



Accreditation Expert Group Report on Cluster of Higher Education Programmes

Tourism cluster

Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University

**Bachelor's Educational Program in Tourism Master's Educational Program in Tourism
Management**

Date of Visit 21. 4. 2026

Report Submission Date 09. 7. 2026

Tbilisi

Information on the Higher educational Institution

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

Expert Panel Members

Chair (Name, Surname, HEI/Organization, Country)	Armand Faganel, University of Primorska, Slovenia
Member (Name, Surname, HEI/Organization, Country)	Eka Lekashvili, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Georgia
Member (Name, Surname, HEI/Organization, Country)	Nino Devidze, The University of Georgia, Georgia
Member (Name, Surname, HEI/Organization, Country)	Nino Talikadze, LTD International Black Sea University, Tbilisi, Georgia
Member (Name, Surname, HEI/Organization, Country)	Tamari Razmadze. New Vision University, Tbilisi.

I. Information on the Cluster of Educational Programmes

	Programme 1	Programme 2
Name of the educational programme In Georgia	ტურიზმი	ტურიზმის მენეჯმენტი
Name of the educational programme In English	Tourism	Tourism Management
Level of higher education	Bachelor's Studies	Master's Studies
Qualification to be awarded	Bachelor of Tourism	Part one - Master of Tourism Management Part two - Research Master in Tourism Management
Name and code of the detailed field	1015 მოგზაურობა, ტურიზმი და დასვენება Travel, Tourism and Leisure	1015 მოგზაურობა, ტურიზმი და დასვენება Travel, Tourism and Leisure
Indication of the right to provide teaching of subject/subjects/group of subjects of the relevant level of general education ¹	-	-
Language of instruction	Georgian	Georgian
Number of ECTS credits	185	60 + 60
Programme Status (Accredited/Non-	New	New

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

accredited/Conditionally Accredited/New/International Accreditation) Indicating Relevant Decision (number, date)		
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II. Accreditation Report Executive Summary

▪ General Information on the Cluster of Education Programmes

The entire cluster with bachelor study programme and two master study programmes on Tourism are newly introduced programmes, based on the guidelines of the government, which recognized the needs and benefits of such type of education for the development of the region.

▪ Overview of the Accreditation Site Visit

Experts were nominated by NCEQE on 17.4.2026; they had an online meeting on May 15, 2026, to get acquainted with each other, divide the tasks, and set the plan for the future work. The visit took place on May 21, 2026; it took place according to the pre-developed agenda. The evaluation process was conducted in a hybrid format: the local experts attended the visit at the University in person, while the international expert took part in the process via Zoom. The experts met with all the stakeholder groups and cross-verified the facts recorded during the interviews. They also requested additional documentation, which was delivered to them during the visit and later. In addition to the interviews, the review of resources and university's infrastructure was conducted. The visit was progressing in a collegial and constructive environment. After the visit, the experts analyzed all the information, and prepared partial reports for the assigned standards, then compiled the report and submitted it to the agency.

▪ Brief Overview of Education Programme Compliance with the Standards

The proposed study programmes all comply with the Standards. Experts made some suggestions and recommendations that might enhance the quality of studies offered.

▪ Recommendations

General recommendations of the Cluster

- It is recommended that the university develops and implements regulations governing the use of generative artificial intelligence in teaching and research processes (2.4)
- It is recommended that the university ensures the introduction of an appropriate electronic platform for identifying AI generated materials in order to support academic integrity and enhance the quality of teaching and learning. (2.4)
- It is recommended to strengthen its tourism-oriented academic profile by increasing the number of academic staff with specialization in the field of tourism, in order to better respond to field-specific requirements and ensure stronger alignment with the disciplinary needs of tourism education (4.1)

- It is recommended that the learning outcomes map and the assessment plan be reviewed. The progression levels and sequence of learning outcome achievement should be maintained, and the assessment periodicity should be clearly specified. Active involvement of the programme leadership, academic staff, and invited lecturers is essential in this process, together with due consideration of university standards. (5.1)

Program 1 (Tourism Management Bachelor Program)

- It is recommended that “Introduction to Tourism” be defined as a prerequisite for the course “Information Technologies in Tourism” and that the l be repositioned in the 2nd or 3rd semester to ensure the achievement of learning outcomes at an appropriate level. (1.4)
- It is recommended that “Introduction to Tourism” be defined as a prerequisite for the course “Tourism and Recreational Resources of Georgia” to ensure students possess the necessary foundational knowledge of tourism concepts and theories. (1.4)
- It is recommended that “Introduction to Tourism,” “Tourism Geography,” and “Tourism and Recreational Resources of Georgia” be established as prerequisites for the course “Excursion Studies and Guiding Art” to support the effective achievement of the course learning outcomes. (1.4)
- It is reasonable to modify the syllabi Cultural Heritage and World History and *Cultural Tourism* and merge them under a single title, *Cultural Tourism*. Such integration would help eliminate unnecessary duplication, improve the logical sequencing of topics, reduce student workload related to repetitive material, and enhance the implementation of competency-based education principles. (1.5)
- It is recommended that the bachelor’s project be completed individually in order to ensure a more accurate and objective assessment of each student’s knowledge, competencies, and academic performance. (1.5)

Program 2 (Tourism Management Master's Program)

the first part of the programme

- It is recommended the literature in the following courses be updated: Strategic management of Tourism; Managerial Economics and Corporate Finance; Effective Business Communication and Leadership Skills; Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility. (1.5)
- **the second part of the programme**

- It is recommended that the study courses “*Scientific Research Methodology and Academic Communication*” and “*Tourism Sociology and Anthropological Research*” be replaced with “*Qualitative Research Methods in Tourism*” and “*Quantitative Research Methods in Tourism*”. These changes would strengthen students’ research competencies and enhance methodological training within the program. (1.4)
- It is recommended that the study course “*Global Tourism Policy and Strategic Diagnostics*” be updated and reformulated as “*Tourism Policy and Regulations*” in order to ensure relevance to the field. (1.4)
- It is recommended that the course “*Innovative Management*” be revised to better align the syllabus with the tourism context, resulting in a more precise course “*Innovation Management in Tourism*”. (1.4)
- It is recommended that the course “*Risk Theory and Resilience Studies*” be replaced by “*Risk Management and Resilience in Tourism*” to strengthen its practical and sector-specific orientation. (1.4)
- It is recommended that the courses “*Scientific Research Design and Academic Communication*”, “*Qualitative Research Methods in Tourism*”, and “*Quantitative Research Methods in Tourism*” be established as prerequisites for *Research Practice* and the *Master’s Thesis*. (1.4)
- It is recommended that the alignment of the program learning outcomes with individual courses be reviewed to ensure the full achievement of the program learning outcomes, their sequential development, and consistency with the substantive goals of the courses. (1.4)
- It is recommended that the course “*Ethics, Philosophy, and Human Rights in Tourism*” be revised, modified, or replaced with a more field-specific course, such as “*Tourism Ethics and Philosophy*”, in order to enhance its relevance to the program’s objectives. (1.4)
- It is recommended to further align the learning outcomes and content of academic courses with the programme learning outcomes in order to ensure the consistent development of students’ competencies throughout the programme. (1.5)
- It is recommended to reconsider the distribution of credits, contact hours, and independent study hours to ensure their full compliance with the course workload, content, and expected learning outcomes. (1.5)
- It is recommended to update and diversify the basic literature indicated in the syllabi in accordance with contemporary academic approaches and current trends in the tourism field, in order to better support the achievement of both course and programme learning outcomes. (1.5)

- It is recommended to include an English-language abstract in the requirements for the structure of the master's thesis and to reflect this in the master's regulations. An English-language abstract will contribute to the internationalization of the research results of young researchers. (2.2)

▪ Suggestions

General Suggestion of the Cluster

- It is suggested that the university raise students' awareness of the regulations governing academic integrity in force at the university.
- It is suggested that lecturers check the level of text similarity not only in relation to bachelor's and master's theses, but also for individual written components of course assignments.
- It is suggested that the university strengthen students' awareness of the Master's Degree Regulations and its application in practice.
- It is suggested that the university enhance students' awareness of the master's thesis supervisor evaluation form and strengthen communication with students regarding its practical use.
- It is suggested for the programme head and the Quality Assurance Office to develop more effective tools and mechanisms beyond surveys to ensure meaningful stakeholder participation in programme development and evaluation processes.
- It is advisable to involve international experts in program evaluation and development.

Program 1 (Tourism Management Bachelor Program)

- It is desirable that the prerequisites for the bachelor's program specify the subject(s) to be taken on the Unified National Exam, which is determined by the Order of the Minister of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia N92 - N.
- It is desirable for the institution to purchase a special program called "Global Reservation Systems" for the training course.

Program 2 (Tourism Management Master's Program)

- None.

Program 3 (Tourism Management Research Master's Program)

- It is advisable for scientific supervisors to focus on ensuring the structure specified by the Master's degree regulations when completing the master's thesis.

- **Quantitative Data Analysis of the educational programme in accordance with the requirements of the accreditation standards**
- **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;
- Based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents, and the site visit, it is confirmed that the total number of the staff involved in the entire Cluster Program is as follows:

Program 1 – Tourism (Bachelor's Programme)

The total number of the staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, and invited staff – 37(Among them: Number of academic staff – 21, Professor -3; Professor – 17; Assistant-Professor -1; Assistant – 0; Invited Staff – 16; Scientific Staff – 0).

The staff with sectoral expertise – 14(among them: Invited Staff – 2); The staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction – 14(Invited Staff – 2); The affiliated academic staff – 20(among them professor -3; Associate Professor- 16; Assistant professor – 1).

Programme 2 (Management in Tourism, master)

Total number of academic staff – 15(Among them Professor – 1; -Associate Professor – 8; Invited Staff – 6); The staff with sectoral expertise – 8(including Invited Staff – 2); The staff holding PhD degree – 8(including Invited Staff -2); The affiliated academic staff – 7.

Programme 3 (Management in Tourism, research master)

Total number of academic staff – 13(including: Professor - 1; Associate Professor -6; Assistant-Professor 0; Assistant 0; Invited Staff 6); The staff with sectoral expertise - 6; The staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction – 7; The affiliated academic staff – 7.

Number of master's theses supervisors for the Programs in cluster – 10(Among them for the Program 1: Professor – 1. Associate professor – 6; invited staff- 2; Supervisors holding PHD – 10, among them invited – 1; Affiliated academic staff – 7).

