechanism for evaluating the learning outcomes of the programmes.</p> <p>Periodically the programme should be compared with similar programmes of foreign universities. To bring the programmes in compliance with the modern requirements, the best international practices should be applied.</p>	
Programme 1 (History of Georgia, Ph.D.)		
Programme 2 (Archaeology, Ph.D.)		

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

<u>Component 5.3. Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review</u>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Ph.D. History of Georgia)	Substantially
Programme 2 (Ph.D. Archaeology)	Substantially

Attached documentation (if applicable):

Signatures

Chair of Accreditation Experts Panel

Full name, signature



Goran Đurđević

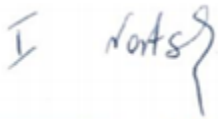
Of the member(s) of the Accreditation Experts Panel

Full name, signature

Guranda Chelidze



Full name, signature



Ia Natsvlishvili

Full name, signature

Vazha Mamiashvili



Full name, signature

Giorgi Pareshishvili