- **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;

Based on the information collected through the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), the enclosed documents, and the site visit, it is confirmed that the total number of staff involved in scientific and research activities within the Cluster Programmes over the last five years is 169 (among them – 72 local journals; 30 - International Journals; 20- Local Conferences; 25- International Conferences; 22 – Other Scientific Activities).

- **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.);

Based on the information collected through the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), the enclosed documents, and the site visit, it is confirmed that the academic staff turnover for the last five years in the programs in Cluster is as follows:

Programme 1 – Tourism (Bachelor's Programme)

The number of retired staff – 0 %; The number of retired staff - 0%; The number of new staff – 3 ; Retention Rate - 100%

Programme 2 Programme 3: Number of retired staff: 0; Number of staff who left the institution: 0; Number of new staff: 0; Staff retention rate: 100%

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

▪ **Brief Overview of the Best Practices (if applicable)³**

The university operates a fully equipped childcare facility that provides a safe and child-friendly environment for students with young children. This service significantly supports their full and continuous engagement in the learning process, reduces barriers to access to education, and enables a better balance between academic and family responsibilities. This approach represents best practice in creating an inclusive and student-centered university

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

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

environment, as it directly contributes to ensuring equal opportunities and strengthening social support for students.

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

The institution shares the recommendations and has already initiated work on the implementation of some of them.

- **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 Bachelor's Educational Program in Tourism	Programme 2 Master's Educational Program in Tourism Management
1.	Educational Programme Objectives, Learning Outcomes and their Compliance with the Programme	Substantially complies	Substantially complies
1.1	Programme Objectives	Complies	Complies
1.2	Programme Learning Outcomes	Complies	Complies
1.3	Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes	Complies	Complies
1.4	Structure and Content of Educational Programme	Substantially complies	Substantially complies
1.5	Academic Course/Subject	Substantially complies	Substantially complies
2.	Methodology and Organization of Teaching, Adequacy of Evaluation of Programme Mastering	Complies	Substantially complies

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

4.5	Programme/Faculty/School Budget and Programme Financial Sustainability	Complies	Complies
5	5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities	Complies	Complies
5.1	Internal Quality Evaluation	Substantially complies	Substantially complies
5.2	External Quality Evaluation	Complies	Complies
5.3	Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review	Complies	Complies

IV. Compliance of the Programme with Accreditation Standards

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

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

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

1.1 Programme Objectives

Accreditation standards indicators

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

PhD programme indicators

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

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

Cluster evaluation

Description and Analysis of Cluster

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 proposed cluster of study programmes in tourism and tourism management demonstrates a well-structured and coherent academic framework that effectively addresses the specificity of the field, the respective educational levels, and the intended graduate profile. The programme objectives are clearly formulated and appropriately aligned with the contemporary demands of tourism education and the evolving needs of the tourism industry. Programme objectives define a comprehensive set of knowledge, skills, and competences that graduates are expected to acquire. The objectives reflect an understanding of current trends in tourism development, sustainability, digital transformation, destination management, entrepreneurship, and intercultural communication, thereby ensuring the relevance and applicability of the study programmes.

An additional strength of the cluster lies in the consistency between the programme objectives and the mission, strategic goals, and development plans of the higher education institution.

The educational programmes within the cluster are logically interconnected and appropriately differentiated according to the respective levels of higher education. The progression from one level to another is coherent and academically justified, enabling students to gradually deepen their knowledge and competences through vertically integrated learning pathways. The cluster structure reflects a clear understanding of the study field and supports continuity in academic and professional development.

The proposed cluster of study programmes represents a comprehensive, strategically aligned, and academically sound educational offer. It demonstrates high relevance for the discipline, strong responsiveness to societal and labour market needs, and a coherent internal structure that supports student progression and the long-term development of the field.

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

Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Name and Level)⁴

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

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).

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

- Annex 2 – Bachelor Educational Program in “Tourism”;
- Annex 2 – Master Educational Program in “Tourism Management”;
- Annex 1 – University Mission;
- Annex 3 – Program Implementing Staff;
- Annex 4 – Methodology for Planning, Development, and Improvement of Educational Programs;
- Annex 8 – Analysis of Labor Market and Employer Demands;
- Annex 13 – Quality Assurance Mechanisms;
- Website of Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University:
<https://zssu.ge/zssu2/node/3687>;
- Interviews with the management.

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 (Tourism, bachelor)	None	None
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	None	None
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	None	None

Evaluation ⁵

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component 1.1 - Programme Objectives	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	Complies
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	Complies
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	Complies

1.2 Programme Learning Outcomes

Accreditation standards indicators

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- The learning outcomes of the programme are logically related to the programme objectives and the specificity of the field of study.
 - Programme learning outcomes describe knowledge, skills, and/or sense of responsibility and autonomy which students gain upon completion of the programme.
-

PHD Programme indicators

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

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

Cluster evaluation

Description and Analysis of Cluster

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.

⁵ Evaluation is performed for each programme separately.

The learning outcomes of the study programmes within the Tourism cluster have been developed in accordance with the “National Qualifications Framework and the Classifier of Fields of Study,” approved by Order No. 69/N of April 10, 2019, of the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia, as well as the University’s “Regulations for Planning, Development, Evaluation, and Improvement of Educational Programs.”

In alignment with the programme objectives, a clearly defined set of competencies has been established, reflecting the essential knowledge, practical skills, and professional abilities that students are expected to acquire throughout their studies. The development of the programmes has been informed by several current national and regional strategic documents related to tourism, labour market analyses, and assessments of the market potential of historical and cultural tourism, ensuring the relevance and responsiveness of the programmes to contemporary sectoral needs.

The structure and design of the programmes demonstrate a coherent combination of programme components, whose logical interconnection, content, and sequencing effectively support the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and programme objectives. This integrated approach contributes significantly to the development of graduates’ professional competencies and enhances their competitiveness in both national and international labour markets.

A separate alignment matrix between programme objectives and intended learning outcomes was prepared for each study programme within the cluster, demonstrating that the objectives of the programmes are fully consistent with and adequately reflected in the intended learning outcomes.

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

Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Name and Level)

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

Evidences/Indicators

- Appendix 2. Bachelor Educational Program in Tourism and Syllabi;
- Appendix 2. Master Educational Program in Tourism Management and Syllabi;

- Appendix 4. Methodology for Planning, Designing, and Developing Educational Programs;
- Appendix 5. Learning Outcomes Assessment Mechanism;
- Appendix 8. Analysis of the Labor Market and Employer Requirements;
- Appendix 13. Quality Assurance Mechanisms;
- The website of Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University
<https://zssu.ge/zssu2/node/3687>;
- Interviews with stakeholders.

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 (Tourism, bachelor)	None	None
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	None	None
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	None	None

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component 1.2 <u>Programme Learning Outcomes</u>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	Complies

Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	Complies
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	Complies

1.3 Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes

Accreditation standards indicators

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

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

Cluster evaluation

Description and Analysis of Cluster

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.

For all three study programmes included in the cluster, comprehensive mechanisms for the assessment of programme learning outcomes have been clearly defined and systematically integrated into the quality assurance framework. The evaluation process combines both direct and indirect assessment methods, ensuring a balanced and multidimensional approach to measuring the extent to which students achieve the intended learning outcomes. Direct assessment methods include examinations, project work, presentations, case studies, internships, practical assignments, and thesis evaluations, while indirect methods incorporate student surveys, graduate feedback, employer evaluations, and labour market analyses.

This combination allows the programmes to obtain both quantitative and qualitative evidence regarding student achievement, programme effectiveness, and the relevance of acquired

competencies in professional contexts. The programmes have also established target benchmarks and achievement indicators for each learning outcome, which demonstrates a structured and measurable approach to quality monitoring.

Specific indicators are defined separately for each study programme in accordance with its content, level, and field-specific requirements. These indicators assess students' acquired knowledge and understanding, practical and analytical skills, as well as the degree of responsibility, autonomy, and professional readiness developed throughout the learning process. An important strength of the cluster is the clearly identified system of responsibilities and timelines related to the assessment process.

Responsible persons, implementation procedures, and evaluation periods are specified, which contributes to the transparency, consistency, and sustainability of the assessment system. Such an approach ensures regular monitoring of programme effectiveness and facilitates evidence-based decision-making. The assessment results are to be actively used for programme development and continuous improvement.

The institution demonstrates a clear commitment to using assessment findings not merely for formal reporting purposes, but as an essential tool for enhancing curriculum quality, updating programme content, refining teaching and learning methods, and, where necessary, introducing programme modifications. This reflects the existence of a functioning quality enhancement culture focused on student learning, academic relevance, and responsiveness to labour market and societal needs.

Overall, the assessment framework established for the programmes within the cluster is well-structured, coherent, and aligned with modern standards of higher education quality assurance. It effectively supports the achievement and continuous improvement of programme learning outcomes while contributing to the preparation of competitive, competent, and professionally responsible graduates in the field of tourism management.

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

Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Name and Level)

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

Evidences/Indicators

- Annex 5
- Assessment of the Learning Outcomes of the Bachelor's Educational Program in "Tourism";
- Assessment of the Learning Outcomes of the Master's Educational Program in "Tourism Management";
- Comparative Analysis with International Benchmarks / Analogues;
- Interviews with stakeholders.

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 (Tourism, bachelor)	None	None
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	None	None
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	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 (Tourism, bachelor)	Complies
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	Complies
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	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

Based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents, and the site visit, it is confirmed that the educational programmes included in the cluster – the Bachelor's Programme in Tourism, the Master's Programme in Tourism Management, and the Research Master's Programme in Tourism Management are designed in accordance with the institutional methodology for planning, designing, and developing educational programmes of Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University. The programme is developed in compliance with the legislation of Georgia and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). The content, volume, and complexity of the programs correspond to the levels of higher education and ensure the achievement of the

intended learning outcomes. The qualifications to be awarded are consistent with the programme content and learning outcomes.

The structure of the programs is consistent and logically organised. Teaching components are arranged in a progressive manner, ensuring the gradual development of knowledge and skills. the programmes demonstrate clear academic progression across the three levels of higher education, ensuring continuity from Bachelor's to Master's and Research Master's levels. Admission preconditions to subsequent courses are generally adequate. Programme content ensures its individuality and reflects the specific requirements of the tourism field. The curriculum is designed to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical skills relevant to the tourism industry.

According to SER and other enclosed documents, the learning outcomes of the programs and their individual courses are generally aligned. The programs consider contemporary developments in the tourism sector and include elements of digital competencies, communication skills, and foreign language training, contributing to graduate employability. The development of the programmes is a collaborative process involving academic and invited staff, students, graduates, employers, and other stakeholders. Their involvement is systematically reflected in programme design, implementation, evaluation, and improvement processes. The programmes are updated in line with modern scientific developments and labour market requirements in the field of tourism. The institutional quality assurance system ensures continuous monitoring and improvement of programme content and structure.

In general, according to SER and other documents the programs in the cluster are consistent with institutional methodology and national standards, coherence of structure, and alignment between programme content, learning outcomes, and awarded qualifications.

The Bachelor's Degree Programme in Tourism consists of 185 ECTS credits, and is structured in accordance with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). The standard duration of the program is 3 years The programme is composed of the following components: Major Mandatory courses (130 ECTS credits), which cover the core theoretical and practical aspects of tourism studies; Elective courses within the major field (15 ECTS credits), allowing students to deepen their knowledge in specific areas of tourism; Free credits (40 ECTS credits), which include: 35 ECTS credits of mandatory free courses;5 ECTS credits

of free elective courses. The program also aims to develop students' written and oral communication skills, as well as their ability to creatively use information and communication technologies for information retrieval and dissemination. It also includes 20 credits of foreign language study, comprising General English and a Professional Foreign Language, thereby strengthening the internationalization dimension of the educational program. Admission to the program is not limited to applicants who have passed only English as their foreign language in the Unified National Examinations. Upon enrollment, the university ensures the placement of students into groups according to their foreign language proficiency level. For developing educational activities, students have the opportunity to participate in conferences, discussions, and other events organized by the faculty.

Upon enrolment at the university, students are provided with comprehensive information about the undergraduate program and the academic and visiting staff involved in its delivery. The Master's Degree Programme in Tourism Management consists of 60 ECTS credits and is structured in accordance with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). The programme includes the following components: Mandatory study courses (approximately 56 ECTS credits), which provide advanced theoretical and practical knowledge in tourism management; Industrial practice (5 ECTS credits), which ensures the application of theoretical knowledge in real working environments; Research project (8 ECTS credits), aimed at developing analytical and research skills; Elective courses (4 ECTS credits), which allow students to specialise in specific areas of tourism. The teaching process is oriented toward equipping students with the competence to independently manage complex processes and make decisions in crisis situations. The program's elective courses enable students to deepen their knowledge in specific areas of tourism in accordance with their individual interests and to further shape their professional profile. A substantial part of the program is dedicated to practical training carried out in industry-related organizations. This component enables students to apply theoretical knowledge in real working environments, test their professional competencies, and establish direct contact with potential employers.

The structure of the programme ensures the integration of theoretical, practical, and applied components and supports the development of managerial competencies in tourism.

The Research Master's Programme in Tourism Management consists of 85 ECTS credits and is structured in accordance with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). The programme includes the following components: Mandatory study courses (55 ECTS credits), which provide advanced theoretical and methodological knowledge in tourism research; Research practice (5 ECTS credits), aimed at developing practical research skills; Elective courses (5 ECTS credits), allowing students to specialise in specific research areas; Master's thesis (20 ECTS credits), which represents the final research component of the programme.

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 - Bachelor's Degree Programme in Tourism

Teaching components of the Program I Bachelor's Programme in Tourism, are logically organized, and simultaneous development of the content is ensured, though the program curriculum partially complies with requirements as admission preconditions to the next components requires additional input to some core courses as followed:

The analysis of the learning outcomes *Information Technologies in Tourism* shows that its content is closely linked to the sector-specific concepts and contexts taught within *Introduction to Tourism*. Course learning outcomes, including the ability to describe the relationship between tourism and information technologies, characterize the structural elements of the tourism digital environment, explain the role of tourism intermediaries, distinguish between information systems across tourism sectors, require prior knowledge and understanding of the tourism industry developed within *Introduction to Tourism*. In order for the students to adequately perceive and successfully complete the course, they should have completed *Introduction to Tourism*. Accordingly, it is reasonable *Introduction to Tourism* be a prerequisite for *Information Technologies in Tourism and repositioned in the 2nd or 3rd semester*. This arrangement would ensure the achievement of learning outcomes at an appropriate level.

Learning outcomes and content of the course, Tourism and Recreational Resources of Georgia, shows that the effective understanding of tourism and recreational resources, sustainable tourism principles, regional tourism potential, and tourism product planning requires students

to possess prior knowledge of the fundamental concepts and theoretical foundations of the tourism field. Therefore, it is reasonable *Introduction to Tourism* be defined as a prerequisite for the course to ensure the achievement of learning outcomes at an appropriate level.

Learning outcomes and content of Excursion Studies and Guiding Art shows that the effective understanding of tour planning and implementation principles, customer-oriented service delivery, crisis management, and the analysis of tourism processes requires students to possess prior knowledge of the fundamental concepts and theoretical foundations of the tourism field, as well as basic spatial and resource-related competencies. Therefore, it is reasonable *Introduction to Tourism*, *Tourism Geography*, and *Tourism and Recreational Resources of Georgia* be defined as prerequisites for the course Excursion Studies and Guiding Art to ensure the achievement of learning outcomes at an appropriate level.

Programme 3 Research Master in Tourism Management

The program 3 Research Master in Tourism Management is partially coherent and logically organized, partly ensuring a consistent integration of teaching and scientific-research components. It is reasonable for several basic courses to be revised and updated to better ensure the distinctiveness of the awarded qualification and to strengthen the research orientation of the program. The following changes in the program curriculum is advisable to be made, It is reasonable to make the changes in the following: The study course “Scientific Research Methodology and Academic Communication”, Tourism Sociology and Anthropological research should be replaced with Qualitative research methods in tourism and Quantitative research methods in tourism These changes will strengthen students’ research competencies;

The study course, “Global Tourism Policy and Strategic Diagnostics” is reasonable to be updated and reformulated as “ Tourism Policy and Regulations; Innovative Management” should be revised to align the syllabus with the tourism context, resulting in a more precise course title, such as “Innovation Management in Tourism; “Risk Theory and Resilience Studies” be replaced by “Risk Management and resilience in Tourism”; Admission prerequisites for progression to subsequent components are reasonable to be clearly defined: The courses “Scientific Research Design and Academic Communication” and “Qualitative research Methods in Tourism” and “Quantitative Research Methods in Tourism” are to be defined as the prerequisites for the Research Practice and the Master’s Thesis; The alignment of the program learning outcomes with each individual course should be reviewed to ensure the full achievement of the program learning outcomes, their sequential development, and consistency with the substantive goals of the courses; It is reasonable Ethics, Philosophy, and Human Rights in Tourism to be modified or replaced by a new course(e.g. Tourism ethics and Philosophy).

Evidences/Indicators

- Self Evaluation Report
- Educational programmes with the enclosed syllabi;
- Curriculum map;
- Evidence of participation of stakeholders in the development of the programme;
- Website of Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University:
<https://zssu.ge/zssu2/node/3687>
- Annex 4
- Interview results.

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 (Tourism, bachelor)	It is recommended that “Introduction to Tourism” be defined as a prerequisite for the course “Information Technologies in Tourism” and that the 1 be repositioned in the 2nd or 3rd semester to ensure the achievement of learning outcomes at an appropriate level. It is recommended that “Introduction to Tourism” be defined as a prerequisite for the course “Tourism and Recreational Resources of Georgia” to ensure students possess the necessary foundational knowledge of tourism concepts and theories. It is recommended that “Introduction to Tourism,” “Tourism Geography,” and	None

	“Tourism and Recreational Resources of Georgia” be established as prerequisites for the course “Excursion Studies and Guiding Art” to support the effective achievement of the course learning outcomes.	
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	None	None
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	It is recommended that the study courses “<i>Scientific Research Methodology and Academic Communication</i>” and “<i>Tourism Sociology and Anthropological Research</i>” be replaced with “<i>Qualitative Research Methods in Tourism</i>” and “<i>Quantitative Research Methods in Tourism</i>”. These changes would strengthen students’ research competencies and enhance methodological training within the program. It is recommended that the study course “<i>Global Tourism Policy and Strategic Diagnostics</i>” be updated and reformulated as “<i>Tourism Policy and Regulations</i>” in order to ensure relevance to the field. It is recommended that the course “<i>Innovative Management</i>” be revised to better align the syllabus with the tourism context, resulting in a more precise course “Innovation Management in Tourism. It is recommended that the course “<i>Risk Theory and Resilience Studies</i>” be replaced by “<i>Risk Management and Resilience in Tourism</i>” to strengthen its practical and sector-specific orientation. It is recommended that the courses “<i>Scientific Research Design and Academic Communication</i>”, “<i>Qualitative Research Methods in Tourism</i>”, and “<i>Quantitative Research Methods in Tourism</i>” be established as prerequisites for <i>Research Practice</i> and the <i>Master’s Thesis</i>. It is recommended that the alignment of the program learning outcomes with individual courses be reviewed to ensure the full	None

	achievement of the program learning outcomes, their sequential development, and consistency with the substantive goals of the courses. It is recommended that the course “<i>Ethics, Philosophy, and Human Rights in Tourism</i>” be revised, modified, or replaced with a more field-specific course, such as “<i>Tourism Ethics and Philosophy</i>”, in order to enhance its relevance to the program’s objectives.	
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Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component 1.4. Structure and Content of Educational Programme	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	Substantially complies
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	Substantially 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

Based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents, and the site visit, it is confirmed that the learning outcomes of the academic courses included in the programs grouped in the cluster, the bachelor's Program in Tourism, the Master's Program in Tourism Management, and the Research Master's Program in Tourism Management, are in line with the respective program learning outcomes. The content of each course corresponds to its intended learning outcomes, while the allocation of credits, including contact and independent hours, is appropriate to the course content, complexity, and expected student workload.

The educational courses are organised in a logical and sequential manner. Prerequisites are defined to support the gradual development of knowledge and competencies. The learning outcomes of individual courses correspond to the relevant higher education level descriptors, subject benchmarks, and program learning outcomes. The contribution of each course to program learning outcomes is determined through curriculum mapping. All course learning outcomes are formulated using Bloom's taxonomy and are measurable through assessment methods defined in the syllabi.

The ratio between contact and independent hours is generally adequate and considers the specific characteristics of individual courses. Course learning outcomes are formulated using Bloom's taxonomy and are measurable through the assessment methods defined in the syllabi. Each course syllabus includes mandatory and additional learning resources and identifies the learning outcomes to be achieved through the course.

The development of the curriculum maps, program structure, and course prerequisites is based on the identified link between program learning outcomes and course learning outcomes. During the design and revision of courses, program coordinators, program development groups, and syllabus authors considered the logical links between individual courses and program components.

The study materials and learning resources indicated in the syllabi generally support the achievement of course and program learning outcomes. The university allocates resources for updating library fund and teaching materials. The syllabi include both main and additional literature intended to support the achievement of the learning outcomes defined by the programs.

In general, the programs included in the cluster demonstrate consistency between course content, learning outcomes, credit allocation, assessment methods, and learning resources, supporting the achievement of program learning outcomes.

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 -Bachelor's Educational Program in Tourism

Though the analysis of the syllabi of the Programme 1 -Bachelor's Educational Program in Tourism revealed that certain courses and subject components partially overlap in terms of content and thematic coverage. The syllabi Cultural Heritage and World History and *Cultural Tourism* shows significant thematic overlap. Both courses similarly cover UNESCO cultural heritage, Georgia's historical and cultural monuments, cultural routes, and related topics. These themes are repeated at both conceptual and seminar levels, which results in a high degree of content duplication. Both courses use the same thematic material, only presented in different forms. As a result, students encounter identical topics in both courses, which reduces the effectiveness of teaching and leads to content overload. It is reasonable to modify the syllabi and merge them under a single title, *Cultural Tourism*. Such consolidation would reduce thematic duplication, ensure a more logical sequence in the learning process, and strengthen the delivery of competency-based education.

The program also includes a bachelor's project which is a written, creative work-project completed individually or by a small group (1-2-3 students). It is advisable the bachelor's project be completed individually, as this format ensures a more accurate and objective assessment of each student's knowledge and competencies. In the case of group work, it is often difficult to clearly determine the actual contribution of each participant, which may affect the fairness of the evaluation. An individual project gives students the opportunity to fully demonstrate their research, analytical, and academic writing skills, as well as take full responsibility for all stages of the research process. This approach reduces the risk of unequal distribution of work and potential academic inconsistency, which are common in group projects.

The basic literature and other teaching and learning resources indicated in the syllabi generally correspond to the course learning outcomes and support the achievement of program learning outcomes, but partially reflect developments and recent achievements in the field. It is reasonable that the literature and teaching resources be updated and supplemented with more recent academic publications and contemporary research in order to better reflect current developments and achievements in the field of tourism. The literature

in the following courses is reasonable to be updated. The literature in the following courses is reasonable to be updated: Introduction to Tourism (e.g. D. Maisuradze, T. Khutsishvili, G. Khomeriki, I. Verbetski – 2011); Cultural Heritage and World History (e.g. Protection of cultural heritage monuments and historic cities. A supplementary guide for teachers in Georgia; Tbilisi, 2014; Western civilization; The struggle for empire to Europe in the modern world. A Harper heritage textbook. Edited by William Langer N.Y. London 1954; Economics of Tourism (e.g. Dolikashvili L., Gvinjilia M., Jashiashvili N. *Economics of Tourism and Hotels* (Textbook), Tbilisi, 2013; Metreveli M. *Economics and Policy of Tourism*, Tbilisi, 2011; Recreational Resources of Georgia (e.g. Metreveli, M. (2012). *Tourism: Theory and Practice*. Tbilisi); Cultural Tourism (e.g. Kvaratskhelia N. *Cultural Tourism*, 2009); Tourism and Hospitality Management (e.g. Clayton W. Barrows, Tom Powers, Dennis Reynolds. *Introduction to Management in the Hospitality Industry*. Publishing House of the Patriarchate of Georgia, 2012; Giorgi Shubladze, L. Dolikashvili. *Tourism Management*. Tbilisi, 2015); English Language for Tourism (e.g. Tourism 2, Oxford English for Careers, Robin Walker and Keith Harding, Students' Book, Oxford 2012; Peter Strutt, English for International Tourism, Pearson, 2013; Rawdon Wyatt, CHECK YOUR ENGLISH VOCABULARY FOR LEISURE, TRAVEL AND TOURISM, Second Edition, A&C Black _ London, 2007; Excursion Studies and Guiding Art (e.g. *Guide Profession* (Practical Handbook). Adjara Tourism and Resorts Department, 2017); Tourism Destination Management (Ukleba M. *Tourism Destination Management* (Textbook). Tbilisi, 2017.

Programme 2 - Master of Tourism Management

The basic literature and other teaching and learning resources indicated in the syllabi generally correspond to the course learning outcomes and support the achievement of program learning outcomes, but partially reflect developments and recent achievements in the field. The literature in the following courses is reasonable to be updated.

Strategic management of Tourism: Arthur A. Thompson Jr., A. J. Strickland III, *Strategic Management: Concepts and Cases*, 13th edition, Shota Rustaveli State University Press, Georgia, 2010.

Managerial Economics and Corporate Finance: James S. Van Horne, John M. Wachowicz Jr., *Fundamentals of Financial Management*, 12th edition, "Sakartvelos Matsne", 2008.

Effective Business Communication and Leadership Skills: Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 2010.

Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility: L. Khoferia, *Guide to Corporate Social Responsibility*, Georgian Center for Strategic Research and Development, Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 2012.

Programme 3 - Research Master in Tourism Management

The learning outcomes of the academic courses of the *Programme 3, Research Master in Tourism Management*, within the main field of study are partially aligned with the program learning outcomes. In several cases, the content of individual courses only partially corresponds to the intended learning outcomes, which may affect the consistency and sequential development of competencies within the program. The distribution of credits, contact hours, and independent study hours should be reviewed to ensure full compliance with the course content, workload, and expected learning outcomes. It is also important to ensure that each learning outcome of every course is adequately assessed through appropriate evaluation methods and assessment components.

The basic literature in the syllabi should be revised, updated, and diversified to reflect contemporary academic approaches, and current trends in the tourism field, that will insure the achievement of both course and program learning outcomes.

Evidences/Indicators

- Educational Programs
- The syllabi; Curriculum map
- Course learning outcomes assessment results
- Teaching materials/resources
- Databases of international electronic library
- Results of the interview

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 (Tourism, bachelor)	It is reasonable to modify the syllabi Cultural Heritage and World History and <i>Cultural Tourism</i> and merge them under a single title, <i>Cultural Tourism</i> . Such integration	None

	would help eliminate unnecessary duplication, improve the logical sequencing of topics, reduce student workload related to repetitive material, and enhance the implementation of competency-based education principles. It is recommended that the bachelor's project be completed individually in order to ensure a more accurate and objective assessment of each student's knowledge, competencies, and academic performance. It is recommended the literature in the following courses be updated: Introduction to Tourism, Cultural Heritage and World History, Economics of Tourism, Recreational Resources of Georgia, Cultural Tourism, Tourism and Hospitality Management, English Language for Tourism, Excursion Studies and Guiding Art, Tourism Destination Management	
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	It is recommended the literature in the following courses be updated: Strategic management of Tourism; Managerial Economics and Corporate Finance; Effective Business Communication and Leadership Skills; Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility:	None
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	It is recommended to further align the learning outcomes and content of academic courses with the programme learning outcomes in order to ensure the consistent development of students' competencies throughout the programme.	None

	It is recommended to reconsider the distribution of credits, contact hours, and independent study hours to ensure their full compliance with the course workload, content, and expected learning outcomes. It is recommended to update and diversify the basic literature indicated in the syllabi in accordance with contemporary academic approaches and current trends in the tourism field, in order to better support the achievement of both course and programme learning outcomes.	
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Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component 1.5. Academic Course/Subject	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	Substantially complies
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	Substantially complies
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	Substantially complies

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

Accreditation standards indicators

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

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 program take into account the specifics of the program, ensure the inclusion of individuals with the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to complete the program. The prerequisites and procedures for admission to the program comply with the current legislation. The prerequisites for admission to the program are logically related to the program outcomes, content of education, level, qualification and language of instruction.

The university determines the methodology for planning the number of students for the educational program, which takes into account data from employment, market research, graduate employment rates, material and technical base and human resources, practice facility and financial resources, on the basis of which the number of students to be admitted to the educational program is determined. Admission of students to the program is carried out in accordance with the methodology for planning the number of students. In case of accreditation of programs, the prerequisites and procedures for admission to the program will be posted on the university website. Accordingly, the fairness, publicity, and accessibility of the prerequisites for admission to the program will be ensured, as with other programs.

A person wishing to enroll in the Tourism Management Master's program must complete a test confirming knowledge of a foreign language (English) at the B2 level. A person who has a certificate confirming knowledge of the language at the appropriate level (issued by internationally recognized organizations) is exempt from testing; or has completed the first-level academic educational program in a foreign language (English); Or holds a B2 (or higher) level certificate issued by the Foreign Language Learning Center of Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University.

Without a common master's exam, students are admitted/enrolled in the Tourism Management Master's Educational Program in accordance with the current legislation.

Mobility enrollment in the Tourism Management Master's Educational Program is possible twice a year, within the deadlines established by the Education Management Information System, in compliance with the mandatory procedures and rules established by the University.

A person who holds a master's degree in tourism, business administration or related fields is eligible to enroll in the Tourism Management Research Master's Educational Program.

The enrollment process for the program includes the following stages:

The candidate must successfully pass an internal university interview with a field commission, the candidate's academic readiness, research interests and motivation are assessed.

A person wishing to enroll in the Research Master's Program must confirm proficiency in English at B2 level. A person is exempted from testing if: he/she holds an international certificate confirming language proficiency at the appropriate level;

Since the candidate has already obtained a master's degree, his/her re-enrollment is regulated in accordance with the applicable legislation and the internal regulations of the university (according to the principle of credit recognition or additional semester).

Mobility: Enrollment in the program under the mobility rule is possible twice a year, within the deadlines established by the education management information system and in compliance with the established rules.

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 (Bachelor Educational Program in Tourism)

The conditions for enrolling applicants for program submitted for evaluation for the purpose of cluster accreditation is as follows:

A citizen of Georgia with a state certificate/attestation confirming complete general education or an equivalent document has the right to enroll in the Bachelor of Tourism educational program, based on the results of the Unified National Exams. Enrollment in the program under a different procedure (without Unified National Exams/mobility) is regulated by the procedure established by the legislation and in accordance with the procedures established by Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University. The prerequisites for the Bachelor's program do not reflect the subject/subjects to be taken at the Unified National Exam as the third subject, which is determined by the Order of the Minister of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia N92 - N (Mathematics./ History/Geography)

A person with a Bachelor's degree who has successfully passed the common Master's and internal university exams (university specialization exam and testing in English) has the right to enroll in the Tourism Management Master's program.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-Assessment Report
- Programs
- Quality Assurance Mechanisms of Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University
- University Website: <https://zssu.ge/>
- 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)
General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster	None	None
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	None	It is desirable that the prerequisites for the bachelor's program specify the subject(s) to be taken on the Unified National Exam, which is determined by the Order of the Minister of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia N92 - N.
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	None	None
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	None	None

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programme with the component

Component <u>2.1 Programme Admission</u> <u>Preconditions</u>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	Complies
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	Complies
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	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 Tourism Cluster programs submitted for evaluation, in accordance with the learning outcomes and level, provide students with the development of practical and research skills, and involvement in research projects. The free components of the programs are focused on the development and development of transferable skills.

In addition, the Bachelor of Tourism educational program offers such courses as Academic Writing (5 ECTS credits), Bachelor's Project (5 ECTS credits) and Practice (5 ECTS credits). The development of practical skills important for the tourism industry will be served by such courses as Global Reservation Systems (GDS) (5 ECTS credits), Entrepreneurship and Innovation (5 ECTS credits), Excursion Studies and Guide Art (5 ECTS credits).

The Master of Science in Tourism Management educational program offers research methodology and data analysis in tourism (5 ECTS credits), professional practice (Master) (5 ECTS credits), research project (8 ECTS credits) in order to develop practical, research and transferable skills.

The educational program for the qualification of a Research Master in Tourism Management offers - Scientific Research Methodology and Academic Communication (5 ECTS credits), Econometrics and Forecasting Models in Tourism (5 ECTS credits), Research Practice (5 ECTS credits), Master's Thesis (20 ECTS credits).

The internship process defined by the Bachelor of Tourism Educational Program is carried out in a contact (consultations with the internship leader/supervisor, direct work with the representative-mentor of the internship institution, fulfillment of his instructions and assigned tasks. Protection of the internship report) and independent work format. The student will be involved in the professional activities of the internship institution, daily describes the work performed in the internship diary, and after completing the internship, presents an internship report, which will be presented/defended publicly.

The duration of the internship is 14 weeks. Based on the joint decision of the faculty and the leadership of the internship facility, the student will spend 2 hours a week at the internship facility during the semester, during the internship he/she will compile an internship diary and an internship report. The responsibility for conducting the internship lies with the internship supervisor (academic staff of the university), the internship supervisor/mentor appointed by the internship facility supervises the daily work of the students, provides consultations to the students in fulfilling the internship program, assists them in completing individual tasks and helps them obtain the necessary information and materials. After the internship is completed, the supervisor/mentor appointed by the internship facility, in cooperation with the supervisor, determines the characterization of each student. During the internship, the student must keep records of daily activities in the internship diary, describe the work performed and the innovations that he/she learned during the internship, record the necessary data, and record the results achieved; Keeping an internship diary will help the student prepare an internship report. The internship is evaluated in accordance with the rules and

criteria described in the relevant syllabus. At the end of the internship, the diary and report are submitted to the supervisor appointed by the internship facility, and after being signed by him/her, the student must hand it over to the internship supervisor; the student is given two or three days at the end of the internship to complete the report. After completing the internship, the student defends the internship report before the supervisor. The institution has presented internship reports and diaries of students of related specialties.

Professional internship and research internship are carried out on a similar principle in tourism master's educational programs. The practical/creative/performing component of the program is organized and planned in accordance with the learning outcomes of the program and corresponds to the level of education. The practical and research components of the programs help students to consolidate theoretical knowledge with practical experience and establish direct contact with employers.

In addition, when performing scientific research components in master's programs, the student is supervised by a qualified person in the field, who evaluates the student's work and writes a conclusion on granting permission to proceed to the defense of the master's thesis.

It is noteworthy that during the interview process, the university presented information on the implementation of practical, scientific-research activities and events promoting the development of transferable skills outside the curriculum, such as annual student scientific conferences, university summer and winter schools, sports and charity events, public lectures, etc. Information about the events is posted on the university website.

The expert group studied the agreements/memorandums signed with internship facilities and employers, the purpose of which is the implementation of the internship component of the bachelor's and master's programs in tourism. The presented memoranda reflect the number and duration of students to be sent for internship. Accordingly, the agreements signed with internship facilities are presented in compliance with the requirements of accreditation standards. Memorandums signed with internships and employers contribute to the achievement of learning outcomes envisaged by the program.

Students are actively involved in both university and regional and international conferences and events, including abroad. They participate individually and together with scientific and academic staff. This was confirmed by representatives of the self-assessment group during the interview process. Conference papers were also presented, which are placed in print in the university library.

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 3 (Tourism Management Research Master's Program)

The expert group requested master's theses completed in related specialties. As a result of the study, it was determined that master's theses are mainly completed in accordance with the requirements of the master's degree regulations, although the requirement for an abstract in English is not presented in the structure of the master's thesis. It is advisable to include a requirement for an English-language abstract in the requirements for the structure of the master's thesis and to reflect this in the master's regulations. An English-language abstract will contribute to the internationalization of the research results of young researchers.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-assessment report
- Programs and syllabi
- References with employers and internship sites
- Master's and bachelor's theses
- Internship diaries, reports, defense reports
- Interview results

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/	None	None

Suggestion of the Cluster		
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	None	None
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	None	None
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	It is recommended to include an English-language abstract in the requirements for the structure of the master's thesis and to reflect this in the master's regulations. An English-language abstract will contribute to the internationalization of the research results of young researchers.	It is advisable for scientific supervisors to focus on ensuring the structure specified by the Master's degree regulations when completing the master's thesis.

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 (Tourism, bachelor)	Complies
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	Substantially 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 methods and activities of each course/subject of the programs correspond to the level of education, the content of the course/subject, the learning outcomes, the requirements of the field characteristics and ensure their achievement. The program provides lectures, explanatory, demonstration, independent work, group work, brainstorming, discussion, debates, problem-based learning. Case-based learning, example discussion, collaborative learning, role-playing games, book work and written work, presentation, portfolio, project preparation and/or project-based learning. The preferential use of a particular method or combination of methods in the process of working on a bachelor's project depends on the topic of a specific bachelor's project, the specificity of the research object and issue/topic, and the set goals and objectives. It is possible to use the method of working on a book, comparative analysis, systematic analysis, dogmatic method, explanatory method, induction, deduction, synthesis and other methods.

A variety of methods are presented in master's programs. In particular, academic seminars and workshops, individual mentoring (tutoring), case study, case analysis, laboratory and practical activities, blended learning with modern technologies.

Teaching and learning methods ensure the active involvement of students in the learning process, interaction between staff and students, as well as between students. It takes into account the participation of students in the learning process with due autonomy and responsibility and is aimed at the development of various skills by students. This was confirmed by studying the components of teaching and learning methods of the syllabi of the training courses. Depending on the specifics of the training courses, a different combination of teaching and learning methods is selected and is related to the results of the training course. Depending on the specifics of a specific training course. The curriculum should include student involvement in practical activities. This may include: a period of work in the field, or learning while working, including volunteering to gain experience; the opportunity to learn in specialized facilities using appropriate equipment (for example, training kitchens and restaurants, sports and recreation facilities, event halls, exhibitions, etc.); work with

professional associations (field or other activities, studying “live cases”, visits to professionals); simulated environments, including those created with virtual technologies, etc.

Teaching and learning methods are flexible and take into account the individual needs of students. If necessary, an individual program is used, drawn up in accordance with the interests and level of academic preparation of the student.

Teaching and learning methods contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the educational program, the assimilation of specific material, and the development of the student's transferable skills. Teaching and learning methods allow demonstrating the general correspondence of the student's learning outcomes and field characteristics.

The method of working at the practice facility is used to conduct practice - the student directly participates in the process of implementing the activities of the practice facility, develops professional and technical skills of practical activity. Gets acquainted with the specifics of the work of the practice facility, collects data to prepare a practice report. The student keeps a practice diary at the practice facility.

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

Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Name and Level)

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

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-assessment report
- Educational program and syllabi
- Rules for planning/selection, development, evaluation and development of higher education programs
- Syllabus of the bachelor's project
- Master's degree regulations
- Practice diaries

- Bachelor's theses
- 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)
General recommendations/ Suggestion of the Cluster	None	None
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	None	None
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	None	None
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	None	None

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component <u>2.3. Teaching and Learning Methods</u>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	Complies
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	Complies
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	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/performative 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 criteria applied at Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University are objective and transparent. During meetings with students and academic staff, it was confirmed that lecturers introduce students to the course structure, including the assessment methodology, at the beginning of each course. Students have access to syllabi through the electronic portal and can review detailed information at any time. The assessment methodology and criteria are described in detail in the submitted syllabi.

The assessment system operating at the university complies with the applicable legislation and is regulated by the university's academic process regulations.

During the site visit, it was established that the university operates a combined mechanism for appealing assessment results. Students are able to submit applications in person through the faculty administration or electronically via the academic portal. Examination schedules are published on the academic portal. Meetings with both the administration and students confirmed that students' individual needs are taken into consideration, including during examination periods.

The principle of academic freedom is upheld at the university. Lecturers independently determine assessment methodologies and criteria and implement necessary modifications based on student feedback.

The university has regulations governing master's degree studies, which define the master's thesis assessment system. Assessment is conducted through a one-time public defense, involving the evaluation of both the written thesis and its oral presentation. The final grade of the master's thesis represents the arithmetic mean of the individual evaluations assigned by the members of the defense committee. The thesis assessment system is available in the master's degree regulations and in the syllabus of the master's thesis course. The master's thesis assessment system operating at the university complies with current legislation.

Based on the interviews conducted, it was determined that the university uses the Turnitin software to check mechanical text similarity. Students noted that lecturers provide information about academic integrity at the beginning of the course, however, some students demonstrated limited awareness of the procedures and regulations in force at the university.

Interviews also revealed that the Turnitin platform is mainly used for assessing bachelor's and master's theses rather than individual course components, such as essays, reflections, or other written assignments.

The university has not yet developed regulations governing the use of generative artificial intelligence. Students stated that the use of artificial intelligence is not prohibited, however, they have not received clear guidance regarding the forms and contexts in which its use is permitted. During meetings with academic staff, differing attitudes toward the use of generative artificial intelligence were identified. Some academic staff members verify student papers using additional mechanisms obtained through their own resources, while others believe that AI generated text can be identified without supplementary tools and therefore do not consider additional preventive or monitoring mechanisms necessary.

Accordingly, it is recommended that the university develop and implement regulations governing the use of generative artificial intelligence in teaching and research processes and ensure the introduction of an appropriate electronic platform for identifying AI generated materials in order to support academic integrity and enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

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

Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Name and Level)

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

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-Evaluation Report
- Bachelor's program syllabi
- Master's program syllabi

- Regulations Governing the Educational Process at the University
- Master's Degree Regulations
- 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	It is recommended that the university develops and implements regulations governing the use of generative artificial intelligence in teaching and research processes It is recommended that the university ensures the introduction of an appropriate electronic platform for identifying AI generated materials in order to support academic integrity and enhance the quality of teaching and learning.	It is suggested that the university raise students' awareness of the regulations governing academic integrity in force at the university. It is suggested that lecturers check the level of text similarity not only in relation to bachelor's and master's theses, but also for individual written components of course assignments.
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	None	None
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	None	None
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	None	None

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component	Evaluation
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2.4. Student Evaluation	
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	Substantially complies
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	Substantially 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

The student support and advisory system at the university is well developed. Academic staff have designated consultation hours specified in the syllabi. Interviews revealed that both administrative and academic staff are consistently accessible to students even beyond formal consultation hours. Students noted that lecturers provide consultations with a high level of engagement and availability, resulting in a very high level of student satisfaction in this regard.

The university operates a Continuing Education Center and provides access to psychological counseling services. Although student utilization of these services is low, the environment and activities organized by the center are positively evaluated.

For students arriving from the occupied region of Abkhazia, the university has implemented a number of support mechanisms, including provision of student accommodation. The university also maintains a fully equipped childcare facility, which supports students with children in fully participating in the academic process.

During the site visit, students positively assessed the individualized approach applied in the academic process, including timetable planning. Interviews confirmed that students are informed about exchange programs, conferences, and project opportunities. The university actively promotes the strengthening of international partnerships. The institution has renewed a memorandum of understanding with Pennsylvania State University and jointly delivers courses with this partner institution. The university also organizes annual summer and winter schools.

The university operates several sports clubs and student organizations. The Career Development Service frequently shares job vacancies and organizes employment forums. The

university supports student employability, and as administrative representatives noted, successful students are often employed within the university itself.

Students receive feedback from lecturers both in a group and individualized format upon request. Lecturers provide additional consultations for students with lower academic performance and use examples and case-based approaches to facilitate understanding of the material. During the interviews, academic staff repeatedly emphasized that the small scale of the university and the relatively small student body allow for the effective implementation of individualized approaches.

The consultation and support procedures provided by academic and administrative staff are positively evaluated in relation to both bachelor's and master's degree programs.

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

Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Name and Level)

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

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-Evaluation Report
- Interviews
- Memorandums provided By HEI
- Webpage

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/	None	None

Suggestion of the Cluster		
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	None	None
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	None	None
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	None	None

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component 3.1 Student Consulting and Support Services	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	Complies
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	Complies
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	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 university has a Master's Degree Regulations document that governs the admission procedures to master's degree programs, the implementation of master's programs, and the procedures required for the awarding of the academic degree of Master.

According to the regulations, the selection of the master's thesis topic and supervisor is carried out by the student, which was confirmed during interviews with both students and academic staff. Students choose their supervisors based on the relevance of the research topic. In cases where a lecturer supervises more than the permitted number of students (approx. 3 students per semester), the faculty administration ensures that the student is reassigned to another appropriately qualified supervisor.

A master's student has the right to change the selected thesis topic or to withdraw from the assigned supervisor/co-supervisor within a reasonable timeframe. The master's thesis supervisor is responsible for assisting the student in developing the research plan, selecting relevant and up-to-date literature, defining data sources and research methodologies, and providing recommendations and feedback throughout the thesis process. In addition, the supervisor supports the student's integration into the local and international academic community, including participation in scientific conferences.

Interviews with students and graduates confirmed that supervisors fulfill their responsibilities in accordance with the applicable regulations. Students noted that supervisors assist them in locating relevant materials, structuring and developing the content of the thesis, working with academic databases, and addressing other academic matters. Graduates positively evaluated the supervisors' work and the advisory support they received.

Based on the submitted accreditation documentation, on-site interviews, and review of academic staff personnel files, it is concluded that their qualifications meet the requirements of the master's level of study. According to the data submitted by the university, the number of master's thesis supervisors is 8, which is fully adequate for a newly established program that has not yet admitted students.

The university has developed a master's thesis supervisor evaluation form.

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 3 (Tourism Management, Research Master's Program)

The University has a Master's Degree Regulations document in place, however students' awareness of this document is limited. During the interviews, it was revealed that students are not clearly informed about which regulatory document they are expected to follow in the academic process. Accordingly, it is suggested that the university strengthen students' awareness of the Master's Degree Regulations and its application in practice.

Although the university has developed a master's thesis supervisor evaluation form, graduates were unable to confirm that they were fully familiar with this form or that they had experience in evaluating their supervisors. Therefore, it is suggested that the university enhance students' awareness of this form as well as strengthen communication regarding its practical use.

Data related to the supervision of master's/doctoral students Programme 1 ((Management in tourism, master))⁶	
Number of master's/doctoral theses supervisors	10
//Number of doctoral thesis supervisors	-
Number of master's students	10
//Number of doctoral students	-
Ratio - supervisors of master's theses/master's students	1/1
Ratio - supervisors of doctoral theses/doctoral students	-
Data related to the supervision of master's/doctoral students Programme 1 ((Management in tourism, Research master))⁷	
Number of master's/doctoral theses supervisors	8

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

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

//Number of doctoral thesis supervisors	-
Number of master's students	10
//Number of doctoral students	-
Ratio - supervisors of master's theses/master's students	1/1:25
Ratio - supervisors of doctoral theses/doctorsal students	-

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-Evaluation Report
- Academic Staff Personnel Files
- Master's Thesis Supervisor Evaluation Form
- Staff-to-Student Ratio -Annex 1
- Master's Degree Regulations
- 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	None	None
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	None	None
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	None	None

Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	None	It is suggested that the university strengthen students' awareness of the Master's Degree Regulations and its application in practice. It is suggested that the university enhance students' awareness of the master's thesis supervisor evaluation form and strengthen communication with students regarding its practical use.
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Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component 3.2. Master's and Doctoral Student Supervision	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	Complies
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	Complies
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	Complies

4. Providing Teaching Resources

Accreditation standards indicators

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

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

Based on the information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents, and the site visit, it is confirmed that the personnel management policy and selection procedures of Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University ensure the recruitment and employment of qualified staff for academic, scientific, and invited positions within the educational programs, the Bachelor's Program in Tourism, the Master's Program in Tourism Management, and the Research Master's Program in Tourism Management. It is also confirmed that staff involved in program implementation are engaged in accordance with national legislation and internal regulations, based on transparent, fair, and objective criteria. Programme staff possess the necessary competencies to achieve the intended learning outcomes and are appropriately qualified in line with their functions and regulatory

requirements. Their qualifications are demonstrated through relevant education, professional experience, and scientific outputs (such as monographs, textbooks, peer-reviewed publications within the last five years, and/or practical projects), which confirm their expertise in the field. The qualification of invited staff is ensured through relevant professional knowledge, practical experience, and competencies that support students in achieving program learning outcomes. The programs are implemented by a sufficient number of academic and invited staff, ensuring the sustainability and continuity of the educational process. The balance between academic and invited personnel supports effective program delivery and long-term sustainability. The total number of staff, including affiliated academic personnel, is adequate in relation to the number of students, ensuring appropriate staffing levels and effective implementation of teaching and learning activities.. The total number of staff is 38 academic and invited personnel. The academic staff includes 21 members, among them 3 Professors and 18 Associate Professors. The invited and other staff consists of 11 Invited Professors, 5 Invited Specialists, and 1 Assistant Professor.

The institution applies a structured workload scheme for academic, scientific, and invited staff, which is updated on a semester basis. This scheme includes teaching, research, and other assigned duties, ensuring a balanced distribution of responsibilities. The workload system also provides for student consultation hours, which are integrated into staff duties and support effective student learning and guidance. The overall workload distribution across staff members ensures the smooth implementation of the educational programs, including those within the cluster, and supports their research and professional activities.

Programme sustainability is further ensured through continuous monitoring and analysis of quantitative indicators, including staff turnover rates, workload distribution, and staffing needs. The results of such analyses are used for ongoing programme improvement and resource planning.

The heads of the programmes possess relevant academic qualifications, professional experience, and/or scientific achievements in the field. They are actively involved in program design and development, implementation, quality assurance processes, student advising, and program-related academic and institutional activities. The Bachelor's Program in Tourism and the Master's Programme in Tourism Management, Research Master's Program in Tourism

Management are led by a Head and two Co-Heads, ensuring effective academic leadership and coordination.

Due to SER and other documents administrative and invited staff are provided in adequate numbers and possess the necessary competencies to support program implementation. Their qualifications correspond to their assigned functions and contribute to the effective operation of the programs.

The higher education institution implements a systematic evaluation of academic, scientific, and invited staff performance. This process aims to enhance productivity in teaching and research activities, increase motivation, and improve professional qualifications. The evaluation is conducted by the Quality Assurance Office in cooperation with other structural units, in accordance with established institutional procedures and regulations at Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University.

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

The best practice would be for the programs to further strengthen their tourism-oriented academic profile; it is necessary to increase the number of academic staff with specialization in the field of tourism to better meet the field-specific demands and ensure stronger alignment with the specific needs of the discipline.

Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)⁸				
Number of the staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, and invited staff)	Number of Programme Staff	Including the staff with sectoral expertise⁹	Including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction¹⁰	Among them, the affiliated academic staff

⁸ In case of necessity please add the appropriate number of tables for the educational programmes grouped in a cluster.

⁹ Staff implementing the relevant components of the main field of study

¹⁰ Staff with relevant doctoral degrees implementing the components of the main field of study

Total number of academic staff	21	14	14	20
- Professor	3	0	0	3
- Associate Professor	17	0	0	16
- Assistant-Professor	1	0	0	1
- Assistant	0	0	0	0
Invited Staff	16	2	2	0
Scientific Staff	0	0	0	0
Including International Staff				

Description and Analysis - Programme 2 (Management in Tourism, master)

The best practice would be for the programs to further strengthen their tourism-oriented academic profile; it is necessary to increase the number of academic staff with specialization in the field of tourism to better meet the field-specific demands and ensure stronger alignment with the specific needs of the discipline.

Programme 2 (Management in Tourism, master)¹¹				
Number of the staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, and invited staff)	Number of Programme Staff	Including the staff with sectoral expertise¹²	Including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction¹³	Among them, the affiliated academic staff
Total number of academic staff	15	8	8	7
- Professor	1	0	0	0
- Associate Professor	8	0	0	0
- Assistant-Professor	0	0	0	0
- Assistant	0	0	0	0
Invited Staff	6	2	2	0

¹¹ In case of necessity please add the appropriate number of tables for the educational programmes grouped in a cluster.

¹² Staff implementing the relevant components of the main field of study

¹³ Staff with relevant doctoral degrees implementing the components of the main field of study

Scientific Staff	0	0	0	0
Including International Staff	0	0	0	0

Description and Analysis - Programme 3 (Management in Tourism, research master)

The best practice would be for the programs to further strengthen their tourism-oriented academic profile; it is necessary to increase the number of academic staff with specialization in the field of tourism to better meet the field-specific demands and ensure stronger alignment with the specific needs of the discipline.

Programme 3 (Management in Tourism, research master) ¹⁴				
Number of the staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, and invited staff)	Number of Programme Staff	Including the staff with sectoral expertise ¹⁵	Including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction ¹⁶	Among them, the affiliated academic staff
Total number of academic staff	13	6	7	7
- Professor	1	0	0	0
- Associate Professor	6	0	0	0
- Assistant-Professor	0	0	0	0
- Assistant	0	0	0	0
Invited Staff	6	0	0	0
Scientific Staff	0	0	0	0
Including International Staff	0	0	0	0

Evidences/Indicators

- CVs of Academic and Invited

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

¹⁵ Staff implementing the relevant components of the main field of study

¹⁶ Staff with relevant doctoral degrees implementing the components of the main field of study

- Annex 12 Overall Workload Scheme for Academic, Scientific, and Invited staff, and Individual Workload Indicators for Academic Staff; Labor Contracts and Affiliation Agreements signed with the staff.
- Interview results.

Recommendations and Suggestions according to the programmes:	Recommendation(s): of academic staff with specialization in the field of tourism, in order to better respond to field-specific requirements and ensure stronger	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 (Tourism, bachelor)		None
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	.	None
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)		None

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component <u>4.1 Human Resources</u>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Bachelor's Educational Program in Tourism)	Substantially complies
Programme 2 (Master of Tourism Management)	Substantially complies

Programme 3 (Research Master in Tourism Management)	Substantially complies
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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 information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site-visit it is confirmed that the HEI has developed transparent qualification requirements for the supervisor and co-supervisor, which are aligned with the requirements of Master's level supervision and reflect the specifics of the programme as well as international best practice. In accordance with the Master's Degree Regulations, a thesis supervisor (who may be a Professor, Associate Professor, or an invited specialist holding a doctoral degree or an equivalent qualification) is required to possess relevant academic or professional experience, demonstrated through active participation in research activities and/or relevant professional practice (including, in artistic fields, creative or performance-based projects) that corresponds to the thematic direction of the Master's thesis. The criteria for selecting the supervisor of a Master's thesis, as well as their rights and responsibilities, are defined in the Master's Degree Regulations.

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

Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Name and Level)

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

Programme 1 (name, level) ¹⁷
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¹⁷ In case of necessity please add the appropriate number of tables for the educational programmes grouped in a cluster.

Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses	These supervisors	Including the supervisors holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction ¹⁸	Among them, the affiliated academic staff
Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses	10	8	7
- Professor	1	0	0
- Associate Professor	6	0	0
- Assistant-Professor		0	0
Invited Staff	2	1	0_
Scientific Staff	0	0	_0
Including International Staff	0	0	0

Evidences/Indicators

- Annex 3 The Personnel CV
- Annex 11 Master's Degree Regulations
- Annex 14 Functions and Responsibilities of the Master's Thesis Supervisor

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 (Tourism, bachelor)	None	None
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	None	None

¹⁸ Theses supervisors having a PhD degree relevant to the qualification awarded by the educational programme.

Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	None	None
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Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component <u>4.2 Qualification of Supervisors of Master's and Doctoral Students</u>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	Complies
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	Complies
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	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 information collected through the self-evaluation report (SER), the enclosed documents and site visit, the HEI conducts, analyses and actively utilises the results of the evaluation of programme staff and staff satisfaction surveys. The University has implemented a multi-component staff evaluation mechanism that encompasses three core directions: teaching, research and administrative activity, as well as professional development and

internationalization, including staff development through international exchange projects, participation in specific projects, and the use of digital platforms to strengthen the internationalization of teaching. In addition, the HEI supports scientific-research activities to ensure internationalization and visibility of research through access to international databases, citation indexing, and financial support, including full funding of staff monographs, textbooks, and works.

The University operates a comprehensive staff management system focused on the continuous enhancement of academic quality and scientific productivity. It systematically conducts, analyses and actively uses the results of staff performance and satisfaction surveys in the implementation of academic programmes. The multi-component staff evaluation system is based on the Strategic Development Plan. The evaluation of academic, scientific and invited staff includes teaching and research performance activities. Teaching is evaluated based on student surveys, students' academic performance, and the overall effectiveness of the teaching process. Research activity is assessed through the requirement to integrate the latest research findings into teaching, as well as through annual reports and self-assessment procedures. Administrative activity is evaluated based on staff involvement in university governance and institutional development. The results of the evaluation are used for the professional development of academic, scientific and invited staff, including programme directors and supervisors of Master students.

The University provides necessary conditions, including material and financial resources, to support the implementation of scientific, research, and, where applicable, artistic/creative activities of academic, scientific and invited staff. It supports the participation of academic and scientific staff, including Master's and Doctoral supervisors, in international projects, research activities and conferences. The University systematically ensures professional development through international projects methodological training in student-centred teaching approaches and work with students with special needs as well as academic mobility opportunities at leading European universities.

Digital tools such as TURNITIN (for plagiarism prevention) and the American Councils online collaborative platform (with Pennsylvania State University) are implemented to strengthen

teaching and learning processes. The University ensures support for the internationalization and visibility of research through access to international databases (Elsevier, Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar). The Quality Assurance Office monitors citation indices of academic staff, and the Scientific Department works with the Crossref platform to assign DOIs to scientific publications. The University also provides financial support for staff publications, including monographs, textbooks and collected works. Where necessary, the University ensures training of programme staff in the effective use of electronic and distance learning, teaching and assessment methods.

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

Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Name and Level)

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

Evidences/Indicators

- Annex 3 Personnel CV
- Annex 16 Documents confirming international cooperation;
- Annex 13 Mechanisms for program quality assurance:
- Procedure for conducting surveys;
- Quality Assurance Office research; Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University
<http://www.zssu.ge/zssu2/>

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	None	None
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	None	None
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	None	None
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	None	None

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component 4.3 Professional Development of Academic, Scientific and Invited Staff	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	Complies
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	Complies
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	Complies

4.4. Material Resources

Accreditation standards indicators

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

PHD Programme indicators

- The doctoral education programme is equipped with the necessary research and artistic-creative infrastructure and technical equipment (scientific laboratory, computer resource, information resource, digital resource, individual working spaces for doctoral students, etc.), which are necessary for the implementation of the educational and scientific-research components of the educational programme and for the achievement of the learning outcomes;

- Library book fund, latest scientific periodicals, international electronic library bases both from the university territory and from any other location are available for doctoral students, which allow them to have access and get to know the scientific resources of the relevant research field to achieve the learning outcomes of the programme;
- In order to implement the scientific-research component, the HEI promotes the sharing of scientific- research infrastructure both within the institution and among other higher educational and scientific institutions outside it;
- HEI constantly takes care of the renewal and development of scientific-research/creative research infrastructure.

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

Cluster evaluation

Description and Analysis of Cluster

The educational programs integrated into the cluster are fully provided with the material, technical and information resources necessary for the implementation of the goals of the programs and the achievement of the specified learning outcomes. In particular,

The university takes care of improving the infrastructure and learning environment: the two educational buildings owned by the university include modern-standard auditoriums, conference rooms, computer laboratories and an examination center, which ensures the effective organization of the educational process.

In addition, academic and administrative personnel are provided with appropriate workspace, individual computer equipment and uninterrupted access to the Internet. The requirements of safety and hygiene norms are observed in the learning environment. The buildings are equipped with central heating and uninterrupted water supply systems; additionally, a medical center and a catering facility operate. The university ensures uninterrupted power supply through backup power systems and a generator, which is of particular importance for the stable functioning of the server infrastructure.

Regarding library and information resources, during the visit, a random selection of educational literature was checked. The library is provided with electronic and physical book

collections, which are presented in the syllabi of the programs submitted for evaluation. Modern scientific periodicals are available to students and academic staff.

To support educational and research processes, access to international electronic databases is provided, including Scopus and Mendeley, which allows them to familiarize themselves with modern scientific data in the relevant field to achieve the learning outcomes of the program; the latest English-language academic literature integrated into the training courses is sourced from international library resources. The library is equipped with appropriate computer equipment and printing devices, and wireless Internet (Wi-Fi) is available throughout the university.

The university has implemented an electronic learning management system (LMS), which promotes effective, transparent and flexible management of administrative and academic processes.

It was found that the educational institution is provided with the necessary software and technical resources for distance learning, which ensures the uninterrupted implementation of the learning process in various environmental conditions. During the visit, a group of experts checked the functioning of the LMS system and the capabilities of the electronic learning management system on site. The university has developed a business continuity plan, which in case of force majeure circumstances, it ensures the stability and continuity of the educational process.

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 (Bachelor Educational Program in Tourism)

It is worth noting that the bachelor's program includes a course called "Global Reservation Systems", which requires a special program. During the interview with the head of the quality assurance service, it was noted that the mentioned program has been searched for, but has not been purchased at this stage, since, on the advice of the information technology manager, in case of program accreditation, it would be rational to purchase the latest improved version.

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-assessment report
- Appendix 17. Material and technical base and infrastructure Documentation confirming ownership/use: training auditoriums, computer centers, laboratories and technical equipment of administrative spaces; Security protection mechanisms: photographs confirming fire-fighting systems, medical station and building adaptation (for persons with disabilities).
- Interview results
- Results of on-site inspection

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 (Tourism, bachelor)	None	It is desirable for the institution to purchase a special program called "Global Reservation Systems" for the training course.
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	None	None
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	None	None

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component <u>4.4. Material Resources</u>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	Complies

Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	Complies
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	Complies

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

Accreditation standards indicators

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

PHD Programme indicators

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

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

Cluster evaluation

Description and Analysis of Cluster

The University budget is a set of revenues received from various financial sources and is formed as a single, consolidated budget. This budget includes various sources of financing of the University, which ensures sustainable financial support for educational and administrative activities.

The main sources of University income are financial resources received from economic activities, including:

- a) tuition fees paid by students of bachelor's, master's and professional educational programs;
- b) tuition fees financed within the framework of the State Educational Grant and the State Master's Educational Grant for accredited educational programs;
- c) tuition fees of students covered by educational and social grants issued by the state;
- d) revenues received from short-term and long-term retraining and training programs;
- e) financial resources received on the basis of private grants, donations and bequests;
- f) Program funding allocated by sectoral ministries;
- g) Voucher and program funding for vocational education;
- h) Targeted funds allocated from relevant budgets;
- i) Other income from the economic activities of the university.

In addition, the financial resources of the university include income from the sale of agricultural products produced in the educational process in the agricultural direction, as well as financial benefits from the sale of products and values created within the framework of vocational education programs. The source of income of the university is also interest income from cash deposits placed in banking institutions and other types of income considered as economic activity by the legislation of Georgia.

The university budget is formed on the basis of the consolidation of all existing sources of financing and is a general university budget. All financial resources are consolidated into a consolidated budget, which, in accordance with the strategic priorities of the university, is distributed, if necessary, to finance academic and professional educational programs of various levels.

The financial resources provided for in the budget of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Healthcare of Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University ensure the effective implementation of educational programs, and the existing financial capabilities create an economically realistic and sustainable basis for the development of programs.

The university has a three-year action plan developed within the framework of the strategic development plan, which includes the appropriate budgetary provision of planned activities. The aforementioned document provides for the financial resources required for the

development and implementation of educational programs, including the costs necessary for the preparation of the information technology educational program.

Based on the above, the cluster of Bachelor of Tourism and Tourism Management educational programs at Shota Meskhia Zugdidi State University is provided with adequate financial resources. The existing financial management model creates the opportunity for the programs not only to maintain the existing quality standards, but also to ensure their continuous development and renewal in accordance with the university's strategic and action plans

The institution has presented the university budget for 2026, which is planned with a breakdown of detailed income and expenditure items. The presented budget is in surplus and reflects the financial part of the university's strategic development capabilities.

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

Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Name and Level)

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

Evidences/Indicators

- Self-assessment report
- University budget

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 (Tourism, bachelor)	None	None
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	None	None
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	None	None

Evaluation

Component 4.5. Programme/Faculty/School Budget and Programme Financial Sustainability	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	Complies
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	Complies
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	Complies

5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities

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

5.1. Internal Quality Evaluation

Accreditation standards indicators

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

PHD Programme indicators

- Internal quality assurance mechanisms of the doctoral educational programme include the evaluation of the scientific-research component, resources, and support mechanisms

of the doctoral student. Evaluation results are applied for the improvement of the HEI's activities and the doctoral programme.

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

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

Cluster evaluation

Description and Analysis of Cluster

At Zugdidi State University, quality assurance processes are managed by the Quality Assurance Office, which participates in the evaluation of educational programmes, teaching and research processes, as well as university services. The mechanisms and procedures for ensuring and evaluating the quality of educational programmes are described in the document "Quality Assurance Mechanisms." According to this document, the university operates a continuous quality assurance system based on the PDCA ("Plan-Do-Check-Act") cycle. As a rule, the Quality Assurance Office coordinates the process of programme planning, development, and preparation for accreditation by providing guidance to the faculty and offering substantiated comments and recommendations to ensure compliance with accreditation standards and sector-specific benchmarks (where applicable). The development of higher education programmes involves academic and invited staff, students, graduates, potential employers, representatives of the faculty and university quality assurance offices, educational and structural units, and other relevant stakeholders.

Based on the self-evaluation report, supporting documentation, and interview results, it is evident that stakeholder participation in the development, planning, and evaluation of the Bachelor's and Master's programmes was primarily ensured through surveys of students, graduates, and employers. Analytical reports based on survey findings and evidence of follow-

up actions were provided. However, interviews with students and graduates revealed limited awareness of their participation in the programme evaluation process. This may be explained by the fact that some of the interviewed students and graduates represented related programmes rather than the programme under review. While some confirmed their involvement in the process, others were unable to do so. It is desirable for the programme leadership and the Quality Assurance Office to consider more effective tools and mechanisms beyond surveys to ensure meaningful stakeholder engagement in programme evaluation.

The submitted documentation and interview results indicate that a self-evaluation group was actively involved in the programme development and revision process. The group included representatives of the administrative and academic staff, a student, and an employer. Several meetings were held during which programme objectives, learning outcomes, data required for the preparation of the self-evaluation report, and other relevant issues were discussed. However, interviews with academic and invited staff revealed difficulties in explaining, or a lack of clarity regarding, how their individual courses contribute to the achievement of programme learning outcomes.

To assess the achievement of learning outcomes in the Bachelor's and Master's programmes, a programme learning outcomes mapping matrix has been developed. Direct and indirect assessment methods have been defined, and the evaluation of learning outcomes is intended to be based on the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data collected through these methods. It should be noted that the curriculum map, which identifies the core compulsory courses contributing to specific learning outcomes and indicates the levels of achievement (1 – Introduction; 2 – Development; 3 – Reinforcement), requires certain modifications for further improvement. In our view, the courses contributing to each learning outcome should be reviewed and all three levels appropriately reflected, as reinforcement of a learning outcome should be preceded by its development through relevant courses, and each learning outcome should ultimately culminate in reinforcement. It is desirable for the Quality Assurance Office to intensify its collaboration with the academic team in developing learning outcomes assessment mechanisms. Furthermore, the periodicity specified in the learning outcomes assessment plan remains unclear. It is also noteworthy that the recommended template for mapping teaching and learning methods to learning outcomes, as prescribed in

the university's own quality assurance mechanisms and referring to achievement levels H (High), M (Medium), and L (Low), has not been utilized.

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

Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Name and Level)

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

Evidences/Indicators

- Quality Assurance System-Mechanisms
- Questionnaires
- Provision of the educational program
- 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	It is recommended that the learning outcomes map and the assessment plan be reviewed. The progression levels and sequence of learning outcome achievement should be maintained, and the assessment periodicity should be clearly	It is suggested for the programme head and the Quality Assurance Office to develop more effective tools and mechanisms beyond surveys to ensure meaningful stakeholder participation in programme

	specified. Active involvement of the programme leadership, academic staff, and invited lecturers is essential in this process, together with due consideration of university standards.	development and evaluation processes.
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	None	None
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	None	None
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	None	None

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component 5.1. Internal Quality Evaluation	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	Substantially complies
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	Substantially complies
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	Substantially complies

[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

Based on the self-evaluation report, supporting documentation, and interview results, it is confirmed that the programme utilizes external quality assurance mechanisms, including the authorization and accreditation standards developed by the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement of Georgia, the related procedures, and the recommendations and advice provided by experts within these processes for the purpose of further programme development. External evaluation of the programme involves field-specific experts. According to university regulations, employers should also be involved in the external evaluation process. For the programmes under review, employer involvement was ensured through participation in the self-evaluation group and through employer surveys.

The submitted programmes were sent for external evaluation. The external review was conducted by the Head of the Bachelor's Programme in Tourism at Telavi State University named after Iakob Gogebashvili. The programme received a positive evaluation from the Georgian expert. However, it is desirable, on the one hand, to involve an international expert in the external evaluation process and, on the other hand, to further improve the existing evaluation form used by external reviewers by diversifying both the range of evaluation criteria and the issues subject to assessment.

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

Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Name and Level)

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

Evidences/Indicators

- Educational programme
- External Evaluations
- Interviews during the visit

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	It is advisable to involve international experts in program evaluation and development.
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	None	None
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	None	None
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	None	None

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component <u>5.2. External Quality Evaluation</u>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	Complies
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	Complies
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	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

At Zugdidi State University, the periodic evaluation of educational programmes is generally carried out in accordance with the rules and procedures established by the university, as described in the document “Quality Assurance Mechanisms.”

Internal programme evaluation is conducted through the systematic collection, processing, and analysis of information involving the Quality Assurance Office, programme head(s), academic and invited staff, administrative and support personnel, students, graduates, employers, and other relevant stakeholders. Based on the analysis of evaluation results, programmes are modified and adapted to ensure their continuous improvement and relevance. Where necessary, programmes may also utilize developmental peer review conducted by Georgian and/or international colleagues employed at other higher education institutions. To enhance teaching quality, academic and invited staff are evaluated through a peer observation process, whereby colleagues from the same programme, another programme within the university, or another higher education institution attend lectures and provide feedback using a predefined evaluation form.

At the end of each core course, students complete course evaluation questionnaires. The results are used to improve and further develop individual courses. Programme effectiveness is assessed through monitoring activities and the use of comprehensive programme performance indicators, which may lead to programme modifications and further development when necessary.

At the end of each semester, the programme head prepares a programme development report for submission to the Faculty Council. In accordance with accreditation standards, the report analyses the actual implementation of the programme and documents actions taken in response to recommendations provided by both internal and external evaluators. In cases

where recommendations have not been implemented, objective barriers and constraints are described. In addition, a comprehensive self-evaluation report is prepared every three years within the framework of the educational programme. As the programmes under review are newly established, relevant evidence demonstrating the implementation of these procedures is not yet available.

Interview results confirm that the institution conducts stakeholder surveys on a semester basis. During the programme development and enhancement process, labour market needs were identified, and surveys were conducted among students, academic and invited staff, graduates, and employers.

During the programme development process, the programme head conducted benchmarking and comparison with similar programmes offered by other higher education institutions.

Master's students actively participate in evaluating the research component of the programme as well as the quality of academic supervision, ensuring meaningful feedback and supporting continuous improvement.

The monitoring process appears to be consistently linked to decision-making at both faculty and programme levels, reinforcing the feedback loop that is essential for effective quality management.

Overall, Zugdidi State University demonstrates a well-documented internal quality monitoring framework.

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

Description and Analysis - Programme 1 (Name and Level)

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

Evidences/Indicators

- Programme curriculum

- Quality Assurance System
- Rules for Evaluating the Implementation of Educational Programs at the University
- Interviews during the site visit

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 (Tourism, bachelor)	None	None
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	None	None
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	None	None

Evaluation

Please, evaluate the compliance of the programmes with the component

Component <u>5.3. Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review</u>	Evaluation
Programme 1 (Tourism, bachelor)	Complies
Programme 2 (Management in tourism, master)	Complies
Programme 3 (Management in tourism, research master)	Complies

Attached documentation (if applicable):

Signatures

Chair of Accreditation Experts Panel

Armand Faganel,



Of the member(s) of the Accreditation Experts Panel

Eka Lekashvili,



Nino Devidze



Nino Talikadze



Tamari Razmadze

